

FAITH hath a leafy walk, serene, apart—
 A sheltered heart.
 She only in the chill and growing shade
 Is not afraid.
 She only at the swift, disordered feet
 And fluttered beat,
 Cries not, with answering roll of inward drums,
 'At last it comes!'
 But hears the sudden message with a still,
 Unshaken will.
 Her smile is deep; she turns no restless eyes
 Of quick surmise;
 Knowing that change and loss will ever bring
 Some better thing,
 And evil hath no place wherein to fall,
 Since God is all.

F. LANGBRIDGE.

Meekness.—Dr. Johnson asked his friend, Bennet Langton, to point out his faults, but was so angry when the latter, in compliance, handed him a paper with sundry texts of Scripture about the value of meekness, that he exclaimed, 'What is your drift, sir?' flew into a passion, and beat his unfortunate friend with a stick.—TINLING.

'Tis hard to live by youth's fast bubbling springs,
 And treat our loves, joys, hopes as flowery things,
 That for awhile may climb the boughs, and twine
 Among the prickly leaves of discipline.
 Yet would'st thou rise in Christ's self-mastering school,
 Thy very heart itself must beat by rule.—FABER.

YEA, blest self-discipline, though sternly wooed,
 Hath smiles, and gladsome is her pipe, though low,
 Her tunèd pipe, sounding 'mid scenes forlorn,
 For discipline is love, whose light hath made
 All like herself: with love fresh hues are born,
 Which, wheresoe'er we stand, present a shade
 Still lovely, upon bough or twinkling blade,
 A thousand rainbows 'mid the tears of morn.

WILLIAMS.

Sermons for Reference.

- Allon (H.), *Indwelling Christ*, 199.
 Bickersteth (E.), *Condensed Notes on Scripture*, 563.
 Burns (I.), *Select Remains*, 75.
 Holland (H. S.), *Creed and Character*, 280.
 Kingsley (C.), *National Sermons*, 85.
 Martineau (J.), *Hours of Thought*, i. 297.
 Martyn (H. J.), *For Christ and the Truth*, 209, 218, 226.
 Matheson (G.), *Voices of the Spirit*, 190.
 Morgan (G. H.), *Modern Knights-Errant*, 45.
 Moule (H. C. G.), *Veni Creator*, 186.
 Murray (A.), *Absolute Surrender*, 105.
 „ (W. H.), *Fruits of the Spirit*, i. 103.
 Norton (J. N.), *King's Ferry Boat*, 15.
 Price (A. C.), *Fifty Sermons*, xi. 393.
 Sadler (M. F.), *Sermon Outlines*, 247.
 Thompson (H.), *Concionalia*, i. 283.
Clerical Library: Three Hundred Outlines on the New Test., 175.
New Manual of Sunday School Addresses, 24.

The Missionary Methods of the Apostles.

BY THE REV. JOHN REID, M.A., DUNDEE.

IV.

The Evangelizing Agents.

SIR JOHN LAWRENCE was once asked by what methods he had accomplished so much in the Punjab. He answered, 'It was not the methods, but the men.' That answer may be given as the explanation of the success which attended missionary work in apostolic times. The quality of the leaders was remarkable. The training which made them what they were can never be repeated. Paul was a spiritual genius such as may appear only once in a millennium. It seems hopeless to expect the reappearance in the service of Christ of such 'mighty men' as the original apostles. And yet why should it be hopeless? Each of these great workers would gladly confess 'it was not I, but

the grace of God which was with me.' The secret of their strength lay in the power which they received from on high, and the word of life which they carried on their lips. That 'word' is in our trust, tried and proved in a thousand lands for nearly two thousand years, and the gift of power is still in the hands of the ascended Lord. Men like them will come again; success like theirs will be repeated, when equal faith and devotion put life and all its powers at the feet of Christ. Nor must it be forgotten that these were not the only workers in the field. There were also apostolic men, like Stephen and Philip, Barnabas and Silas, Timothy and Titus, and a host of unknown

preachers whose labours helped to fill the Roman world with the name and fame of Jesus. It is for the Church of Christ to pray for these 'men of the Spirit' and 'the word,' and to nourish them in the warmth of her own spiritual life. The men whom the Churches send forth to preach at home and abroad are in large measure the product and index of her own spiritual character and capacity.

It is impossible to estimate the number of preachers who were put into the field at the beginning. Most of the seventy whom our Lord sent forth in His earthly lifetime would be available. Many of these would be included in the 120 who received the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Even if all the men in the larger number were not available for the work of preaching, a very large proportion of them would be. They were personal disciples of the Lord Jesus, and had received the gift of power. It was therefore not the eleven only, or the twelve, including Matthias, who began the gracious work. Their number was multiplied, perhaps a hundredfold, and the fulness of the Spirit inspired them with intense energy and unshrinking courage. The fact that on one day three thousand were added to the Church awakens no surprise. The harvest was great, the field was small, and comparatively speaking, the labourers were not few. They were also reaping where 'the Sower' had sowed. This increase, together with the equally remarkable additions which followed, must have largely increased the number of available preachers. The seven who were appointed to serve tables, seem to have given themselves also to the ministry of the word. Stephen and Philip, we may be well assured, were not the only members of that chosen company who acted thus. Joses, surnamed Barnabas, *i.e.* distinguished for his power of exhortation (*παρακλήσις*), must have been a preacher of outstanding influence. Tradition speaks of him as a fellow-student of Paul, under Gamaliel. Silas his missionary companion, and the company of prophets, of whom Agabus was one, must not be forgotten. The prophets are ranked immediately after the apostles in the order of importance (1 Co 12²⁸, Rev 18²⁰). The number of them must have been very great, for they appear to have been universally distributed throughout the Church. Their peculiar gift (*χάρισμα*) was exercised in the Church, for the edification of believers, but might prove instrumental in the conversion of an

unbeliever who entered the Christian assembly (1 Co 14^{3, 4, 24}). It was a gift which any Christian might receive. It was an occasional gift, and though those who exercised it were called prophets, they do not seem to have formed a separate order of ministry. Their importance in regard to the special work of preaching, arises from the fact that some who are regarded as prophets, are known to have been actively engaged in preaching or teaching, like Barnabas (Ac 13¹), Judas and Silas (15³²). Paul himself seems to have excelled in the gift of prophecy, as in speaking with tongues, and in preaching (2 Co 12¹⁻⁴). It is not unlikely that very many of the prophets, in addition to the peculiar gift which gave them the distinctive name, were also engaged in the more general work of evangelization. Their capacity for work of this kind is a fair assumption from all we know of the prophetic order in the Old and New Testaments.

It is unlikely that the persecution which arose about Stephen scattered 'all' the believers at Jerusalem except the apostles (Ac 8¹). In such circumstances it would have been useless for the apostles to stay there. Probably it was for the most part teachers and preachers, like Philip and Christian Jews (Hellenists), who were sent away, while the apostles remained at the place of danger to care for the flock. But whatever was their position, when they were scattered abroad they went everywhere, preaching the Word. Apparently most of these preached to Jews only, but Philip went to the Samaritans, enlightened the inquiring Ethiopian Eunuch, and some who were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, when they came to Antioch, spake also to the Greeks.¹ It is possible that the teachers and prophets who are found at Antioch may be identified with some of these happy innovators, as Simeon that was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen (Ac 13¹). Here it may be noted that it is under the experience of persecution that the Jewish Church extended its evangelistic work, and that it was most likely through the agency of men of the more liberal Hellenistic Spirit that it was extended to the Gentiles.²

These names and instances cannot be regarded

¹ [*Ἕλληνας* in Ac 11²⁰ must be accepted as the true reading, even though MS. evidence is against it.]

² The reading *Ἑλληνιστάς* in Ac 11²⁰ may have been adopted lest the authoritative act of Peter in preaching to Cornelius should appear to have been anticipated.

as exhaustive. They only indicate through particular examples the general character of missionary activity in the Jewish Church. The total activity must have been very great. The gospel was a new thing. It profoundly affected the Jewish people. The enthusiasm of preachers and converts must have led to earnest and continuous toil in publishing what they felt to be 'good tidings of great joy.'

It is evident that a very large number of agents were under the superintendence of the Apostle Paul. At first, as was natural, he received his assistants and co-workers from the Jewish Church. In later years he selected his helpers from converts brought in under his own ministry. Many of these were doubtless Jews, proselytes, or men with a Jewish connexion, like Timothy, but as his work advanced among Gentiles, he found his fellow-labourers among them. He seems to have secured assistants in almost every Church which he founded. Gaius from Derbe, Sopater from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Epaphroditus from Philippi, Erastus from Corinth, Trophimus, and possibly Tychicus, from Ephesus. The friends to whom he sends greeting (Ro 16) are a noble company whose activity in the service of Christ receives honourable mention at his hand. But the 'crowd of knights' of the gospel was too great for each to be named. We can only accept the list of workers as indicative of the numbers who helped in the preaching of the Word. They 'that published it were a great host.'

Although the work of the evangelists is clearly distinguished by their name, it is not evident that they formed a distinct order of ministry. The list of offices given in Eph 4¹¹ is not distinctive. The same man might discharge several functions at different times. We read of elders who not only ruled well, but laboured in word and doctrine, *i.e.* in evangelizing and teaching (1 Ti 5¹⁷). 'In the floating constitution of the half-organized early Church, different kinds of work were amalgamated, according to qualifications and circumstances' (Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. 'Evangelist').

The work of private disciples does not come prominently before us in the New Testament, but there are indications that warrant the belief of great activity on their part. The fact that both in Jerusalem and in the Gentile world, the little Church met in a house would suggest that household preaching or conversation about the gospel

was common. It is to be noted that men not only 'spoke' the Word (λέγειν τὸν λόγον) but also 'talked' the word (λαλεῖν τὸν λόγον), and Paul speaks of his work from house to house in Ephesus (Ac 20²⁰). In working thus he was only doing what others did (cf. Mt 10¹²⁻¹⁴). We may be certain that the activity of the Church at Thessalonica was not unique. In their case Paul emphasizes the work which they did in evangelization, saying: 'From you sounded out the word of the Lord in Macedonia and Achaia' (1 Th 1⁸). The fact that the converts so quickly supplied the large number of workers whom Paul mentions by name, warrants the belief that the spirit of missionary enthusiasm burned brightly in the general body of believers. It is perhaps not too much to say that the knowledge of the gospel was more widely extended by unnamed believers working in the home, by the way, and in the circle of their friends, than by the public activity of the workers whose names we know. Aquila and Priscilla are examples of what must have happened in innumerable instances. Liberty of preaching was universal in apostolic days. As late as the date of the Apostolical Constitutions it was expressly stated, 'Even if a teacher be a layman, still if he be skilled in the Word, and reverent in habit, let him teach: for the Scripture says, They shall be all taught of God.'¹ No special designation was thought of or needed. The converts realized that the gospel was not only a good thing, but the best thing—a pearl of great price. Its freshness and glory filled their hearts, and out of that fulness they spake, and could not keep silence. The progress of the gospel in Manchuria at the present day, in this respect, recalls and repeats the methods of the first days. The converts carry the tidings everywhere and 'few of the inquirers ever see a foreign missionary' (may we not say, apostle?) 'till they are examined for baptism.'² The various relations of social life provided everywhere the means whereby the new revelation of God and His Salvation could be extended. The leaven wrought constantly, silently, invisibly in every circle where it was introduced, and will work, until the whole world is leavened.

The work of women in the early Church is very noticeable, but it was mainly charitable, or social, and it cannot be said with definiteness what part

¹ Hatch's Bampton Lecture, p. 117.

² *The Story of the Manchurian Mission*, pp. 41-43; 95-97.

they had in the special work of evangelization. In the Jewish Churches the traditions of the synagogue ruled their life, and it is unlikely that Jewish women had any part in the general evangelistic ministry, excepting such as was possible in the house, or the social circle. In Gentile Christian communities, and especially in Asia, women had larger liberty, and a more prominent social position, but even among them the influence of Jewish traditions was strong, and public speech on their part was repressed. Still the records are not without some indications of woman's missionary activity, though it cannot be said that it was carried on in public. Priscilla had a share in the instruction of Apollos. Paul speaks of her and Aquila as his fellow-workers in Christ Jesus (Ro 16³). Weizsäcker says: 'This joint work can only refer to apostolic promulgation, hardly in its general character, but as carried out in Ephesus and the province of Asia. These common labours are specified as evangelic by the phrase "in Christ Christ."¹ The same phrase distinguishes the labours of Tryphæna, Tryphosa, and the beloved Persis, but the verb which describes their labour (*κοπιᾶν*) seems to indicate that it was in the sphere of charitable service that they showed their devotion. In face of the restrictions which were imposed on women, we can infer nothing from the fact that Philip the evangelist had four daughters who prophesied (Ac 21⁹). And in any case the gift of prophecy was exercised in the Church for the edification of believers. As far as one can judge, activity on the part of women was generally exercised in private, and their energies were chiefly directed to works of charity.

The Training of Evangelists. — Little is said about this in the New Testament. It is only from the activity of the Apostle Paul that we can gather any information. As far as we can judge he selected likely men from the various Churches, and trained them, as the Lord Jesus trained His disciples. He took them with him on his journeys, used them as evangelists or helpers in the centres where he laboured, sending them out into the surrounding districts, superintending their work and *training them for it while engaged in it* (cf. Ac 20⁴⁻⁹). Occasionally, also, he sent them out alone on visits of superintendence, and dealt with the matters contained in their reports, in some cases sending letters to the Churches visited. Any other system

¹ *The Apostolic Age*, vol. i. p. 394.

of training was impossible. The Pastoral Epistles, which in spite of Beyschlag's emphatic rejection, we still attribute to the Apostle Paul, may embody much of the instruction and advice which he gave to his assistants during many years. The differences which distinguish them from his other epistles may be accounted for on this hypothesis. Certainly they receive a new value when we read them thus. The training was brief, practical, personal. The efficiency of the workers lay in the experience of salvation, the knowledge of the word, the mental and spiritual abilities which they possessed, and the instruction they received from the example and teaching of their leader. They were undoubtedly 'picked men'; but they had no peculiar genius or qualities. They were simply the best available men who could be drawn from the general body of converts. Of theology as a science they knew nothing. As to other kinds of knowledge no special instruction was given. All they possessed had been acquired before they became evangelists. Yet these men had to labour among peoples who were in general highly civilized. Though education in the modern sense was practically unknown, the influences of Greek and Roman civilization had enlightened the world. The letters of Paul alone are decisive as to the mental quality of those to whom the evangelists had to preach. It was the undogmatic form of the gospel message which made a special and prolonged course of training unnecessary. The chief difficulties of the preachers were connected with the conflict between Jewish and Christian ideas. The conflict with the philosophy of Greece and of Asia Minor came later. The early evangelists were heralds. They had to announce a '*kerugma*,' not a '*dogma*.'² What we call 'doctrine' was no doubt present in some degree, but the proclamation of the gospel facts predominated. One cannot but fear that the difficulty which almost every missionary experiences in obtaining native evangelists, arises largely from the neglect of this form of preaching. Is it necessary that young men likely to become native preachers should receive a course of instruction in 'doctrinal theology,' 'the evidences of Christianity,' 'Church history,' 'the history of England,' 'the English language,' 'geography,' 'arithmetic,' and 'music'?'³

² *Christology of Jesus*, Stalker, p. 24.

³ *Report of London Missionary Conference*, 1888, vol. ii. p. 371.

It is not supposed that this form of training is universal, or that an educated ministry is not desirable, or that different fields do not require different capacities in the preachers. But such training inevitably subjects the students to the influences of an alien civilization which tends to denationalize them. It supplies them with knowledge which can only be assimilated slowly. It introduces them to problems which have not yet arisen in the native Christian mind. It forces the development of doctrine beyond the stage of Christian experience which they have reached. It leads to a form of preaching which is in advance of the evangelistic, and makes the reception of the gospel message more difficult. And besides, it is the source of innumerable practical difficulties about the scale of payment, the competition of other employments, and the tendency of the native preacher to adopt a mode of life which quickly leads him into debt. It likewise tends to repress the activity of the untrained native Christian.

Would it not be wiser to follow the methods of the apostles?—to choose the best available converts for training; train them in the field: give them

'the word' in its simplest, most undogmatic, universal form: tell them nothing of the problems which the Church of Christ has had to solve in the course of its history. Some of these may not arise in the mission fields of to-day. But aid them to the best of our power to solve the problems which do arise out of their own experience in life and preaching. The European missionary ought to be the wisest man on whom the Church can lay hold, and should receive the most effective training which can be given. It is he whose special work it is to train the native preacher. Central training institutions do not belong to the primary stage of evangelization. Even when the need of them arises, the training should be distinctly specialized. It should deal with living issues, present problems, local difficulties. 'The King's business requireth haste,' and the messenger should not be delayed or encumbered with knowledge which is in advance of his requirements.

Lastly, to send natives to Europe or America for training, generally speaking, unfits them for the very work for which they are being trained.

Three Children's Sermons.

I.

Laughter in the New Jerusalem.

BY THE REV. D. A. MACKINNON, M.A., MARYKIRK.

'And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.'—ZEC. viii. 5.

THE JEWS respected old age. They were taught to reverence the elders of their people, and to stand up in their presence, because grey hairs are a crown of glory. They valued children above all other riches. A large family of boys and girls was counted one of God's favours. They called children 'God's heritage'—'arrows in the hand of a mighty man.'

After their nation had been long captive in Babylon for sin, the Jews began to send parties back to Canaan. Some of these, joining the colony which had remained behind, began to rebuild Jerusalem. When this text was written, they had been labouring at the temple for two

years. Being surrounded by enemies, they had to be ready at all times to fight as well as to work (Neh 4¹⁸), reminding us of those Pilgrim Fathers who built the homesteads of the new world, plying their axe while their rifles leant against the nearest tree.

Such an atmosphere was bad for very young and for very old people, just as Lucknow—commemorated in the verses about Jessie Brown—was a cruel place for tender children and grey-haired men. The colonists in Jerusalem were therefore chiefly men of young or middle age. Amid constant warfare, few survived to be veterans. It was a rough, hard society, unblest by these 'two benedictions of life,' childhood and old age.

The captive Jews sent on one occasion to their native land to ask about keeping certain Fasts in Babylon. God's reply, recorded in Zec 7, was: 'Cease to be wicked, and you will not need Fasts. Judge true judgment, practise mercy. Defend