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GIVING GOD A CHANCE

"ADOPTING A NEW ORDER"

JACK CREAGH.



TOP—ST. BARNABAS', BROADWAY.
BOTTOM—PORCH OF ST. PHILIP'S, CHURCH HILL, SYDNEY.

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Foreword.

My friend, Jack Creagh, has asked me to write a brief introduction to his life story, and I very gladly do so. It is interwoven with my own experience, and I thank God continually for his labor of love and his loyalty to the Gospel and to me. I hope that there will be a large sale for this very excellent record, and if it lies within my power I certainly shall do what I can to increase it.

It seems a thousand pities that I should have, at this particular time when it is so needed, to give up "Grit" that I originated and have controlled for 36 years, but I hope to bring it out at least once a month.
—Ven. Archdeacon R. B. S. Hammond,
O.B.E.

GIVING GOD A CHANCE.

"BECAUSE HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND, I SHALL NOT BE MOVED."
(Psalm 16.)

CHAPTER I.

"For Thy mercy is great above the heavens; and Thy truth reacheth unto the clouds,
That Thy beloved may be delivered:
SAVE WITH THY RIGHT HAND,
AND ANSWER ME."

—Psalm 108:4-6.

"With mercy and with judgment my web of Time He wove,
And aye the dews of sorrow were lusted by His love;
I'll bless the hand that guided, I'll bless the love that planned,
Where glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land."

—Rutherford.

A BIRTHDAY.

Days come and days go; it does not matter how important they are—twenty-four hours, 1440 minutes, 86,400 seconds for a day. Such a day was June 15, 1942, and how I enjoyed every minute of it, in spite of war and bad conditions ruling. King George of England and the British Empire (his birthday also) gave me a holiday on the 15th, our Government agreeing to it, so I started from home to go to the Central Police Court to enter the drunks' yard with a thankfulness in my heart, a mind full of song, and a conscience full of gratitude. In the drunks' yard I lost no time before I was on my subject, "Total abstinence from alcoholic liquors," by "GIVING GOD A CHANCE THROUGH SOBRIETY."

One drunk, who had a fairly big list of previous convictions, came at me first, giving me a cue. He said: "Jack, I wonder if the magistrate will give us a chance, because it is the King's Birthday."

This was said because on other King's Birthdays the magistrates have discharged the men and women because it was the King's Birthday.

I said to this man, also to the others, "Don't lower yourself by asking or expecting a chance from any person, even a magistrate." I followed this with a suggestion, "You give God a chance to make a man of you; that's your only hope, as it was mine thirty-eight years ago on June 15, 1904."

After about 30 minutes' talk in the yard, the officer in charge opened the iron-barred door, and we went into Number 2 Court.

When the magistrate entered the 52 cases were dealt with, but no case went by without my uttering a silent prayer to God I met while a drunkard. Every man and woman went out with the words, "Give God a chance." You will if you give up strong drink.

ANOTHER CHANCE.

Now let us go back thirty-eight years—the place, Sydney. Two men emerged from the Sydney Domain; both about 31 years old. Before leaving the Domain they took a drink of water at a fountain; but it did not appease their thirst. Then started a weary and dreary hunt for a few, or many, pints of beer that then (1904) was 3d. a pint; now it is 1/0½.

It was a lean day for the two men; but in their wretched state it only took half the quantity to make the doped beer effective, and at about 4 p.m. that cold June 15 the two men, both ragged and unshaven, looked miserable specimens of humanity, and there was seemingly nothing but hopelessness in front of them.

There is no doubt that hundreds who walked the Sydney streets on that day thought the same; as indeed they do to-day. But all those who thought so, including the two ragged, drunken men on the park seat, were wrong. There was a chance if certain conditions that any fool could see were entered into.

But I am getting ahead of my story. About 4 o'clock some 60 men, by the look of them the same type as the two on the seat, were mooching about the park. They had not long to wait, for there was a sudden rush

towards a low-lying building next to a beautiful church—St. Philip's, Church Hill.

IF BY ANY MEANS SOME ARE SAVED.

One of the two men on the seat made for the old building, the other refused to budge, and he thought less of his friend for going to the religious meeting to get a ticket for a free breakfast on the following Sunday, for that was the bait. Rev. R. B. S. Hammond (Curate, St. Philip's Church) and Mr. Danny Mathers (City Mission, Miller's Point) held out to the dead-beats so that they would hear the message of REDEEMING LOVE, known as the Gospels, that offered a full and free salvation to even the worst humans sojourning on this old planet.

THE UNJUST NOT OVERLOOKED.

Now the Creator sends rain on the just and the unjust, and so it happened on that day. About ten minutes passed, then a miracle happened—rain fell on one unjust man, MYSELF, then known as Jack O'Brien, now known as W. D. B. ("Jack") Creagh, my real name.

While thirty-eight years have passed I still feel the misery in my body and mind I felt on that cold day in June, 1904, and only the love of God HAS SOLVED MY PROBLEMS.

THE MIRACLE.

I said a miracle happened—rain fell; but also there was no other shelter available as far as I could see but to duck into the porch of the 100-year-old building, St. Philip's School hall, Church Hill. My pride seemed hurt as I shuffled about in the porch, leaning against the old door. I could hear coughing, then hard voices singing a hymn. It was a dismal failure. Then a very strong, appealing voice began a story which I now know as "The Parable of the Prodigal Son."

It hit me on the top of my head, between the eyes, through what little was left of my mind. It made me feel so small, for I really felt it was a review of my own life, even to the farm where The Prodigal worked.

I had worked as recently as seven months on a farm, Mr. Alford's place, Hunter River, Jerry's Plains, Singleton, cutting prickly pear and other manual jobs. I cannot recall a word the parson said in a short talk to the men. I awoke to myself as Rev. Hammond came to the door. He took no notice of me then, but I could not move away. The parson gave each man a ticket, shook hands with them, but the things that, besides the Parable live most in my mind are the words the parson said to each man—"GIVE GOD A CHANCE TO MAKE A MAN OF YOU."

I would have left if I could, but that was impossible. At last all men passed out. Then it was my turn to get the hand-shake, backed by a pat on the back, as the parson said to me personally, "Give God a chance to make a man of you."

I said to the first Christian I had ever taken notice of, "Sir, I believe that is impossible; I don't know your God." He said, "But God is a reality; I have proved it."

MY FIRST PRAYER.

Anyway, we had to part, but before doing so I really saw the man was deadly in earnest, and I did promise him I would kneel down as I had seen others do and ask his God to help me. So that night at 8 p.m. I knelt down by the side of a bed in the City Night Refuge, Kent Street, and I uttered what must have been the strangest prayer ever uttered. Here it is:

"God, I don't know anything about You, but that parson I met to-day does. Give me something I have not got THAT HE HAS." Then I bid God, whom I did not know, good-night, jumped into the free bed, had the first decent night's sleep I'd had for weeks, and, best of all, woke up with the desire to hunt a job. Leaving the shelter at 6 a.m., I ignored the craving of my body for more alcohol, and on the wall of the "Herald" office, Pitt Street, I saw a useful job at Mr. Andrew's, The Hall, Norton Street, Leichhardt.

I hurried out per boot, and I was not surprised that out of 30 men there I got the job. God was answering my prayer.

SOME PROOF.

That's 38 years ago, and to-day I'm still in a job, as Christian Missioner with Hammond's Social Services that was founded by my present chief, Archdeacon Hammond.

What a story those 38 years would make! I have struggled to hold his coat in many a tough fight with our social, physical and spiritual curse, ALCOHOL, and I have often got in a punch myself or I have kept the crowd back, as it were, to see fair play.

Why does alcohol come in for such antagonism from our Archdeacon and others, whose make-up, physical and spiritual, shows such kindly spirit? Why, indeed? Because they are pledged to fight for the weak and sinful, and as alcohol makes more weak and sinful outcasts than anything else in our so-called civilised democratic order, Christian men and women must fight the curse if they have any spiritual salt in them. I was very pleased on this 15th June, 1942 (my total abstinence birthday), to be one favored to meet my chief, Archdeacon Hammond, on his return to Sydney—there, on the Central Railway platform, to get the grip of his hand and to hear his voice that first persuaded me to "GIVE GOD A CHANCE."

I often think I have been an unprofitable servant, that I could have done more to justify his trust; but while our friendship lasts, be it long or short on this planet, we know THE BEST IS YET TO COME.

This has been written with one object—to encourage people to TRUST GOD themselves, and to encourage Christians to have hope for the worst humans they contact with, even drunkards, so numerous and troublesome, now in our midst. I am still ashamed for my failure in early life, but proud of my God and the friends He gave me. This alone gives me the courage I need, as indeed it will give any unfortunate sinner courage. If a failure, GIVE GOD A CHANCE and help others get the same chance.

CHAPTER II.

"4. They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.

"5. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.

"6. Then THEY CRIED UNTO THE LORD in their trouble, and HE DELIVERED THEM OUT OF THEIR DISTRESSES."

—Psalm 107, verses 4, 5 and 6.

The above deliverance came to me in 1904. God is the same to-day as when the Psalmist uttered the words above. God is a proved redeemer of DRUNKS, IF THEY PUT THEIR TRUST IN HIM.

SOUL HUNGER.

Have you ever fainted from physical weakness? Many I know have, and they all tell me it is not painful; and, in fact, the fainting can be very pleasant. Not having known physical fainting I cannot tell you of the feeling at all; but I can tell you something about one's soul fainting, for that was my condition as I left the City Night Refuge the day after God stirred me—even blasted me—out of my complacency. With the aid of Rev. Hammond's impassioned words on that eventful day—15th June, 1904—when I first came face to face with my appalling physical needs, and, under the inspiration of the spiritual lesson God saw fit to administer to me, I, in some wonderful resigning way, was able to accept.

Don't think for one moment I saw anything spiritual in what God's servant said. How could I, then, understand spiritual things? My life in the main had been physical, even to utter selfishness. All drunkards, gluttons and other kinds of perverts live just purely dumb, physical lives to excess. That's why they are what they are. Deliberate sinners cannot be spiritual, but they may have a kind nature that, under spiritual inspiration, can be guided, and conversion then takes place.

JUST TWELVE HOURS.

I had entered the shelter at 6 p.m. on the 15th June, 1904. I left the same shelter at 6 a.m. on the 16th—just twelve hours later; but what a change had taken place!

I was still clothed in rags, and had bad—very bad—boots on my feet. I was still unshaven. I had no home to go to, nor had I a change of garments. All my own fault—my sinful nature had planned that way. I was the result of deliberate sin—just that; and if anyone of the same type (or any other type of deliberate sinner) should read this and doesn't see as I now see, they are just plain crazy or deliberately wilful.

My soul really fainted on that first morning. Standing in Kent-street I could not see which way to go; but, automatically, I nearly turned to the habits, particularly the alcoholic one, I had previously hugged to my very life. Is there any wonder, having gone that way for so long a period?

I watched other poor unfortunates come through the door of the shelter, and, while the physical shapes differed, their outlook of failure was the same.

GOOD-BYE TO MY PAL.

Then my friend Charlie came to me. He, too, through his sin, had to resort to the free shelter. On the previous night, when my friend requested me to go after a drink, I gave him the first evidence of a new awakening conscience. I told him plainly that we would have to go our separate ways. In the morning I told him to do the same, and we parted. Fate sent my old drinking pal towards the Central Railway Station and alcohol. Because of this I went the opposite direction, and, turning some corners, I eventually found myself outside the "Sydney Morning Herald" office, Pitt-street. My thanks always go to the "S.M.H." ("Granny Herald" some call the paper). Well, that morning "Granny" was, indeed, a pal to me, for I found my first job from the advertising sheet they put on their premises—in 1904—and still do—1942.

I thank them for this, for the job, small as it was, gave me many months of work, a home, backed up with good, plain food; a place of refuge also.

This was, indeed, a magnificent start in my heartfelt request to GIVE GOD A CHANCE, and, looking back over the many years that have passed, I am sure God was working for my redemption.

TAKE HEED.

To all who may read this, and who have made a failure of life, and who are honestly dissatisfied with the arrangement, let me urge the following:

1st: Break away from all intimate friendships that are harmful. Don't count the cost, either.

2nd: If entirely destitute of material means, take the first humble position offering. I am now thinking of those who are like I was—no dependents; but others must do as their conscience directs.

3rd: Keep away from the usual means of recreation that helped in any way downward. My likes, "pubs and boxing," may not be your likes, but they may be even more harmful.

Then, like a child—and you will be like a child if you are trying sincerely to redeem the past under God's inspiration—look on your future life and conduct as an earnest child does as it enters school.

KEEN STUDY NEEDED.

Study your previous life and the things that have ruined you; compare your new desires; watch carefully those around you; if possible, go and make friends with those you want to be like. My temperament, which had an element of fear in it, made me keep aloof from practically every person but those I had to deal with in my job.

WATCH FOR TEMPTERS.

My first temptation came from the man I worked for. I soon found out he was a heavy wine drinker, and made his own wine on the Hunter River. Although it was plain to my employer that drink had beaten me—he candidly saw that when I, one of thirty men after the job, faced him—I often wondered how I got that job, for I was the worst looking badly-dressed man in the crowd. I am sure now, looking back, my employer had no option. God gave me my chance, as He also gave me the power to refuse alcoholic wine when my employer, Mr. A—, requested me to have a drink. This was after I had honestly worked for a month, and, as he said, he had got to like me.

Mr. A— had a hall built in his grounds, like a small theatre, also he installed the biggest privately-owned organ in Australia (now installed in Christ Church St. Laurence, George-street). He also had a large telescope placed in the hall, and between the organ (music) and the telescope (astronomy) and his money he carried on his life, but when I was given back my physical strength and growing desire in my heart to be a better—especially a sober—man, I felt that Mr. A— was a miserable man, while I, his laborer, was happy.

TEMPTATION NEVER LETS UP.

Don't think that temptation did not attack me, for on a number of times I was nearly drawn back. Booze was always attacking me. Keep in mind that for months I kept to myself. It did not dawn on me for quite a long time that I should look up my parson friend.

Three months after I met him I felt very moody. I hadn't been cut in the street for a month. I fought a lone fight, which was unwise. Something upset me, and at 9 p.m. I took a stroll down Norton-street to the corner

of Parramatta-road, Leichhardt. There on the corner was a well-lighted pub, and a crowd of men, including some British sailors, were drinking at the bar. Their laughter attracted me, and I was soon inside the pub. I felt very uncomfortable, as well I might be.

Soon I was chatting to the sailors, and asked them to have a drink. Of course they would. I ordered four pints, putting a two shilling piece on the counter to pay for it.

SIDESTEPPING BOOZE.

The three sailors became very friendly. The barmaid took my money, and then I woke up. I was breaking the pledge I had verbally given the parson. I decided not to drink. The woman put the change on the counter. Then the God I did not even know worked for my welfare. Somehow I said to the sailors, "Excuse me, you lads; I have forgotten something." I sheepishly said "Good night" to the sailors and the barmaid, and backed toward the door. They all looked surprised, and laughed at me, and I feel sure they thought I was crazy. Now, of a surety, I know it was one of the most sane actions of my life. I found myself on the footpath, and, seeing a poorly-dressed woman and two children, I emptied my pocket of the money I had there. She, too, looked amazed. I then made for my lonely room in the pad-dock attached to the hall, Norton-street, Leichhardt, where I threw myself on my bed in a kind of exhaustion which now I know to be not physical, but the exhaustion of my soul, which was getting life through the mercies of God, whom even then I did not know, but who was working on my behalf, because I, a poor, stumbling, wilful drunkard, had called on Him just a few months previously.

When I was given a Bible by the parson I stumbled on the 107th Psalm and I found I was often in the same position as those mentioned in the Psalm, 27th and 28th verses: "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and ARE AT THEIR WITS' END." "Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble AND HE BRINGETH THEM OUT OF THEIR DISTRESSES."

Yes, I was beginning to discern—through a glass, darkly; but discern I certainly did, and I pen this in the hope it will help others. My one theme now is: GIVE GOD A CHANCE.

CHAPTER III.

MAKING CROOKED THINGS STRAIGHT AND DARKNESS LIGHT.

"And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not. I will lead them in paths that they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them and not forsake them."—Holy Writ (Isaiah 42:16).

If one's faith is like a grain of mustard seed, one has started right. God, always reasonable and just, will listen to any contrite sinner's murmur, and will always provide a way for the weary. Christ is that way. Can anyone tell me a better? It is greatest in its simplicity—just have faith.

FOUR LONG MONTHS.

After about four months' struggle, which was so pleasant as compared with my condition on the afternoon I first met the Parson, I began to get confidence in myself—just the confidence that comes from a better physical condition; but I knew nothing of God, although I often thought of God. When I didn't think of God, I thought of the one who had told me of Him, but I even then did not think it wise to go to look for the one (Rev. Hammond) who prompted me to think and act better. The result, after four months, was good. I had no desire to drink alcoholic liquors. I had won the first round. But as I gained confidence in myself, because of better physical condition, I was heading for temptation, and it came.

I went along Parramatta Road for a walk, and, needing a hair cut, I sought out a barber. I entered the shop, and as usual the barber was very talkative. I noticed a few men enter, and go to the back of the shop. Soon I heard laughter, and the familiar tap, tap of boxing gloves.

The barber finished his job, and then, on my inquiry, he said I could go through to the big shed where the boxing was taking place.

I found a young man was putting a few novices through their paces. I sat through that evening, hardly saying a word to those present. The next day I was at the barber's shop again, sitting on a plank seat talking to a young chap who was waiting for the instructor to come along to give him some lessons. The young chap was disappointed, and I offered to take his mate's place.

I was in great condition, and the lad received a good lesson. When we finished there was his mate, with others, looking on. I had made a good impression, and the chap who was teaching the others to box asked me to have a few rounds with him. I agreed. I am sure he was out to give me a hiding, for he became very rough. So I warmed up,

and instead of getting a hiding I gave the one who ran the show a real boxing lesson, and I received good applause for it.

THE OLD SHED.

I was often in that old shed, and gradually my love for the game came back. But God was on the job also. I became more confident, and soon I was visiting the old Gaiety Boxing Saloon. A Mr. Charlie Campbell was the boss there. About six months previously he had ordered me out of the show for drunkenness. Cockney Bob, the doorkeeper, who had given me an introduction to Campbell that led to two small fights that I won, gave me a raspberry as I staggered through the door. I never forget that fact, but it was honestly my own fault.

When I entered the show after six months' sobriety, I looked splendid. Charlie Campbell rushed me, and placed me in a good seat. I felt flattered. During the boxing that night Campbell offered me a fight in two weeks. I agreed, and was matched with a good second-rate man, with the promise, if I won, to be given a chance with a real good man, known as Ike Stewart, a negro.

After the show, in which I had refused drink, I started training, running from the Town Hall to Leichhardt. During the following week I was at the barber's shop, boxing often. I seemed to be set for big things. The big things were on the way, but not as I planned.

I MEET MY FRIEND AGAIN.

On the following Saturday night I was walking down George Street, opposite the Queen Victoria Markets, just waiting about for 8 o'clock, when I was due at the Gaiety.

Walking slowly I met the Parson the second time; we passed each other. Both had noticed the other, and both turned to look back.

I was then sure it was the one I had met in the school porch. We joined each other, and shook hands. I told Rev. Hammond, or Father Hammond, as I called him, just how well I was, told him of the fight I was in on the next Saturday; in fact, offered him a front seat at the show.

I saw his downcast look, and he said these words: "Be careful, or the old life will get you back." Not understanding the Parson's meaning, I felt disappointed. "Besides," said Rev. Hammond, "I have a fight on myself that night. I will be fighting the old devil in the Y.M.C.A. at 8 p.m. Why not come along?"

We parted, I to go to the boxing, he to the Y.M.C.A. to tell the young men of God His Love and the right way to live.

I WAS VERY UNEASY—WHY?

Many handshakes were mine at the old Gaiety that night, but I felt very uneasy,

thinking of the words, "Be careful, or the old life will get you back."

I was introduced to the motley crowd, some half-drunk. I felt excited and proud, then hot and cold in turns, but uneasy. Was it the Parson's prayer, uttered when I left him in the street? It certainly was unusual.

Sitting in my seat again, one fellow, full of booze, offered me a drink from a bottle. I felt more disturbed. Another fellow asked me to go out with him for a drink. I refused. The Parson's prayer was holding its own with the mob.

After the show I hurried out and ran from the Gaiety to Leichhardt—a training stunt I called it. Entering my rooms I sat on my bed for a long time, turning over in my worried mind the words Rev. Hammond said about the old life.

MAKING MY CHOICE.

It must have been early in the morning when I fell asleep worried. I awoke very worried. I wanted to box, but I wanted to be a sober, decent man. That Sunday I put in very thoughtful. I heard church bells ring, and left my room. I entered the church, which I found was All Souls, Leichhardt. I sat through the service; one or two men tried to be nice, but I was too glum. I did not understand.

I went home to dinner, then I fell asleep, and awoke about tea time very worried, so I decided if I could I would give up the fight, and picked the man who ran the boxing school at the barber's shop as the one to take my place.

I gave him a letter to Mr. Campbell, and said I was ill—this was indeed true. The following Saturday, instead of boxing, I stayed in bed, really afraid to go out. Then I thought I would look up the Parson again, and on the afternoon of the men's meeting I went to the old school hall where I first was introduced to God. I crept into the back seat.

A GREAT MOMENT.

There was the same old ragged crowd after the meal ticket. There was the Parson after their souls. The meeting started, a hymn was sung by Mr. McClelland, who also played the organ. The Rev. Hammond read something from the Bible. Then I was to get a shock, for the Parson said, "Men, I have a friend here to-day; he, I feel sure, would like to say something to you."

Then he said, "Come on, Jack, have a few words with the men." I did not know he meant me, so took no notice, then he beckoned to me, with, "Come on, Jack." I had often heard those same words while

boxing, but I understood them there. I felt on the point of fainting, and nearly turned to run out of the door. But God, and the Parson's sincerity, won, and I stood on my feet.

I could not speak at first, but gradually I formed words which ran like this: "Men, I don't know what to say, but I will say this. Just about six months ago I stood in that porch, a ragged drunkard. Now, because that man (I pointed to Rev. Hammond) had hope for me, telling me to give God a chance to make a man of me, I gave up drink, got a job, and I'm much better for it. You try it, men. It's better than being drunk and miserable." I wished them good luck, and, really exhausted, I staggered to the back seat again.

Some of the men had known me, but I got a great surprise when the meeting finished, and the men shook hands with me. At last I was left with one man, ragged, covered in dirt, unshaven. He addressed me as "Jack." I felt I had heard his voice before, and when he said he was "Charlie, my old drinking mate" I left outside the City Refuge, I put my arms around him, for it was really through him I met the Parson. By and by Rev. Hammond came to us, and when I told him who the man was he was interested.

HUNGRY FOR SOULS.

We both shook hands with the Parson, and he watched us go down the street together. What were his thoughts, and prayers? Looking back thirty-eight years I know now he wanted us both to be saved. Not me alone satisfied him. His heart was big enough to take in all the drunks in the world.

Charlie and I entered a restaurant next door to a pub we often drank in. After a good feed we sat on a seat in Hyde Park talking things over. His story was a terrible one, and I really thought he would have ended his life if he went on much longer.

I made up my mind not to leave him that night, and took him along to my room. I got a bucket of warm water. He washed himself. Then he put on some of my clean clothes that God had given me. We shared the blankets, and before we fell asleep we both knelt down, and even then I did not know God, but I felt some power urging me on. Charlie, my pal, listened to my rough words said to God, whom both of us did not know.

Next morning Mr. A—, my boss, permitted me to keep Charlie around. If he hadn't, I would have left my job. Prayer was being answered in our lives.

CHAPTER IV.

The Master, through His servant, Archdeacon Hammond, taught me the following lesson:

You, Jack, are the fellow that has to decide

Whether you'll do it or toss it aside;

You are the fellow who makes up your mind

Whether you'll lead or will linger behind—

Whether you'll try for the goal that's afar,

Or just be content to stay where you are.

Take it or leave it—here's something to do:

Just think it over—it's all up to you!

Taking the first step against the enemy of your soul is necessary before you really step out into a new and complete way of life.

CHARLIE FALLS.

Charlie stayed with me one week, during which time he never entered the street. No alcoholic liquor passed his lips. He picked up in health, and his mental outlook brightened and his spirit was good; but he was not pledged to abstain as I was. Then on the Saturday he got moody, and said he would look for a job, but I never saw Charlie again for two weeks. He admitted he had been drinking, and he looked it.

I stuck to my pal again, and paid a registry office fee for a job he found. Charlie stayed in that job two weeks. The second pay beat him. He wrote and told me this, and said he was fed up with life.

A week after he received his quarter's remittance from England, for he was one of those unhappy drunkards that make a real trouble at home, and their rich relatives give them a chance to redeem themselves abroad—Australia for preference, because it is so far away.

Hundreds of such unfortunates are sent to Australia every year. If drink is their trouble, they hardly ever make good; but Charlie made good, thanks to the parson, and my interest in him, simply because we were interested by faith in Christ.

I think I should tell this incident. Once I managed to get Charlie a job, and I was to meet him after he had finished. We arranged a time and place to meet; when this took place we were going to a meeting where the parson would speak.

The meeting place was the top of William Street. I alighted from the tram and saw Charlie sitting on a small tin trunk in the gutter. He was very drunk. He began to make a row like a duck, even shed tears. I gave him a push and he fell backward, his

head on the pavement, his feet in the air, still on the old tin trunk. A policeman came along and landed Charlie in the lock-up, tin trunk and all. Yet Charlie was saved, and later, while I was working at Berry, his wife and child came out from the Homeland to meet him. The parson had lunch with them just before they sailed for New Zealand.

NEVER DESPAIR.

Never despair of any drunkard, but do not molly-coddle them. Hardship is the one thing that will make them think; but be ready to render practical help on the first signs of awakening decency. The drunk's complete salvation comes from some higher ideal. He must see himself as he is, crave for a greater ideal; he must see alcoholic liquors as his real enemy—a coward, and, socially and morally, a bludger living on his degradation.

When a drunkard gets the above thought into his mind, he is just as ashamed to drink as he was previously proud and eager to do so. Do not fall into the error of saying or thinking the alcoholic is WEAK-WILLED. This is entirely wrong, for the drunkard is a STRONG-WILLED person. It's the ideal of life and the outlook and outcome that are weak. The strong-willed drunkard becomes the strong-willed abstainer when he or she becomes wise to the dirty, cowardly way the liquor trade treats them. And the Governments come in for a measure of hate, as indeed they should, for the Governments, who should protect the citizens, are more interested in the smaller number of licensees and the money their trade brings them. The war is one of the results of governmental lax thinking.

MEETINGS HELPED.

While the parson remained at St. Philip's Church I never missed a meeting; also I was at the City Mission free breakfast at 8 a.m. at Millers Point. During all the meetings my mind was studying every word uttered and hymns sung. I made personal contact with those attending church and other meetings, especially so at the free breakfast and men's meetings at the Y.M.C.A. The two meetings were so different. One (the free breakfast) was for drunks; the other for young men just starting out in life. I was more at home with the drunks and failures, but I never missed a chance to learn.

A WONDERFUL AWAKENING.

Now while I was strong against alcohol I could not definitely say I was a Christian; but on one Sunday evening I was to get a pleasant surprise, and it came as all big things come, in a very simple way.

The evening service at St. Philip's started and had reached the sermon. It was on the subject of personal salvation.

Mr. W. E. Wilson a few weeks previously had told me he was praying for me. Really,

I could not understand what good that would do simply because I did not understand prayer. I thought the fight for my salvation was one for me only. I could not understand where Mr. Wilson or even Christ came in. Before I left the church that night I was to really know.

Rev. Hammond began to preach. There was a light shining directly on to his face. One of the hymns sung contained this verse:

"I heard the voice of Jesus say, Come unto Me and rest;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down thy head upon My breast.
I came to Jesus as I was, weary and worn and sad;
I found in Him a resting place, and He has made me glad."

I had heard it previously, and liked it. That night I was not only to hear it, but I was to see Jesus and to hear His voice. How it came about I do not know. I cannot remember the text, but it had something to do with the lost. The parson pictured a shepherd looking for a lost sheep; his description was very vivid, and as he progressed his words came to me as indeed from the Master, his Master. I lost sight of the parson altogether, and I could see the figure of Jesus on the Cross right in the pulpit, and I heard, not Rev. Hammond's voice, but a different voice. I flush now about 37 years after at the very thought of it. Christ that night became my Master also, and ever since I saw and heard Christ's voice I know why the parson and other really converted men and women were so emphatic in their preaching of Christ. I never questioned again the reason why Rev. Hammond was so keenly interested in those on the lowest strata—physically, morally and spiritually. It was his God-given job.

Previously I had thought that Rev. Ham-

mond was foolish in putting so much of his time into an effort that often was heart-breaking. It was his standing up to disappointment that made me desire to be a better and useful man; to take my troubles, meet them and overcome them, and I had many troubles to overcome. Another strange thing happened that night—Mr. W. E. Wilson, after the sermon, said to me, "What did you think of the sermon?" I said, "Why, I saw Christ, sir." He often recalled this in after years, and this fine businessman with a child's simple and humble mind became a great help to me right to the day he died.

What a story old St. Philip's could tell! The parson's friends—Jim Storey, Harry Banks, Dave Brookman, Maguire, Dan Gladding, Jack Probyn and a host of others, some of whom entered the Mission field, and then all of us were to get a depth charge thrown into the camp.

Rev. Hammond was to go up higher in the Master's service. He had been offered the head of the Mission Zone work. This made it necessary to leave the old church, live privately, and go from church to church holding missions. A number of the men shifted to other churches. I went to Redfern Congregational Church with Charlie Woodward and others; but when the parson came to the suburbs the congregation there saw many strange and hard-faced men among them, generally all in a bunch—they could not keep from their friend. Many converts came out at the parson's appeal at these mission meetings, and often it was my delight to take a little booklet and New Testament to the homes where the converts lived. My faith got stronger. The parson's work with the Mission Zone began to grow. Mission centres were opened, some in shops, and very interesting meetings took place. This gave the converts something to do, and was responsible for much development.

CHAPTER V.

I START TO WORK AND MAKE MANY MISTAKES.

How patient my Christian friends, especially the Parson, were with me in my humble efforts to do something in which I often stumbled. St. Paul became a great hero and teacher to me. His and Timothy's contact and experience helped me very much. Often I took Paul's and Jesus' instruction to Timothy as being personally given to me. St. Paul often said to me: "Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding IN ALL THINGS." (Timothy, 2nd chapter, 7th verse.)

MY LIFE ENLARGED.

What a change came to me after I saw, believed and determined to follow Christ! I was deeply interested in the new emotions

that FAITH IN CHRIST brought into my life. My world enlarged, and I saw the complex life around me in a different light. One definite outcome of my accepting Jesus Christ as my Saviour and friend was my seeing the misery following the fact and participation in sin of people in a very different way, and my disdain and anger developed for those who lived on those who committed sin, especially the alcoholic liquor trade, which had fattened on my own downfall, and all through the thirty-eight years I have been a Christian I have not hesitated to fight them, and I will fight them; also those that protect them and financially fatten on the trade.

If my disdain of the liquor trade has been strong, my sympathy for the victims has also grown stronger. I feel if this were not so I would be unworthy to be classed as even a

humble follower of the Christ Who was no coward. The fact that while Christ was on earth in the flesh He went about doing good also interested me, and I naturally looked to those who followed the Master for guidance and example. I was not disappointed with those the Creator put me in touch with.

MY SPIRITUAL PARENTS.

My thanks are always ascending to the God of my salvation for the human contacts He saw fit to give me in my dire extremity. I have always looked on the following two people (spiritually) as one looks on their own earthly parents: Robert B. S. Hammond and Mrs. Jewel E. Greene were my spiritual parents.

I was, indeed, lucky—if that element can be mentioned—in having such a spiritual parent as the Rev. Hammond—a two-fisted fighter against evil, a man who stooped down to see, help and educate spiritually, as well as helping materially, those who needed it.

On the other side of human nature was Mrs. Jewel E. Greene (mother of Sir Massey-Greene), who was so gracious and gentle, so thoughtful not to notice my roughness and spiritual ignorance. Yes, I was well-born spiritually, and those two people helped me to tide over my great sorrow, as I saw my previous conduct in letting down my dear mother, who, later, I found out, expected me to return until the day she died, and even on that day she insisted on my sister going out to the front gate of her home in England to see if I was coming home.

If I hadn't friends like the two I have mentioned I am certain I could not have overcome the sorrow and grief I felt, and early I accepted the promise that some day in the providence of God I would even join up with those I had lost.

WASHING DISHES.

It is, indeed, strange how one's ideas and ideals change when one accepts Christ by faith. I had no easy task in regard to those I contacted in earning my daily bread. I had some tough jobs—one, after I left Leichhardt, washing dishes in a good-class boarding house, gave me much food for thought, and a great test regarding my own new desires. I had no complaint regarding the dishes or the work, although I had regarding the humans I worked with; but I treated them all kindly, and held to the way I desired as against their way. My early months of real faith in God made me live in two worlds, and I longed for meetings and chances of learning about God.

TWO SHIPS.

One afternoon I found myself in the Botanical Gardens looking up the harbor. I loved ships and had travelled a good deal. Coming up the harbor from the Heads was a poor old coal carrier, grimy, and ugly. Then I saw a great Orient liner come around Fort Macquarie, and as they approached each

other the ships were a great contrast. I received a great lesson.

The look of the coal hulk and her grime was just like myself before I met the human friend who introduced me to Jesus Christ. In less than a year the contrast in my life and appearance was as great as the contrast between the coal hulk and the ocean-going liner.

That afternoon I had three great longings—to be good, to do good, and to develop a good faith, and early I knew I would have to have a good faith in God, to develop the other two desires.

My previous life of selfishness was not easily broken down. The Parson had to be at his best often to keep my spiritual helm "hard a port" or on a straight tack. I began to hunger to hear the voice of others speak about the Master whom I was trying to know and serve. It was this hunger that led me to do my first bit of mission work.

BREAKING NEW GROUND.

I said to Rev. Hammond one day, "When I was a Godless man I found a pub bar every night; I want to go somewhere every night to hear, see, and, if possible, help Christians." The Parson took the hint, and there and then wrote me out three letters, so that I could introduce myself to others serving Christ.

One was to a young man, Stanley Yarrington, who was in charge of the Hudson Street (Redfern) Mission Hall. I arrived at the Mission Hall after the meeting had started, and quietly I sat in the back seat. What a meeting! About sixty young chaps, most of them real toughs and larrikins, were seated about the hall. The leader, Mr. Yarrington, gave out a hymn number, and the tune was played, but the men sang a different hymn. They were noisy, particularly when the young man spoke to them.

Then some tea, cakes and bread and butter were brought forward, and the mob were all attention and active at this juncture. How they did eat! I said nothing, and could eat nothing. Then Mr. Yarrington called attention, and said he would dismiss the meeting with prayer.

THE OLD DOOR MAT.

The men again became unruly, and in the next seat to me a big hefty fellow of about 22 years pulled his hand back and, before I could check him, he threw a big crust at the praying man, and as the crust hit the young leader so I hit the fellow who aimed the crust.

The prayer stopped abruptly, and the young fellow, much bigger than I was, picked himself up off the floor. The crowd of toughs came at me. I was close to the door, and picking up an old mat heavy with dirt I faced the mob, with one hand clenched, but that mob could not lay a finger on me—some power held them back. The young man, Yarrington, came around to the door, and I slipped the Parson's introductory letter into his hand. He read it aloud to the mob facing me. One passage in the letter saved

me—that passage was: “This will introduce Mr. Jack O’Brien, an old boxer, now interested in Christian work. Please give him a good welcome.”

It must have looked strange, it was strange. I looked a pretty tough customer to be interested in Christian work, and the first outside meeting nearly knocked one of the congregation out. Mr. Yarrington asked the men to sit down; they did, still looking dangerous. Then I was asked to say a few words, still with the old dirty mat in my hand. I just said, “I am sorry things have happened as they did. I came to help, not to fight; but it was cowardly to throw bread at the man who had given you food.” Everyone was quiet, so I went to the door and put down the mat.

GOOD FROM A PUNCH.

Little did I think that from that action of mine, strange as it was, that good would result. I had really beaten the gang with one punch, for the man I hit, because he was a coward, was the big bully of his district gang, one of whom was Charlie Woodward, the Lyceum Missioner, who died quite recently.

Yes, I attended hundreds of meetings, and lived to see all the lands, including the bully I hit, become fine friends of mine, and many gave their hearts to the Master I then devoutly believed in. What wonders of grace became associated with that meeting! Outstanding were Mr. Dan Gladding and his family, who lived about 300 yards from the mission. Dan had been converted from alcohol by the Parson in an open-air meeting. What a change—the family happy, the house open to all who loved the Master they so beautifully served. Mr. Gladding drove a dray for Sandy’s paint firm, and, as Dan used to say, the horse was looked after better, the harness cleaned more often, the axle of

the dray greased regularly, the kids’ stomachs always filled, and the old woman continually happy. “Glory be to God!” he would finish his testimony with.

INCURABLES NOT FORGOTTEN.

I learned much in those small missions, and began to help a little band of workers who collected a few shillings for invalids. Mr. Johnston, Miss Schard, W. E. Wilson, and others introduced me to many who never left their rooms—incurables—a burden often to those looking after them.

The workers longed for a home where they could get nursing aid, meet others, and one day a bright idea took shape. A home was found in Cleveland Street, Redfern, right opposite the park.

This meant greater efforts, but God never let them down. The worst cases were put into the home, and how they enjoyed it!

One day Mr. Johnston asked me to go to Ryde, to the Hon. Henry Moses’ home “Wemala,” a mansion standing in many acres of ground. Giving up his home, he said to the Committee, “I will sell this home for (I think it was) £8000, and will give you half.” Having faith in God they agreed, and before long the money was found.

I was at the sale of the furniture, and the Hon. Henry Moses was called into the kitchen by me before the sale. I had found a Bible in the table drawer. He found that the cook had owned it—it was his family Bible. I said to the Hon. Henry Moses, “This kitchen as it stands would help the incurables.” He locked the kitchen door, gave me the key, and instructed the auctioneer to wipe all kitchen furniture off his list. While Mr. Johnston looked after the empty home by night, I relieved him in day time, milking the cows that Mr. Moses has also given to the home for incurables.

Yes, I saw much evidence of God’s great love in the friends He had given me.

CHAPTER VI.

IF KNOCKED DOWN, GET UP AGAIN.

Changing masters from Satan to Christ is no easy job. All would be saved if it were so; but if any sinner undertakes the change and succeeds, it is well worth it. No two experiences are alike, but Christ is the same. Always remember that in the effort to be spiritual you have to drag the old evil, physical body and material mind with you. Much happiness comes if you can overcome the many troubles facing you. I early learned this verse, and, when in trouble, repeated it:

“So into His hand went mine,
And into my heart came He;
And I walk in a light divine,
The path I had feared to see.”

PULLING DOWN AND REBUILDING.

The last chapter dealt with my first efforts to help those Christians I found

myself with in the plan for redeeming my life, and I was willing to do anything then, and I still am after thirty-eight years. I was always willing to do anything, no matter how humble the task, if it would help in anyway to put a person in touch with those who could help them in physical and spiritual matters, even God Himself.

I understood the physical or material needs best, and it took a long time and much thought, study, also many sermons delivered by the Parson and others to instil into my mind the fact of a spiritual life in myself or others. But I felt strong, even if strange, impulses gaining strength in my life; all made me hopeful of overcoming this difficulty.

I was sensible enough to know that habits covering many years’ development could not be easily overcome, at least in natures like mine. I made great progress in developing bad habits before I became, by faith, a be-

liever in Jesus Christ, and I knew it would take a long time, many years, in fact, before I could develop any chance of overcoming many of them, and some would be very hard. Some find it easier. I early decided not to trust in my own understanding, and the constant overwhelming desire of my life was to “Trust in the Lord with all my heart.”

I felt I would sooner build slowly, watching every new impulse in the building, than rush a job that would collapse when a storm came.

When I gained physical strength I had no difficulty in finding employment. This is most important. I do thank God that I was satisfied with humble jobs. The last thought in my mind was “Big things in a material way,” but I had in mind a longing to live a simple, helpful life, without the constant reproach of moral failure, which brings misery, unrest, and constant warring in one’s life.

I said it was easy for me to get work, but I often found it was wiser to throw up a job than contend with the dangers and temptations that constantly assailed me.

STARTING FROM SCRATCH.

Here are some of the jobs that came my way: Gardening, kitchen hand, door-to-door canvasser selling tea and firescreens, cutting posts and rails, groom and useful for a doctor, stovemaker, driver of a two-horse lorry delivering soft drinks, managing a laundry and restaurant, cook for cane-cutters in Queensland, and, after the gang chucked up the job through a severe boss, I drove a three-horse team, drawing the cane to the railway.

I must tell this incident: Because I was in a job that compelled me to work every Sunday, I decided to quit; church friendships were more to me than the best job I ever had, so I quit.

TOO HAPPY AND TOO HEALTHY.

Seeing a job advertised in the “Sydney Morning Herald,” I applied for it—it was for a coachman. I went to the address and found it was the undertakers, Wood, Coffill and Co. I was called into the office, and the boss looked at me. By that time, in spite of plenty of trouble and hardship, I was in great condition, ruddy of face, with an expansive smile.

The manager took one look at me after looking at my references, and said, “Young man, you won’t do for this job.” I asked why. He said, “I want a man to drive a hearse; we are undertakers—you look too happy, and too healthy.” We both laughed and shook hands. I was still laughing when I found myself in George Street, and a smart chap looked hard at me. I thought I recognised the man, and he had the same thought. He spoke to me; we had been soldiers together. The man turned out to be Captain Wilson, K.R.R.’s., then Aide to Admiral Sir Harry Rawson, Governor of New South Wales.

DRIVING THE GOVERNOR.

The strange part of the meeting was that Captain Wilson was looking for someone to

drive the State coach, and, after telling him about being turned down by the undertaker, he there and then engaged me, and believe you me I was allowed the use of my face to look happy and for smiling purposes. Having charge of the stable, I saw no alcohol came in. I left that job when the Governor left to go away.

TICKETS, PLEASE.

Then I found a job on the railway as porter, and I was very happy to find Charlie Woodward was to be in the same gang, cleaning carriages. After a few days the gang found out we were both Christians, and how they poked fun at us, especially when in our midnight meal hour we would not gamble or drink. We were on the job three weeks when the boss made both Charles and myself gangers, with charge over a gang. One regret Charlie and I had was that we had to give up the midnight Christian fellowship which was so helpful for two such young Christians. Often, while the others gambled, drank beer, cursing all the time, we too were busy praying in an empty carriage. When we became gangers in charge we received every kind of insult; but together we could afford to take no notice—our friendship helped. Because we were quiet and seemingly softies to them, their opposition and insults increased when we separated. And one night, unknown to each other, a showdown took place, and it ended in our gangs having more respect for Christians.

The incident I was in was this: When midnight came, I called a halt for supper, and we chose an empty car to eat in. While I was in charge I had to work just as the others, only my job was to see the cars were properly done. While I was having my supper one of the gang threw a bit of oily waste at me—of course at my back. I took no notice, and I expect that was a sign of weakness, for a few more pieces were thrown.

Then something heavy struck the seat I was sitting in. I still took no notice. Then every kind of insult was hurled at me; one that brought my mother into it just made me mad. Having the key to lock the doors after cars were cleaned, I moved to the end of car and locked that door, then I also locked the other, and faced the gang of five men. Knowing who had said the words, I just ordered him to put his hands up. He did, and a fight started that also soon ended. I knocked out the bully, and, warmed up, I made for the others. One jumped through a window, the others expressed their sorrow, and I looked at my watch. It was one o’clock. I blew the whistle, and we were soon at work again.

Every one of that gang respected me after that. There were no more insults or missiles thrown; all were my friends. Still, I felt I had done wrong, and had fallen short of my Master’s example; but remember, I was only a child in the faith.

Charlie Woodward, on the same night, had to fight in the same way, and he, too,

cleaned up his man, and by so doing earned the respect of his persecutors.

I stopped on the railway until my Sundays were interfered with, and I told the Parson. He said, "Let's pray about it."

I was sent to Macdonald Town station as porter.

One day, flagging the trains out and in, a train stopped, and a voice called out "Jack," and then a head appeared through a window.

CHAPTER VII.

"Upon thy bended knees thank God
for work,

Work—once man's penance, now his
high reward!

For work to do, and strength to do the
work,

We thank Thee, Lord!

"Upon thy bended knees thank God
for work.

In workless days all ills and evils
lurk.

For work to do, and strength to do
the work,

We thank Thee, Lord!"

Many jobs of work came my way,
and I gladly tackled them, always keep-
ing in mind to trust God, and especi-
ally hold fast to principles that had
foundation truths in God's teaching.
Then nothing is too humble, nothing
too hard.

ANOTHER JOB.

After a short interview with the Parson (Rev. Hammond) that night I decided to leave the railway and go back to my first love—gardening. A job was offered to me. So in the morning I saw the officer in charge of staff at Central Station, and re-signed. He was very disappointed and asked me if a change of jobs would keep me in the railway service. I told him why I was leaving—so that I could be sure of some Sundays off to go to Church. I told him a bit of my history. He, being a good Christian and an office-bearer in his Church, agreed, but said, "If you ever want a job on the railway, come and see me."

I left the Eddy Avenue Office deeply in thought. My thoughts were thankfulness to God that I had in a few years been made a man worthy of any man's appreciation, and I received a lift upward towards God, in whose hands I had placed my life. I had proved these lines to be true:

"Jesus is near, burdens to bear,
Just when we need Him most."

Then came my last visit to the pay office of the railway. Many of my porter friends I had worked with were there, and they had heard I was leaving. I came out from the office and was making my way to the street, when one of the men who had been in my gang cleaning cars came to me and said, "Jack, here's a little present from the boys,"

It was the Parson, and because the train had to move on quickly, he just shouted out: "See me to-night; I have a job for you."

Up went the green flag, and up went my heart's impulse that craved for Christian fellowship. The best jobs on railways, if the carriages were made of gold, running on a road bed of rubies, with rails made of silver, could not hold me away from God's House, or remove the desire to be a Christian from my heart at that time.

handing me a good edition of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." This book was a great joy and help to me, and the way it came gave added pleasure.

WITH MILLIONAIRES.

I was soon installed in my new job at Potts Point, head gardener for the millionaires, Mr. Walter and Mrs. Eliza Hall, at "Wildfell," their beautiful home. We had a proper understanding re Sunday. I was to have two off work in three. I felt this was a fair deal, as one male employee had to be on the premises on Sunday. We each took turn about. I had some wonderful experiences there, and when the second gardener became a Christian, and he said it was through my example, I was proud, but it was Christ's example, not mine. I was just an outspoken witness for my Master.

But I was proud that even with my faults I could influence one life. Our work together was real co-operation, and between us we improved the garden and our own lives.

I must tell this story of a little skirmish with Mr. Walter Hall: One of my duties was to milk a cow. The cow and I had become great friends; I even used to groom the animal like a prize winning horse. It was a great joke to Mr. Hall, but I told him the increased supply of milk he was getting came because I was giving the cow, a great favorite with Mr. Hall, the best attention.

One day Mr. Hall called me, and told me he was going away to Queensland for at least three months. He said: "Take every care of the cow while I am away." I did, but I was nearly sacked for doing so. For two months no rain fell, green feed was scarce, and, mindful of Mr. Hall's instructions, I resorted to feed a bit more expensive.

Mr. and Mrs. Hall came back, and all was well the first two days. A big pail of milk went to the house twice a day—seven days a week.

GOLD MINES AND COWS.

Then I was called in to see Mr. Hall. I might say now that Mr. Hall was a very sick man. In front of him was the weekly feed bills of the cow for three months. He had totalled them up, and they had averaged about 5/- a week more than usual, due to the hot dry weather. I thought Mr. Hall was going to have a fit, he was so hot under the collar. I listened very attentively to his remarks about extravagance, and then it was my turn.

I told Mr. Hall of his demand given to me, "to keep the cow in milk at all costs," and said, "You left me in charge; I had to use my judgment. Surely, Mr. Hall, the rich milk you get from the cow at this time is more to you than your Mount Morgan gold mine. Gold won't give you strength, but it should keep the cow that gives you strength."

Expecting to be fired, I said further, "Mr. Hall, in future while I'm in your employ, don't make any suggestions about how I look after the cow. The cow was placed in my care, the gold mines and other assets in your care—you look after the Mount Morgan goldmine and your other assets, and I'll look after the cow."

I had to stop there, for Mr. Hall, a big man, began to splutter, got red in face, and his body began to shake violently. I became alarmed, and rang a bell I saw on the table. Mrs. Hall and the butler came in on the run; as they did a great explosion came from Mr. Hall's mouth. I thought, "What have you done now, Jack?"

Mrs. Hall began to fan Mr. Hall's face, the butler poured out a brandy, then after Dr. Kelty had been called, Mr. Hall came round. He burst into laughter, heaving his big body the while. He stretched out his hand, shook mine heartily and said to Mrs. Hall, "I believe Jack's given me a new outlook in life, and the greatest laugh I've ever had. Raise his wages 10/- a week."

PRINCIPLE AT STAKE AGAIN.

In spite of giving Mr. Hall a new outlook in life, I was to get a shock. Mr. and Mrs. Hall had found the other men had often slipped away on the Sunday when their turn came round for duty. One day I was called in to see Mrs. Hall, and the following conversation took place:

Mrs. Hall said, "Jack, I want you to remain on duty every Sunday; you can take other week-time off." I had by then taken a class in Sunday School and helped at open-air meetings in Regent Street, Redfern, on my Sundays off.

I told Mrs. Hall of her agreement when I came to work for her. I told her of her approval of my reason for leaving the railway. I said, "We will both think over the matter and finalise on the morrow."

But Mrs. Hall said, "No, I want your answer now," also offering me more pay if I accepted. Without hesitation, I said, "No," and I was again out of a job because of my Christian principles and desire to know more of God. Not so long after Mr. Hall died, then Mrs. Hall passed away, and every employee in her employ received a very big gift, many thousands in fact, but I never regretted sticking to my principles and conviction concerning RIGHT AND JUSTICE.

After I left Mrs. Hall, she twice wrote to me to go back. I said I would if she allowed me my usual Sundays off. But she would not agree.

I began to find out that when a man sticks to Christian principles he is likely to meet trouble. But it is worth while.

"Just when we need Him most.

Just when we need Him most,

Jesus is near

To comfort and cheer,

Just when we need Him most."

I had plenty of hardships after leaving Mrs. Hall, who, by the way, became very generous to many charities. When she died she left property valued at over £1,000,000, the interest of which every year was to be used for charity. I have always in memory thanked her for this noble gift, no doubt the greatest single gift any one single person has given to charity in Australia, and the first man to manage the gift was General Finn, an old soldier, who was a great friend of my father.

FIRST HAMMOND HOSTEL.

One day the Parson (Rev. Hammond) said to me, "Jack, I'm tired of seeing men who are trying to go straight, getting away from me." I was then driving a three-horse dray, and had instructions to keep a lookout for a suitable house that could be rented, and used as a place of refuge for men.

One was soon found in Church Street, Newtown, opposite the old Newtown Cemetery. After Rev. Hammond had seen it, rent was paid, and in two days a meeting was held, and guests installed. The great attraction of the home to the Parson was that there was a fair-sized stable at the back for religious meetings. That stable played a big part in many men's lives.

CHAPTER VIII. HAVING AND GIVING.

"Keep pushing; 'tis wiser than sitting
 aside
 And dreaming, sighing, and waiting
 the tide;
 In life's sorest battle they only pre-
 vail
 Who daily march on and NEVER SAY
 FAIL!"

Someone has said: "Do not grasp at the stars, but do life's plain, common work as it comes, certain that daily duties and daily bread are the sweetest things of life."

BE ON THE RIGHT SCENT.

Half the world is on the wrong scent in the pursuit of happiness. People think it consists in having and getting and in being served by others, when happiness really is found in giving and serving others." As I began to think more deeply concerning things spiritual, I saw my own life and the human life around me in a different light.

Someone has said:

"Many a life is one long fever,
 The fever of anxious suspense and care;
 The fever of fretting, the fever of getting,
 The fever of hurrying here and there."

I soon found out I had been on the wrong track, hurrying here and there, without a set plan or real knowledge of life, then giving Satan a clear go. Endowed physically and mentally with faults, especially selfishness, I went the way those faults dictated, and, because of the great impulse developed, is there any wonder I failed as so many others have failed, especially when the material-minded financiers traded on those weaknesses and the Government backs them?

I began to study those around me in the light of my own failures, and especially did I study those who had become associated with the Parson in the same way I had through FAILURE. The study of humanity is more interesting when one is incited to study through God's word (the Bible), and God's ministers (the clergy).

It was in studying the Parson that I learnt to study myself and others. You don't need a big college to do this. The quietness of your own soul is all that is necessary if you will undertake to study. When you graduate you can help others.

The Parson, now Archdeacon Hammond, O.B.E., left St. Philip's Church to take up a more important work for the Church. He became the working chief of the society then known as "The Mission Zone Fund," a work to the Church, dealing with the poorer and weaker districts, especially touching on the social problems of the people and their need for spiritual enlightenment. He

soon improved the work. When this took place the converts, then looking to the Parson for guidance, lost their regular meeting place, for it meant the Parson went from church to church in suburbs and country, instructing, inspiring and appealing to the regular church members all over the State for their co-operation in the work of the Church in the interest of the suffering and lost in the slums of Sydney.

THE INVITE AND PHOTO.

Rev. and Mrs. Hammond lived privately, and their quiet home life was often disturbed by visits of men; but they were gracious and encouraging.

I was having a rough time, and one day I received a letter asking me to call the next day. I turned up very eagerly, to find other men there; all hard, tough cases, who had come under the Parson's influence. I will never forget that morning, and the photo taken on the porch of the cottage shown in this article helped to keep alive



the flame of friendship that was kindled in my heart by the Parson and his wife's thoughtfulness.

I often look at that photo, and think, "How came it about that the American cook (Jim Storey), the plumber (Teddy South), the engineer (George Campbell), the two business men (Mr. Smith, Harry Banks), and ex-soldier and boxer-fool (myself) were brought in personal contact, practically through the same reason (sin-failure) with the Parson." All of us were men of different tastes who had nothing in common, unless it was our failure. But God has something in common for our failures—friendship.

Someone has said: "Of all the best things upon earth I hold that a faithful friend is the best."

THE BEST FRIEND.

And a friend actuated by a love for God is the greatest friend you can have. This I have proved.

If this meets the eye of anyone who has made a failure of things I say, "Don't think of friendships in a material way." Real Christians are much greater. Think of and observe them in a Godly way. Failure cannot be met with material things. The chances are that such help and friendship will lead to greater failure.

I look back over the years since that photo was taken, and having seen all in the photo but myself pass from this world I wonder, and ask, "Why am I left alive? Why am I enjoying a measure of good health and spiritual happiness? How can I justify, repay, or show my right to live?"

Only one answer can be given: It is only by God's grace and mercy. Therefore prove yourself, show yourself worthy of His and their friendship, especially that of the morning when the photo was taken. Friendship was accepted, and now lives through the years, a help and comfort.

BEARING BURDENS.

The Parson learned one law of Christ's thoroughly, namely, "Bear ye one another's burdens," and as he preached that law unto the churches of his State mission field he did not shirk his own burdens that he had built up for himself in Sydney. Carrying a list of his rough, tough friends into the country with him, he was busy with letters to those friends whom he had influenced for good.

I used to listen for the postman's knock, as did others stopping in cheap, cheerless rooms. Having no other friends at first, the only letters I received were his, and how they cheered me on, particularly those that said, "I'll be in Sydney; come and see me."

Others also received them, and often a good number would turn up at a suburban church where the Parson was due to preach. Many of the brethren wondered as they saw our hard faces, but generally they were very kind and friendly.

I was sitting next to Dave Brookman

in church one morning, and his rich tenor voice could be heard above all the others, including a fine choir. But while every eye, including the Parson's, was on Dave, no one asked him to join the choir.

FIRST HOME OPENED.

It was the desire to have a home for proved failures who were endeavoring to be Christian successes that induced the Parson to rent a house, with a good stable in the rear, at Church Street, Newtown. That was the first of a series of homes, ending with the one now in operation at Hereford Street, Glebe.

I undertook the management voluntarily, and after putting my horses away on the job I then had, I lived at the home.

I will never forget the opening. Rent was paid on Tuesday, and a man from England, named Smith, founder of the first adult school movement, being in Sydney, undertook to be the first speaker next day. But we had no furniture, and the stable was not ready, so the Parson and I bought some lino at Winn's Limited, carried and laid it on the two bottom rooms; then I canvassed the surrounding houses for chairs and a table, which were kindly lent, and the first meeting was held. Mr. McLennon was at the keys of the borrowed portable organ, and a happy crowd of tough men were seated on the borrowed seats, listening to the Parson and Mr. Smith say the things that God gave them to say.

The Parson was particularly happy that night, as indeed he ever has been, when every adventure and investment made in God's name for sinful people had unfolded. Now, while the opening of the home was quick, results proved the adventure in faith was justified.

The old stable was eventually white-washed, the floor levelled, and a few Christian texts hung. Mr. Smith gave me a little printed card before he left that said, "God does not intend us all to be rich, powerful or great, BUT HE DOES INTEND US ALL TO BE FRIENDS."

I read that to all the neighbors as they came and received back the chairs they had loaned. We used that home well, only leaving to open a bigger one in Surry Hills. I was truly able to thank God for giving Him a chance.

CHAPTER IX.

TRUSTING AND WORKING.

Charles Kingsley said: "In such a world as this, with such ugly possibilities hanging over us all, there is but one anchor which will hold, and that is utter trust in God."

Someone else also put on record:

"Build a little fence of trust around to-day,
Fill the space with loving thoughts,
and therein stay;
Look not through its sheltering bars
upon to-morrow,
God will help you bear what comes of
joy or sorrow."

THE GREAT FRIENDMAKER.

If one thing has been proved in my mind it is "Friends will always be on hand to help a person who labors in Christ's name to do good in the Social Order." Jesus Christ showed His followers a good and perfect example. Courage and honest friendship especially did He give.

Sinners had at last received their chance, and no sinner was exempt. Service to the unfortunate is personified in Christ's demands on Christians, and how nobly a good percentage have responded down the ages.

Can any person show or tell me of any teaching or society in any social order or period since Christ lived that has done more for suffering humanity or those living on the lowest strata of human life than Christians?

FRIENDSHIP AND A STABLE.

When the house and stable in Newtown was taken over there was very little to pay rent, let alone furnish it; but a few people had begun to have faith in the Parson, and chairs, tables, beds, etc., came along. Soon every corner was occupied, the stable white-washed, floor cleaned and levelled and meetings proceeded every week. They were a great help to many, especially myself.

The bed accommodation was limited, as was the seating in the stable when meetings were held. The place was not large. Some of those meetings were remarkable. One night, after we sang a hymn, all present were surprised to see a well-dressed, set-up party enter the stable. They were given seats like any others. Then the Parson introduced a big man as the Earl of Dudley, Governor-General of Australia.

Our usual meeting method was that someone, generally the Parson, gave a talk; singing and testimony followed. It was always good; all were so close together in that stable. Great wisdom was dispensed and men were converted.

One big man was a great favorite, Mr. Jack Probyn, whose testimony was so de-

lightfully given in perfect English. With all the ability and prospects of an important life, even that of being a national figure like his forebears, he went astray, finishing up in Australia a remittance man; but coming under the influence of the Parson, he made a wonderful change, and in his spiritual comeback he, by his example and frank testimony, carried many others with him to a happy life here on earth, with the promise of Heaven for the future.

SCHOOLMATES MEET.

During the meeting Jack Probyn gave his testimony. He didn't spare himself, and when Jack Probyn told of the Love of God, it was fit for the King to hear, let alone His Majesty's servant, the Governor-General, Lord Dudley, who was deeply stirred. Jack finished speaking, sat down, and Lord Dudley stretched out his hand to Jack, and as they shook Lord Dudley said: "I seem to know you; have we met before?" Jack answered, "Yes, Your Excellency, we were at school together—Eton and Oxford." Then they talked for a good while, as they enjoyed a cup of tea.

What memories they revived! Jack's face beamed, and as they and the Parson walked arm and arm together down the road the Governor's staff followed to the waiting carriage. I thought, and I have always thought, Christ's way of life and salvation is the only solution for a New Order in this or any other human community.

If I am ever asked, and I often am, "What man's conversion was most thorough, most typical of good?" I always say, "Jack Probyn's." Jack and I had much in common. We shared a small room, and, after slipping into error a few times, his great soul seemed to pause and plan anew. Jack never made the same mistake twice; his upbringing was noble, and he was such that he could be excused if pride was uppermost in his mind as he mixed with his fellows of lesser social standing, but he was a humble soul.

A FLAG, A JERSEY AND A MAN.

When the Parson did not preach regularly in Sydney because of absence in the country, Probyn and I went to various churches—High Church of England, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist—and I was beginning to think he would swing to a church with much pomp and ceremony, and he nearly did so; but an incident happened at a meeting that gave Jack Probyn a chance to decide.

Something attracted Jack and me to the Salvation Headquarters, then in Goulburn Street. Jack liked band music, and at that meeting a fine band played. Jack was delighted, as indeed was I, but the clapping hands made Jack wince—he had not thought of that. Then a big, burly man with a flaming red jersey gave his testimony. By

the way, during a procession to the hall this man had carried the flag in front of the band. After the testimony was over, a poor, unfortunate, ragged man got up from his seat and began to walk to the door. Everyone could see he was upset. The flag-carrying-testimony-giving man saw it, and, while everyone else kept their seats, this man jumped forward and followed the ragged man to the street. About five minutes after back came the two—the ragged man weeping, the Salvation Army flag-carrying soldier beaming over with delight.

That night, as we walked to our room, Jack Probyn was silent, and after we had prayed together, Jack said, "I wonder if that drunk was really influenced by the other's testimony?" I, of course, could not tell, but we both went to sleep thinking about it. On the next Sunday evening we were outside the Salvation Army meeting place with others, waiting for the band and procession.

SAVED BY GRACE.

As they swung down Goulburn Street all eyes were on the big chap with the flag. His head erect, his flag flying in the breeze, and there by his side, head up, face set, was the ex-drunk and ragged outcast who the previous Sunday had been first impressed; and, not understanding the appeal and call, became confused, walked out, and no doubt would have been lost only the big flag-carrier saw the position, and was quick to follow up any advantage gained by his humble testimony.

HAVE YOU A METHOD?

Jack and I watched these two men week after week. We saw the rags leave the drink-cursed body as they had left ours; we saw a smile come into his face, his step became alert, and in about five weeks there he was beside the big chap, who had even let his young convert carry the flag. A great honor!

GET BUSY AND KEEP BUSY.

The above happened about two years before Lord Dudley heard Jack Probyn's testimony, and Jack and I had gained much experience. The Army meeting and the Parson

decided Jack and me on our method. We decided to be men after the Parson and the Salvation Army man's example, and Jack Probyn, until his death in Wollongong, never withheld his voice in praise and thankfulness to God for His great love and mercy in both saving and keeping him, as indeed I have been kept.

Jack Probyn became a very busy man. From a personal canvasser in an insurance company, he was promoted to a district, part of Illawarra. His voice was heard for many years, little house meetings amongst miners, big or little open-air meetings in the streets of the towns in which he found himself. If no one else could use him, he made for the Salvation Army meetings.

He made every day of his beautiful life count for something good, and his townsmen and women showed how splendid was his service, for on his sudden death, while going his cheery rounds in the streets of Wollongong, the miners who knew him put their lamps and picks away—businessmen closed their shops, little children stood sad and amazed in the street as the casket, headed by the local Salvation Army band (flag and all) marched to the grave. In Bethany, his home, his dear wife waited, for she said she would not take away the glory of the day by her outward distress, she must not be selfish.

The Parson (Rev. Hammond), Rev. Tinsley and all who knew him felt something big had left the earth when Jack Probyn passed on.

Yet Jack and I would have been lost but for Christ's love and example in the lives of other humans, especially the Parson, who showed us the true way of life.

Christ's message to His followers, if heeded, is just this: Get others to give My Father, God, a chance to make them really happy and useful that others may learn of Me and BE SAVED.

St. Paul said, "God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power THAT WORKETH IN US." Jack Probyn and I have proved this to be true after giving God a chance.

CHAPTER X.

MAKING WANDERERS HOMERS.

Grant faith that treads the stormy deep
If but Thy voice shall bid it come;
And zeal, that climbs the mountain steep,
To seek and bring the wanderer home.

Give strength, blest Saviour, in Thy might;
Illuminate our hearts, and we,
Transformed into Thine image bright,
Shall teach, and love, and live, like Thee.

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."—Gal. 6:2.

GODLY RESPONSIBILITY.

Having started a men's home, the Parson found it meant more and greater responsibility, but he never dodged that responsibility.

A chance had to be given, and the best chance possible has been always in the Parson's mind, hence the home. In all Christian social enterprises, "sorrow and joy mingle," disappointments of some days are levelled up by the joys of others. The sun is not always shining, but it is well to remember when sad or disappointed that the sun is still in the heavens. Then take up hope and your task again. The task of any Christian is many-sided if they get in close touch with those who have made sin the failure of life.

KEEPING PIGEONS.

When a young lad, a young friend of mine set out to establish a pigeon loft. How enthusiastic he was. When the loft was built, he began to buy the pigeons, and soon he had quite a lot. Of course, feed had to be bought, cleaning and a lot of other work had to be done. My friend became quite expert, and there was much pleasure in his hobby.

Of course, a time period had to be allowed before the birds were permitted to fly; but one morning a few of his friends, myself included, met at the loft, and with much ceremony the loft trap was opened and the pigeons flew out. "Would they come back?" "Would they become wanderers, and lost?" were some of the questions we asked, and we hung about the loft in turns all day to see them return. Most did, but some were lost. They had gone back to their old haunts or trapped by some other loft owner, and the young owner watched for the return of the lost birds. A blue checker or some other favorite bird gone, much trouble and loss,

but compensations made up the losses, for strange birds came down with the other homers to become resident, and so it was with the Parson's home at Newtown.

Some strange men were admitted; some of them old Satan had not left with a feather to fly with, "skinned right out" could be said of them, but the Parson accepted all the homers as they came, did his best, and left the rest to his Master, knowing full well that their only chance of happiness, even their complete salvation, was in His hands.

Yes, that first men's home brought into being many emotions. Sometimes a man would come along with a letter from the Parson; he would be admitted, then began the period of cleaning up, which, without the home, was impossible. The Parson would be delighted as he saw the new man making good; then one night as I looked around he would be missing.

"How's So-and-So?" the Parson would say when he called, and as I reported his absence his face would become sad, but when some chap continued to make good, got a job, and returned on meeting nights, the face of us all, following the lead of the Parson, would assume a happy appearance. The boy with the pigeon loft had nothing on us when our birds came back home; some a bit knocked about to be sure, but home.

Anyone who starts a home for men failures soon finds many difficulties besides the men. Most men who get into difficulties also get others, wives and children especially, into difficulty. Very few fall alone; when a man is lifted, others are generally lifted with him.

The Parson, being well aware of this, made super-efforts to place men where they themselves could help in the lifting process.

Often this could be said of men who passed through the Parson's home. Jesus was behind the unselfish effort.

"He could not be hid. All around Him would press

The sick and afflicted, and all in distress. His love so compassionate, so filled with grace,

The husband He cleaned, for a wife's embrace."

About half the men wanted to do right, the others persisted in doing wrong. Terrible mental struggles took place in many men's minds as they thought of the wrongs done to those that loved them, and those they should have loved. Sin cannot be passed over lightly.

ALONE WITH HIS DEAD.

I remember one night, after looking into

a room where the inmate was missing, going to sleep. The missing man had two weeks of splendid living; he told me he was going along well, and he looked it. About 1 a.m. I was awakened by a shout that seemed to come from the street. I looked through the window. The full moon was shining. On the other side of the street was a six-foot fence that surrounded the old Newtown cemetery.

KEEPING SINFUL MEN.

As I looked over the scene I saw a man's figure sitting on one of the graves about 150 feet from my window. It was a fairly cold night, but I had no thought of the cold, and as the man in the graveyard then walked up and down, I detected quite clearly that it was the man who was missing from the room in our home.

I went downstairs and crossed to the fence, and called out to the man. He made no reply, so I climbed the fence and went toward the man, whom I found very distressed.

I put my arm around his shoulder, a habit I had learnt from the Parson, who did the same to me when I was in great trouble.

Sitting on that grave kerbing I listened to the unfortunate man's story. It was a story that helped me to understand the aim of the Parson, and behind that aim was the love of God.

The man when in our home was only 150 feet away from the grave of his mother and his wife. With tears running down his face he told me how unfair he had been to his mother when a young man, although she then needed his help. She passed on, leaving her son unsaved; Satan had taken possession.

DULLING CONSCIENCE.

When his mother died, he had a wife and young baby, and the man began to drink very heavily. This led to separation, and he and his wife parted two months before she was due for confinement. Six months after he learnt that his wife had died during her confinement, the baby also.

Then followed years of debauchery, and one night he was led into a little meeting in our stable. That night he determined to "Give God a Chance." There was a vacant

bed, and the Parson gave it to him. During the two weeks he was splendid and he made inquiries about his little boy who had been put on the State, and during the inquiries he found out that his wife and other child when they died had been buried with his mother, just 150 feet from his bed in the men's home. He made efforts to reach his room, but distress seized him, and for hours after he climbed the fence he sat on the grave of those he loved. "His sins had found him out," while he was making a splendid effort to get back to decency.

He had been very near to self-murder that night, and I feel sure it was God Himself that directed his moans to me, compelling me, although very tired, to go to the man in the cemetery. After much persuasion he climbed over the cemetery fence with me, and I pulled his mattress into my room, for I could not trust him that night. Here we were two units who had made failure helping each other. We knelt down together, and we knelt down many times after.

Many months after I left as cook with a gang of cancutters, and in that gang was the man who had climbed the fence of the old cemetery with me. He was great, but he never found his son; he had missed his chance of happiness.

But the Parson, because the Saviour had claimed his life, had passed on the saving power and example to unfortunate men, sufficient to overcome the greatest sorrow and loss.

It is strange that this power of love is so little understood amongst those in trouble, but we two men in the cemetery felt it, and understood. In Isaiah 25:4 we read: "For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in their distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall."

If this reaches the eye of any person in trouble, even if the trouble is your own making, don't despair without hope; and to Christians I say you are hope-raisers. Go to it! You will never regret.

Words of comfort, fitly spoken,

To the weary and oppressed,

Fall like dew upon Mount Hermon,

And the fainting are refreshed.

Always keep in mind that "It's your job to get others to give God His chance."

CHAPTER XI.

A WAY IS FOUND IN THE CANEFIELDS TO SERVE THE MASTER.

Thirty-four years ago the Queensland canefields were a tough old place to work in. It is much better now. In my humble way I tried to help men, because Christ helped me. I stopped weeping and became a singer.

"A singer sang a song of tears and the great world heard and wept,
For he sang the sorrows of fleeting years and the hopes which the dead past kept;
And souls in anguish their burden bore, for the world was sadder than before.

"A singer sang a song of cheer, and the great world heard and smiled,
For he sang of the love of a Father dear, and the trust of a little child;
And souls that before had forgotten to pray, looked up and went singing along the way."

GETTING SUGARCANE.

Ever go canecutting? If not, don't go, unless you are tremendously strong, physically, mentally, spiritually, and a good mixer amongst tough workers, who perhaps while the cutting lasts have more to put up with than any other manual workers. Jesus and His friendship can help canecutters.

When I was worrying over a certain problem working out in my life, the proposition of going as cook to a gang of young adventurers came my way, and after much thought I accepted, although I was sad at leaving the Parson even temporarily.

I reasoned things out that people had to have sugar in their tea, cakes, and many other things; also as the colored men from the Islands had been deposed from the fields, white people were needed to help the white farmers who grew the cane and gather it in.

Then three of the eight men in the gang had given up alcohol through the Parson's appeal, and my example. Before accepting the job of cook the gang and I discussed a plan of campaign. We decided to pool our earnings, I as cook to receive an equal share.

The last meeting of the gang was held in the Men's Home, and, as one man said, because I was a Christian, as well as a boxer, I was to be the manager.

I promised the Parson I would be back to hold his coat again in about six months, and a happy party of nine men met on the Central Station, each having a ticket to Brisbane. We started our adventure.

We arrived in Brisbane, and had to wait seven days for a small boat going to Bunda-

berg, Queensland; trains did not run through then. We had very little money, and that meant cheap accommodation. In those days, thirty-four years ago, there was no Hotel Canberra containing 400 rooms, with no grog doorstep to trip one up. Booze and accommodation should be separated. I soon found out why the chap had picked me for manager. The fact I was a Christian and a boxer played a big part in that trip.

I was given full play, and after one man had a lapse (drink) it was decided my room should be the store for luggage, and my pocket was to hold any money not needed for immediate purposes.

CHRIST IN ACTION.

The men had no place to meet each other, so I suggested to the manager of the Y.M.C.A. that he permit the men to use their reading room. This was done, and the gymnasium was thrown in to make good weight.

This was a fine Christian service by the Y.M.C.A., as the boat did not sail for a week. Later two of the men joined the Y.M.C.A. because of the Brisbane kindness. At last We arrived in Bundaberg, and I was still in charge of the men's money. The people were not ready for the men to start cutting, so I had to fix the men up in the town for five days. We didn't have much money, but a chap told me if I saw Mrs. McKenzie at the Christian Mission, she would no doubt put us up. She did, and again a Christian agency was foremost in the help line.

Giving God a chance had good results in tough old Bundaberg, and the mission showed me God was keeping His promises. Christians get things right.

God hath not promised skies always blue,
Flower-strewn pathways all our lives through;

God hath not promised sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain.

But God hath promised strength for the day,

Rest for the labor, light for the way,
Grace for the trials, help from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love.

At last we arrived at the cane plantation. We were housed in huts, had supper, and then we all knelt down at my—"the manager's"—request, to thank God for His care. I don't know what the others thought, but as I uttered a simple prayer of thanks the chap who had such a sad time in the cemetery put his arm on my shoulder, and we were drawn closer together. Prayer is a great draw card. Two days after we were given tents, pots, pans and rations, and we were soon on the job.

A GOOD START.

How enthusiastic those men were, as they sharpened their cane knives, while I began cooking their first meal. The first thing I cooked was a good cup of tea, and I was given praise for it. Said I: "Boys, wait until I hand out the hard tack, then see if you have any praise." They got some of the hard tack in just one hour and a quarter. I said many prayers for guidance, and the men helped themselves to a good meal.

As they sat at the bush table I stood at the head, and no man started to eat until I had thanked God for His goodness. It was wonderful how those hard cases responded, and I am sure in the heart, conscience and soul of every human being there is a desire for God that only needs some simple but real instruction to develop a hunger that will nourish every avenue of their life. Their spiritual habilitation follows, with its new life, new motives, and new ideals. Giving this instruction is the greatest adventure for good on this old sad earth.

Ruskin said, and he's right: "He only is advancing in life whose heart is getting softer, whose blood is warmer, whose pulse is quicker, and whose spirit is entering into loving peace.

In the morning the men had a good breakfast, took their lunch with them, and soon they were swinging their knives into the cane. The men were all new at the work. They came back at night to a good supper, their hands a bit cut up with the thrash, and very tired but hopeful. The next day all the men were ready, but some order from the head made a gang of triers mad; and, in fact, a large number turned the job in, and after hearing the complaints one even higher up said he (the manager) was wrong.

I urged the men to sleep on it, and that night after supper I walked eighteen miles to the head office at the mill. It was a tough journey. Once as I crossed a narrow bridge over a river, 30 feet high in places, made of rails and sleepers, I thought my end had come. I heard a cane train approaching, and if it had come on to the bridge I would have had to hang underneath until it passed. I heard the train stop as I was in the middle of the bridge, and I crossed to the other side just as it started again. How I prayed on that bridge, and after! I certainly gave God a chance, and He helped me, for on my way back I rode on the same train, and the driver said he stopped to pick up his cap that had blown off.

When I explained my mission at Head Office, they telephoned to re-engage the men on new work; but, in spite of this, when I got back half my gang had left, and the other half, with other men, were going to a cane farm, Buss Bros., outside Bundaberg.

BACK TO HORSES.

I returned all the pots and pans, and with only one man of the gang at my side—the chap who was in the cemetery—I took a job driving a three-horse cane team. The other chap took some job in the mill, where after the crushing we met again. He was giving God a chance.

I found much experience on the canefields. Men worked in rows, and there was much keen competition. The men were paid so much a ton. They first cut the stick at the bottom, then with a downward motion they cleaned the leaves on one side, then the top was cut, then the other side the thrash (leaves) were removed. The clean stick was then thrown in a row behind them.

FINGER-STALLS AND LINT.

I often heard a curse, and saw a man's fingers bleed, the sharp edge of leaf cutting it. The men were very careless as a rule, and bad wounds became festered. I saw my chance, and I bought a few yards of strong linen, also some tape. I washed the linen, cut it into pieces large enough to make a good sized finger-stall, then I sewed a tape on. I also bought some lint and iodine. In those days there was no employees' insurance, and it was every man for himself. I thought I would break that rule, so armed with twenty-four finger stalls, lint, and iodine, I went to the cutters on Monday morning and I showed the boss my scheme. He was pleased, and called the twenty men up while I unfolded my idea, or rather God's idea.

I told the men to first be careful and not cut themselves, but if they did to go to the box, put iodine on the cut, a piece of lint on after, then finish the job by tying the finger stall over the lot. The tape would stop the bandage coming off.

CHRIST IS LIFTED UP.

That simple interest gave me a standing with the men, and as the days passed each man, particularly those who cut themselves, thanked me, and all were my friends. They even helped me to get linen and make more finger-stalls.

While I was there no one had to leave through bad hands, for at camp fire meetings I made every part of their bodies and their souls look more important. I hit booze hard also, for from voluntary statements I found the majority were forced to take on the tough work because of unreliability in city jobs through booze. Christ was always in those meetings.

I longed to see my old gang friends, and left the job with many regrets, but not before appealing to the men to give God a chance. My steps were turned toward Buss Bros.' plantation, near Avondale, and I walked many miles to get there, but it was all worthwhile. Those of the gang who were still there gave me a great reception, and I was given a job cane cutting.

CHAPTER XII.

GOD'S SHOULDER IS UNDER A GOOD MAN'S BURDEN.

When God cuts off the shoots of our interests it is that we may graft on our hearts the interests of others.

You're not hard up when your purse is flat,
And your trousers frayed like an old door-mat;
You're not hard up when your bills fall due
And you haven't a dollar to see you through;
You're not hard up till you see the day
That you haven't a cheerful word to say.

But you are hard up and in a sorry way
If you haven't a cheerful word to say;
If nothing on earth appeals to you
And you can't see charm in the skies of blue.
And you are hard up if you've reached the end
And can say in truth that **YOU HAVE NO FRIEND.**

Jogging along the road between one plantation I had left and the one (Buss Bros.) I hoped to work at, thoughts came to my mind such as: "Will the boys of the gang be glad to see me?" "How are they?" "Can I still be a help to them?"

Coming to a small store about a half-mile from the plantation, I rested on the verandah. The store also acted as post office and savings bank. Making inquiries about the plantation, the men who worked there, and those who owned the plantation, the answers gave me a good impression.

This small store, as hundreds of others all over the country, is rendering a good service; unfortunately they are hampered by the close proximity of a pub. The pub, store and bank and the men on the plantation played a big part in my life while at Buss Bros. Someone has said, "I would not give much for your religion unless it can be seen—lamps do not talk, but they do shine."

As I walked from the store to the plantation office I prayed much in my humble way. Although only a few years had passed since I accepted Christ's standard and way of life, one thing I knew—our influence depended not so much on what we know, upon what we do, but upon **WHAT WE ARE.**

Every now and then I pause and think on those words.

And tramping up a hill to the plantation office that midday of a certain Saturday, thoughts crammed my brain and I was ready

for any job that came my way. At last the sheds, dining room, office and other out-houses came into view, and from that angle I was satisfied, especially when I went to the big kitchen to get some boiling water for a billy of tea. A cook and two offsidiers were in the kitchen, and they said, "Don't worry about hot water; stop and have dinner with the boys."

Even as the cook uttered those words, "the boys" could be heard coming from work, about 80 of them. They had been working in frosted cane, which compelled them to burn the thrash before cutting, and each cutter looked like a South African native. I sat on the step of one row of huts as the men went to their rooms to clean up, and not one man spoke to me, although they gave me a very friendly nod.

Making my way to the dining room I sat near the door, watching each face intently, looking for someone I knew. A short time after taking up my stand I heard a laugh and it was one of my old gang. They (five of them) had found their niche, and they unburdened themselves to me. The cook placed me at a table with them, and there, in that plantation dining room, I had a very happy time, enjoying to the full their **FRIENDSHIP**, and I have seldom met or seen such mirth and I longed to be on the pay-roll more for that reason than any other.

After dinner I sat with the gang, and one of them slipped away to interview the working boss, who put me on the pay-roll without seeing me, not knowing this until a cane knife and bunk were given me.

Mr. W. E. Wilson once wrote to me because the Parson was troubled about me. In that letter were these lines, and while I did not know them when at the cane plantation, they were appropriate:

"The day will dawn, however dark the night;
The right will win, however fierce the fight;
The end is sure, however far from sight—
be brave.

The road will brighter grow throughout its length;
The load will lighter grow through added strength;
Peace, victory and joy will come at length—**BE BRAVE.**"

CHRIST ON THE JOB.

We strolled about the place, all of us going to the store; but not much business was done—it was not a pay Saturday.

On the Sunday morning I got out my linen, tapes and lint and proceeded to make some finger-stalls. I reasoned it out, "The

finger-stalls worked at the other place; they ought to work here."

The old gang came round to know what I was doing. Some could show me wounds. I had others inquiring. Honestly, most men could not understand my interest, but they were soon to feel it. The working boss came round on hut inspection, and he, too, inquired about the stalls. He had no doubt it would work, as he told me men had to quit work through neglected cuts.

THE FAITHFUL FEW.

Sunday afternoon came round; most men rested on their bunks. I was thinking of doing the same, when I heard the strains of a hymn. I moved in the direction of the music and found five people—three women, including Mrs. McKenzie, and two men, one of the men being Ted Cranston, or "Ted the Snag," as his old drinking and gambling friends in Newcastle and Sydney called him.

Hardly a person left their bunks, but on my appeal the five of the old gang who had stayed at the Mission while in Bundaberg came around with myself; that made eleven. Hymns were sung, prayer offered up, and "Ted the Snag" gave his testimony. No one else came round. Mrs. McKenzie and Ted Cranston asked me to say something. I had never been a coward in a physical way. At first I refused, then feeling ashamed, to save my face, I agreed to sing, and the hymn I chose was "Lead, Kindly Light." In one of the rooms I heard a chap say, "It's the bloke that's making the finger-stalls," and, while not a great singer, the interest of the men was won, because I was interested in them. Heads popped out of the windows, some came to the doors; others came round from the other unseen verandahs, and soon we had a good crowd—at least fifty.

At the men's request I sang a second hymn, one with a good swing. At least two dozen hymn books were accepted by the men and a real free and easy meeting took place.

At the end of my singing one chap called out, "What about the finger-stalls?" and that gave me one of the greatest chances of my life up to then.

SPEAK JUST A WORD.

Beginning something like this: "Perhaps you men think I'm a mug to go to any trouble and expense to help you. Well, I'm not worried about what you think, but I am worried about what I do and am. Four years ago I wouldn't or couldn't have given you a shirt button. I was only thinking of myself. I had nothing to give; old 'Smuttery Face' had everything—booze got the most of it." I told them of the Parson and of the

Master he served. How I had altered my ideas and manner of life. "I cannot give you what the Parson passed on to me, but I can give you a **FINGER-STALL**. That is in my power. While on this plantation I want to be your friend, and I hope you'll be mine. You may not understand my simple ways, but I will give you my word, your happiness will be linked up with mine. If I can stop the slightest pain in your body and soul, let me do it."

A fine young ex-school teacher took those words down in shorthand. Alcohol had beaten him. He was one of my greatest pals at Buss Bros., and he became a teacher again; better still, he became a sober man, and a Christian. When I passed through Queensland in 1919 I found him, and stopped in his house. He was then the headmaster of a good school. The men took up a collection, and the Mission people went back home quite happy.

PAIN AGAIN RELIEVED.

Monday morning, hard work, plenty of banter about finger-stalls, but by 10.30 smoko three men had been attended to. In two days eleven men were helped on the field and at night when home.

On the third day the boss had me set apart as first aid man, and when we cut out in 10 weeks he told me he would continue the same service, and I was told there would always be a job for me.

PUBLICAN OUTWITTED.

One thing I was awfully proud of—the first pay Saturday came round, and three days before Saturday the licensee of the pub had picked a team to play cricket. A number of drinkers (locals) were in his team; the plantation team held only men (regular workers) at Buss Bros.

I lost no time, and at the Friday evening meal I stood in my seat, and pointed out who the two teams were; no cane-cutters in the team.

It set them thinking, especially when I pointed out there were no matches on days other than pay days. "Anyhow, men, use your heads, for myself I'm going down to the Government Savings Bank. The publicans will bank none of mine, after giving me a sour stomach." For hard working men I have never given greater service, and at smoko next day (cricket day) they asked me questions. Then one of the regular drinkers previously on these occasions also spoke, and he told them his testimony. It was the ex-school teacher, whom booze had beaten; he had turned.

Only two canecutters went to the pub. My motto since that day has been: "Make every day of your life count for something good."

CHAPTER XIII.

WHERE TO, SHIPMATE? HOW'S YOUR COMPASS?

Each of us is bound to make a little circle, in which we live. What's your circle? There are souls there; you can help or mar.

"One small life in God's great plan,
How futile it seems as the ages roll,
Do what it may, or drive what it can,
To alter the sweep of the infinite whole!

A single stitch in an endless web,
A drop in the ocean's flow and ebb,
But the pattern is rent where the stitch is lost,
Or marred where the tangled threads have crossed;
And each life that fails of the true intent,
Mars the perfect plan that its Master meant."

—"Gems."

Remember circumstances are beyond the control of man; but his conduct is in his own power.

MAKING HOME.

As the six of the old gang left Buss Bros., Avondale, we drew each other's attention to the fact that it was eight months since we left Sydney. Each one had a note of victory in his thoughts, and the victory, coming after trouble and hard work, made the victory all the sweeter. We arrived in Bundaberg and found the town full, for many canefields had cut out. We could not get accommodation for all in one place. The Mission was full. So we split up, and then, at my suggestion, we visited the Savings Bank, and placed most of our money there—a wise step.

To-day, in any town the good old Commonwealth Savings Bank exists, and transfers can be made from one branch to another. With nothing else to do we walked down the town, and early in the day we saw the pubs were going to have a good time at the expense of a great crowd of hard-working men. Even then drunks were everywhere. I felt sad knowing what great chaps they were.

Mrs. McKenzie said they were holding open-air meetings every night outside a big pub, in the centre of the town. I was at the spot early, and that night one of the greatest meetings I have ever seen took place, and Satan did not have it all his own way.

Mrs. McKenzie was one of those Christians who did God's will wherever she found herself, then she left the rest to Him, but always she was working. At 7.15 p.m. a little group of six, with a good light and organ, took up their stand. Four of my gang made

the number ten. On the first musical strains, men came down the street, also out of the pubs. Some brought their beer with them. The pub at the corner where we were did a big trade; pub closing was then 11 p.m., and some more.

No police being around drunks were numerous in and out of the pubs. After a prayer, and two hymns, Mrs. McKenzie said a few words. The men around the ring were all attention. Ted ("The Snag") Cranston then gave a talk, and he was inundated with good-natured banter.

SATAN OUT-PUNCHED.

One man then became objectionable and insulting. Then a remarkable thing happened. A short nuggety man pushed through the ring, making straight for the chap who was insulting the speaker, and before anyone could stop him he hit the nasty one on the jaw, and number one casualty was registered.

The man being unconscious I hurried to his help, and he was carried to the yard of the pub, a bucket of water was produced, and his face was soused with it until he revived. He said he had no idea what happened, but all others had no doubts, the chap known as "Nugget" had done the trick.

"Nugget" was to repeat the dose on another bully before half an hour had passed, and by the end of the meeting "Nugget's" score was four, and on each occasion the victim was carried to the pub yard and revived.

Old Ted Cranston called on me to speak at a time when at least 300 tough men, some drunk, at least 100 with pots of beer in their hands, were standing around.

WANDERERS.

I first sang a hymn, "Where Is My Wandering Boy To-night." It acted like magic, hardly a sound could be heard, and when I called on the crowd to sing the chorus they responded so heartily that men even forgot their beer. We must have sung that chorus twenty times, and it certainly brought the scoffers up with a round turn.

My testimony contained these words: "Men, I once drank the same alcoholic muck that takes your senses away. I had about ten years of it. I had been a soldier, and fair boxer, had roamed the world, and at 31 years I was stranded in Sydney, as some of you will be stranded in Bundaberg, if you don't stop drinking. With your money you can make the pub bright, but in doing so you are making your own life and home dark and miserable."

A woman on the top pub verandah called out, "Don't shout so loud or you'll wake my baby."

I hadn't looked up before, but on seeing the woman with a baby in her arms I said I was sorry. "But, madam," said I, "if you lay the baby down on its bed in your room it will not be disturbed." Then an inspiration came to me and I said, "I wonder how many of you men have babies, or little children. I know most of you come from Brisbane, and Sydney, and some of you have spent a lot of your money already. I want to give the publican's baby a fair deal, but I also appeal to you to give your wives and babies a fair chance to benefit by your hard work."

There was dead silence, and a slight cheer went up. I remember roaring out, "Like me, men, you were not made for failure, but for victory. Booze means failure, and you know it."

Every time I tried to stop I was urged on, and with poems, bible texts, from the Parson's New Testament, I was able to keep going. We had two more hymns, and by the time the last prayer was offered in dead silence, there must have been five hundred canecutters and mill workers present.

I went with the Mission workers to their rooms, and there I was offered a job in the town by one of the councillors.

As I walked the streets next day many men stopped me. Not one had an unkind word, and one chap said, "I'm sure you stopped many men drinking last night." After Bundaberg I thought of these words, and would like readers to also think of them and take courage:

"They might not heed me, yet they might;
I'll let my heart and voice be just in sight.
A smile, or word so small as mine, might be
Precisely their necessity."

A word uttered in Christ's name and spirit, as in my own case, can save the most hopeless.

On the third day the rest of the gang and self, joined by the cemetery man, decided to go back to Sydney. We had to wait three more days for a boat to Brisbane. Each night found us all at the open-air meeting, but they were much quieter than the first; converts were made.

Little "Nugget," who knocked out four interjecters, and I became great pals. He was an Irishman, with no religion, as he said, in his make-up, but he believed in fair play. Before leaving Bundaberg I got him to give up drink. When I saw he really had done

so, I took him to the business man who offered me the job, and "Nugget" was started. The business man continued to strengthen "Nugget." No more knockouts. I received letters from him for years, and he became a great helper in the Mission, and they told me in a letter that "he had no punching act now, only friendly help and financial aid."

Ella W. Wilcox once wrote:

"Do you wish the world were wiser?
Well, suppose you make a start
By accumulating wisdom
In the scrap-book of your heart."

I often look back to the Bundaberg days, and the days getting back to Sydney were amongst the greatest. On the boat packed with returning canecutters I was able to break into many a man's life. Result: many a skeleton was thrown overboard, many a pound was saved for some wife. There was a liquor bar on board, but very little business was done.

All the gang but two were returning to Sydney. One found work in a mill as a regular hand; he joined up with a band of Christians headed by Young Bros., and the last I heard of him was: "He, too, was giving God a chance."

THE LOST SHEEP.

One who never came back left Bundaberg on the first break. He reached Brisbane. Getting work he started to live fast. The result: he suicided about two years after. Alcohol and lust claimed another victim. I feel sure if this young man had stuck to his job with us he would be alive to-day. In my life I always thought that God put me in that canecutting gang. I learnt how to analyse difficulties, troubles and temptations under a different life and light. I was put on my mettle away from the Parson and other friends. Also, I saw the troubles of other men. I felt much sweat, also much pain and disappointment, but I never had any doubts. God was there and would help if I did my part. Humans are like ships.

"My barque is wafted on the strand by
breath divine,
And at the helm there rests a hand other
than mine.

One who was known in storms to sail, I
have on board;
Above the roaring of the gale I hear my
Lord."

I saw God in the canefields, and in some part of every day since.

CHAPTER XIV.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT SORROW; LEAVE IT WITH GOD.

With severe pains goading my body, and the knowledge that in less than two hours I will be in hospital, this does not hamper my spiritual understanding, or hinder in the slightest way my belief in, and love for, God, or hope for my fellow man. I write simple, because Christ's salvation is natural, therefore simple.

Long years ago, in sorrow and alone, These words I read and clasped them for my own:

"God never does, nor suffers to be done, But what thou wouldst thyself, couldst thou but see

The end of all events as well as He." Suff'r'r, I pass the message on to thee.

BACK HOME.

When booking our passage to Sydney the clerk said, "You will be in time to see the American Fleet enter Sydney Heads. Our boat is timing her arrival early in the morning, and will wait in line with the other ships to act as a guard of honor."

We had read of the big Fleet's coming, and we were all eager to see it. We reached the Heads before daylight, and found many other ships there. People from Sydney had paid a big price so that they could view the Fleet as it entered.

Each ship was fully decorated, and one wag in our gang said, "It's very good for them to welcome us back like this."

Gradually the dawn came, then it was seen that great crowds of people had taken up vantage points on every piece of land overlooking the harbor, and boats were crowded. Every eye was strained as the crowd looked seaward, and soon little blotches of smoke in a row could be seen, and from that moment the excitement became intense. Gradually the Fleet came into view, and a magnificent sight it was.

The Australian merchant marine made a great show as, in two lines fully decorated, the U.S.A. Fleet of (I think) twenty ships passed through the lines, then through the Heads, to drop anchor in their appointed places.

Little did the people of Australia and U.S.A. think that, about thirty-four years after, great numbers of American troops would be scattered over Australia at real battle stations, and their warships in battle defending our shores against our common enemy.

Thirty-four years after I stood on the ship's deck and watched the American Fleet arrive, I look back, and I am definitely positive that national sin, such as WAR, is, like in-

dividual sin, just plain DUMB SELFISHNESS, and the results of war—death, pain, sorrow, waste of God-given necessities—are just the result of national power drunkenness that breaks out as foolishly as an individual alcohol drunkard, and continues as long as the nations or individuals keep up the rotten habit, and that means until they are broke—morally, physically and economically. Unfortunately all suffer, including the innocent. You can root, cheer, wave flags, shout victory, if the other nation gives in before you do.

But it will avail you nothing, unless at the end of the killing, maiming and waste, peace and goodwill is the principle behind the nation's efforts, especially towards those who had to give in first.

The end of the World War came about because Germany and her Allies were broke, just as my last bout of drinking and squandering made me weak and penniless. You might say, "But you are only an individual." My reply is, "That each nation is made up of individuals." War is POWER-DRUNKENNESS, and the nations which partake of it must suffer, WILL SUFFER, and continue to suffer until the sin is dissipated, and, like the individual drunkard (myself, for instance), we look to a higher power, even God the Creator Himself.

I have proved this. I have seen others prove it. History also tells that national leaders have proved it, and we, the Allies, and the Nazis, will have to prove it. Thank God they can if they wish. GIVE GOD A CHANCE.

GOD IS NOT MOCKED.

If His hand in wisdom closes every avenue there is
To the service you would render, don't forget the work is His.
Do not fret and lose your patience, if He bids you sit and wait;
In His own kind loving manner He will open another gate.
If He shuts you up to silence and the folding of the hands,
It may be that in His furnace He is burning off your bands;
And when all your gold is molten in His crucible of flame,
He will lead you into Service that will glorify His name.

Be sure of this: You can't beat the love, truth and wisdom of God by refusing it, and after each war, especially this war, all the nations' futures depend on the three principles—Love, Truth and Wisdom. I have strayed from my simple story in which "Giving God a Chance" made me do what I have said individuals and nations must do.

There is no other way out of our difficulties. Why not accept the only way?

When every ship in the American Fleet had dropped anchor, all the merchant ships in line entered the Heads. A beautiful sight as slowly each ship nosed its way through a fleet of small bedecked craft, which, amidst wild cheering, surrounded the warships.

Bo'sns were piping the ships' orders, especially for those on first shore leave to parade.

Gradually our ship made her way to the berth appointed, and those who were left of the gang stood together on the deck waiting to go ashore. How keen and happy they were!

THANKING GOD.

I thought of the many incidents that happened since we left Sydney, about eight months previously. Just before the gangway was lifted on to the boat the Cemetery Man said, "What about a prayer, so that we can all thank God for our success." I agreed, and knelt down on the deck. As I did so the rest of the gang, and some others, knelt also.

I must have seemed strange to those who have no idea or who are casual about God. Amidst luggage and sticks of sugar cane that most passengers had, I thanked our Heavenly Father for His care, guidance and safe delivery. If ever I was sure there was a Heavenly Father who had wisdom, love and mercy greater than humans it was on that ship.

It did not finish there, for, because of the earnestness of the Cemetery Man, I took up with the Government the man's son who had been put on the State because of the father's drunkenness.

Moreover, the couple the boy was assigned to agreed with the father that he would live with them, or, sadly they said, they would agree if the State was willing to give up every claim to him.

The home was a clean, godly, Methodist home, and on my advice the father for the

present agreed to live with them. Many a time the Cemetery Man and the rest of the family were seated in the old York Street Hall, and they grew up a crowd of God-rearing people, who, although poor, were happy and spiritually prosperous. GIVING GOD A CHANCE always pays, even if you are not financially able to subscribe to War Loans.

When I landed from the boat I got a cab (no taxis those days) and made for an address I was going to stay at. Some Christian friends were soon around to see me, and it was a happy time, and, believe me, there was no alcohol needed to make us happy and friendly.

That night I slipped away to see the Parson, and how pleased I was. The American Fleet did not concern us. More important things were discussed, and thirty-four years after—that's a fair period of test—what we discussed has turned out good. How do I know? I am not at war with a living soul, and amongst my friends are hundreds of men and women I have rubbed shoulders (and souls) with, and in some humble way we are giving God a chance. We have in some degree learned a lesson—just a natural lesson. The following words show life really is a personal matter:

I have to live with myself and so I want to be fit myself to know,
I want to be able, as days go by, always to look myself in the eyes.

I don't want to stand in the setting sun and hate myself for the things I've done,
I will not know the pangs of shame if I live clean, fight clean and play the game.

Giving God a chance is the greatest sporting game in this world of humans. To play the game you are offside unless you think, not what has happened to myself to-day, but what has happened to others through me, and it's a very sick man who says so, for I will occupy a hospital bed within one hour.

CHAPTER XV.

STILL MOVING UPWARD.

Last week I wrote under the difficulty of great physical pain. This sent me to hospital in the Western Suburbs. After a week's rest, treatment and splendid medical skill, especially the God-given X-ray, I am able to go home, where I write this in bed. The doctors say I need an operation. The pain having left, and, knowing exactly the trouble, I give God another chance in faith to heal without an operation. He has done greater things for me, for which I am glad.

I've found a joy in sorrow, a secret balm for pain,
A beautiful to-morrow of sunshine after rain.
I've found a branch of healing near every bitter spring,
A whispered promise stealing o'er every broken string.

SAME OLD CITY.

Eight months' absence from Sydney made no difference in the appearance of the city—the rush of people, young and old, backwards and forwards; the drunks going in and coming out of pubs and wine bars; the fellows with a vacant stare standing at each corner—all were still there. I was in no doubt or in any danger from my old enemy, alcohol; but I was again out of work, though I had no fear about getting a billet. Being a Christian makes for confidence.

After a short holiday I decided to take a job with the Arthur Rickard Land Agency, and I was on my way to Wollongong to help carve up the Rosemont Estate, near the town. The fact that Jack Probyn was there helped me to decide. The men from Sydney were camped in tents, and we cooked for ourselves. Some meals we had in town.

For many months one of my delights was to visit Jack and Mrs. Probyn, then attend church services with them. Jack and I in the few years were looking good, and feeling the benefits of our faith in God.

One Saturday night—pay day for the local miners—Jack invited me to a fine open-air meeting in the main street of Wollongong. The crowd was big, and the drunks numerous, but a good sprinkling of Welsh miners made the singing very good.

I think it was Jack Probyn who introduced me to the crowd as the next speaker, and he said I had been a soldier and boxer. This led to an incident on the job on which I was engaged, which I will explain.

FORCED TO FIGHT.

There was quite a fast local sporting lot mixed in on the job. One was supposed to be a good local boxer.

There was quite a lot of excitement on the Monday, for the locals brought with them a set of boxing gloves.

When the ganger called lunch one of the Wollongong sports threw out a challenge that I meet the local boy just in a friendly spar. I was then thirty-six, the challenger twenty-five. I was faced with a problem. Making every kind of excuse, I tried my best to stop it; but I was met with the old slur: "All you Christians are the same—just yellow."

This riled me, so I said I would be glad to meet my young friend after we finished on the job that night.

A chap named Atkinson was ganger of my gang, and he was very anxious about me. I told him not to worry. The excitement was great, and some betting took place; but the other chap was the favorite. Being a Christian, they thought I was a softie.

We finished at 5 p.m., and all the lads gathered round. In front of the whole gang I said I would be more pleased to pray with, and not box with, my friend. I was again called "yellow," so that settled the matter. I was on my mettle. We both took our shirts off, and the gloves were adjusted. The boss was the referee. Being on good level turf was in my favor—at least I thought so—and as my opponent rushed in I stepped on one side, and, doing this often, they roared out, "Why don't you fight?" I said, "All in good time." Just then a Mr. Byrne, who kept the dairy close by, brought the milk for the men in camp. He was a born gambler, and he had two pounds to back me.

THAT SOME MAY BE WON.

My ganger bet a local a pound I would win, and I was faced with this problem—at least I thought so then—If I lost I would let God and my betting friends down." If I won, every man in the gangs would respect Christians more. So I set to work to win, and this I did without taking too much out of my opponent, who was the first to compliment me. I feel sure some of my Christian friends will say I was wrong to fight at all. But, remember, I was only a baby Christian five years old. I make no apologies, but when I say this of the result of this affair, "All the men, especially my opponent, became my friends," it helped me in the evenings around the camp fire to calmly give my experiences and to enlarge on the wisdom of giving God a chance to make a man of me, and even of them; without a fight I could not get a hearing. I began to love the open-air meeting on pay Saturday nights, and I was given a good hearing. Miners love a fighter of the spiritual or physical kind, and as I used to mention the Parson, Rev. Hammond, a good deal, and in doing so enlarge on his sports record in Victoria, I was often met with a

big cheer, which Jack Probyn also got at the end of his testimony. Personal experience always counts.

NEVER SAY FAIL.

In life's rosy morning, in manhood's firm pride,
Let this be the motto your footsteps to guide:

In storm and in sunshine, whatever assail,
Go onward and conquer, and never say fail.

That job ending, I went back to Sydney, and took casual jobs here and there, never accepting a job that interfered with Sunday. Then I applied to the City Council for a job, and I was sent for. After interviewing Mr. Neil Breden, Assets Department, I was employed at the fruit and vegetable department as attendant, and old Paddy's Market became the scene and place of my labors for God and the City Markets department, full of interest and opportunities.

When I look back at the old wooden sheds of those days, and compare them with the fine buildings now in operation, I marvel at the improvement and the material progress of the city.

Running up from the markets was old Wexford-street, also other small streets and lanes that contained many opium dens run by whites and yellow exploiters of vice. These, aggravated by the numerous Government licensed alcohol hells, made the district a reproach to the great city. Sergeant Jeffs, of the police, and I cleaned out many of these opium dens.

Christian Chinese used to tell Sergeant Jeffs about white women in certain places. He used to get me to go with him, and soon we were hated by those opium sellers. In those days opium was not prohibited as now. But we cared little for their hate, and many young women were taken by Jeffs and myself to homes run by the various Churches and Mr. Ardill. Paddy's Market was held on Saturday in those days, and the closing time was 11 p.m. Most shops also remained open until that time, and nearly every night there were the larrikin push fights.

THE OLD SAINT WITH BELL.

One fine character stands out in my memory. A dear old lady went along Wexford-street ringing a bell. Even the drunks and thieves lifted their hats to her, and often

gave her money to help her in the God-given work she was doing. Her quest was the outcast women. When this dear saint found a discarded sister she used to take her to her house in Surry Hills. Often Sergeant Jeffs and I would take someone there, and some even came back later to thank her after their salvation.

METHO. FOR CAKE AND TEA.

When the stallholders who sold cake—especially Mr. Sutton, churchwarden of old St. Simon's Church—finished business they used to give the leftovers to me. I had a very big billy, and on the Sunday morning I used to fill it with boiling tea. At a certain time the drunks, especially the methos, would come to me. As many as fifty some days would partake of tea and cake.

Often after a quiet talk with these men and women they would empty their metho. into the gutter. Many fine men gave God a chance in that old market, and day after day in my own humble way I helped. What else could I do? I could not do what the Parson was doing in a big way, but I could help him a little, at the same time doing some little jobs in the sphere in which I found myself. Paddy's Market was a great chance, and it was a great school to train me for the work God and the Parson had in store for me at the Police Courts.

While at the markets many of the agents and helpers were arrested for drunkenness, and my job was often to raise the bail or the fine money to get them out. I used to intercede with their employers, and often they gave jobs back to the erring ones.

I often thought, after some disappointment, "Is it worthwhile?" Then a good rousing sermon by the Parson, a visit to the men's home, much prayer—often a peep back at my own previous miserable life—would wake me up. It is good for all Christians to have an occasional survey or stocktaking. I think it was Whittier who gave us this thought:

Let the lowliest work be mine, grateful
so the work be Thine;
If there be some weaker one, give me
strength to help him on;
If a blinder soul there be, let me guide
him nearer Thee,
Clothe with life the weak intent, let me
be the thing I meant.

And so I continued, more carefully and earnestly, giving God a chance, and I have never regretted it. The happiness profits have been big.

CHAPTER XVI.

GOD IS ABLE TO MAKE US EQUAL TO THE DOING OF ANY DUTY HE CALLS US TO DO.

Are you a weaver, working for God, who uses human material in his design? The finest carpet or piece of fabric is just made up of small threads. So is a true Christian. Little acts of kindness, self-sacrifice, smiles, and humility are some of the threads that make a Christian become a weaver for God.

Better to weave in the web of life

A bright and golden filling,
And to do God's will with a ready heart,

And hands that are swift and willing,
Than to snap the slender, delicate threads

Of our curious life asunder,
And then blame heaven for the tangled ends

And sit and grieve and wonder.

AWAY WITH SLUMS!

A prayer was answered while I worked at the vegetable markets. I often prayed that I should see Wexford-street and many other streets running up from and to it also would be destroyed, that the common use of opium would be prohibited. I saw both brought about.

The City Council condemned then bought up a big track of slum property, razed it to the ground, resurveyed it, first opening up old Wexford-street, and making a fine wide road now named Wentworth Avenue.

New markets were opened, the old ones closed, but those old markets had been a social university to me, helping me to see much of the sordid side of life. It has always been a mystery to me that when I was getting into a sordid and unnatural life I could not see the suffering, and the wrong of it, passively agreeing to it even. It takes the love of God, only discerned spiritually, to open the eyes of humans; but when discernment comes, the difference is to be compared with light and dark—and you cannot change it by putting the clocks on for one hour, as is done to-day for economic reasons.

Since becoming a Christian I have opened my eyes to my own previous sinfulness and misery, also that of others to be seen all round me. This helped me form plans, not only of our sinfulness, but what causes it. Now while helping the sinner with one hand, I hit out hard at those powers, especially Governments, who control vice, even protect it, and often, under the guise of taxation, making money out of it, like they do

with the alcoholic liquor traffic. In the latter case the money, coming from the trade, is generally handed out again to those Government departments, called "social services," dealing with death, crime, poverty, law, police and lunacy, caused in the social life of the people through alcoholic indulgence and greed.

HELP WHERE YOU CAN.

I early adopted Kingsley's motto, namely: "Do the work that's nearest, tho' it's dull at whiles, Helping, when we meet them, lame dogs over stiles."

Here are two instances from many. It was during the early days while working at the markets that I planned a little personal work, and every Christian should plan likewise, besides helping in the bigger scheme of things, such as Church organisation. Taking my turn at night duty, there were plenty of opportunities to plan and work. One morning at four o'clock I began pulling up the big shutters to let the market gardeners in with their loads.

When one door was a few feet up, I was confronted with a sleeping woman, who fell sideways. I pulled her on to some bags on a man's stall. I could not give her any attention then; all the many doors had to be opened, and I was the only one on duty until 6 a.m.

About one hour after Mr. Regan, who rented the stall, came to me to ask what I was going to do with that drunken woman on his stall. I went with him to the woman. She was still asleep. She had no hat, but I had a comb and combed her beautiful black hair from off her face. Jack Regan said, "She must have been a beautiful woman." I said, "Jack, she's still beautiful in God's sight." He never forgot this. She awakened, and I led her to the men's rooms, giving her a towel, soap, and warm water. I then went and bought coffee and scones—just 6d. worth. These she eagerly devoured. Then I got a surprise. Jack Regan had watched my every action, and he said, "Jack, if you'll go to that trouble it's up to others to help, so I've collected £1/9/- for the woman." I returned to the woman at 5.40, for my time was up at 6 a.m., when the full day staff came on.

The woman was very grateful, and she said, "I am what I am through my own fault." Also she said, "Do you think I can do any better?" I said, "All the men here think you can."

I told her of the money I had for her, but I said, "Why not go to a friend of mine at Tressmanning Women's Home, Glebe Point, then have a few days there, and I

am sure the Matron will have a plan for you."

The woman agreed. So when I was off duty we went out to the home, and dear Miss McGarvey, the matron, gave us both a welcome and a cup of tea.

SOME RETURN.

Two weeks after this woman, looking ten years younger, with new hat and clothes the £1/9/- had bought her, all made by the woman with the aid of the matron, left for a domestic job at Elizabeth Bay Road. She had been given another chance, tough men helping a bit.

She wrote to me occasionally, and once she came down to the markets, requesting me to introduce her to Mr. Regan. I did so, and Jack Regan said, "What can I do for you?" She said, "Nothing now, but let me thank you for what you did about four years ago, when you collected £1/9/- to help me. I am happily married now." Looking at me in surprise Jack said, "My God, you're not that woman who slept on my potato sacks?" Then he looked again, the black hair making it a certainty, and Regan was deeply impressed, and when he told others about it they were surprised, and often they helped hopeless souls by calling me to set in motion some little human help that is often necessary to save a soul.

A DOCTOR DROPS IN.

One morning, going my usual rounds in the market, I saw a shabby man picking out damaged fruit from the agents' dirt boxes. There were many doing it. Brave women also help their poverty-stricken offspring. Often I longed to help them.

I used to put half-case lots near the big bins. It was easier to pick out those that were undamaged. The agents helped me. I told the man where he would get some better fruit. Later I saw him filling a bag and he thanked me in an educated voice I knew to be English-trained. I asked him how he was down on his luck. He told me he was a ship's doctor and through a drinking bout he lost his ship. He showed me pawn tickets for surgical instruments and clothes. I was signing off duty and told him I would like to see him then.

From a talk we had I devised a scheme, especially when he told me of a chemist friend who knew him in the city. "But," said he, "I am dirty and cannot go to him."

I took the doctor home with me. He had a good meal, a bath and shave, then I lent him my best suit, and told him to go and see his friend. I was closely following the Parson's methods.

I lived at Leichhardt then, and told him to come back for tea, giving him fares. In

two hours he came back, happy and confident, for his chemist friend got in touch with a medical agency, who gave Dr. F—a position in a country hospital. His friend also got his instruments out of pawn, also some clothes, then next day he received an advance and his ticket for the country town, where he worked faithfully for years, only leaving when the World War broke out, because as a naval reserve doctor he answered the call sent out by the British Navy.

This man never broke his verbal pledge to abstain from liquor. The last letter I received from him told me he had received bad head wounds while serving on a warship in the North Sea. I believe he died on service.

Christians, never give up hope, but, like your Master, the little bread you have, share, and pray "To-morrow give me more to give away."

THE HELPING HAND.

Just a gentle smile will cheer us when life's hill is very steep,
Just a kindly word will help us when a frown would make us weep.
Just the sunshine on the waters, just the rainbow in the sky,
Just a little love, so little, and its value is so high.

—E. Deeley.

So day after day, in and out of season, I went on my way, fighting temptation, at my best when closest to the Master and the Parson.

Myself, I had plenty of ups and downs, getting into difficulties when I got out of my spiritual depth, or sought material comforts for self. What a complex a saved sinner often finds himself in. I found "the gentleness of perfect freedom can only be won by the discipline of self-restraint."

Someone has said: "He that never changes any of his opinions never corrects any of his mistakes."

There has never been any reason for me to practise "austerity" in regard to God's love. You can always help yourself to it, there is no shortage; but I find I must practise "austerity" when it comes to my own desires, unless they are in complete union with the teaching of Christ, God's beloved Son. Conquer we shall, but we must contend "'Tis not the fight that crowns us, but the end."

Small acts of kindness shown to others in need give greater happiness than seeking something for one's self, even if that something seems quite natural.

From the lowest depth there is a path to the loftiest height, but one must not stray one degree from a chosen path if the signpost on the road reads "Give God a chance."

DON'T LOOK FOR RESULTS; GIVE HELP. LEAVE THE REST TO GOD.

"You can never tell what good you may do

If you pass on some comfort just given to you;

There are hearts sorely aching with hopes long deferred,

Whose load might be lifted by one cheering word.

Have you just had a message which lightened your load?

Then pass it to others you meet on life's road;

It costs scarce an effort to do here your part,

To help on a comrade, and cheer some lone heart."

—Fairelie Thornton.

DON'T GO BY LOOKS.

Bear with me a minute while I recall another man who was often called "the greatest pest in the vegetable markets." In my many years at the markets I do not know any man who was put out—often thrown out—more times than J. E—. I often stood between him and men who would have used violence. The Chinese feared him, not because Joe used bad language or offered violence; it was his looks, and, if on duty, I was the one sought out to put Joe out. This was done by just my request to leave—a joke which generally brought a smile to Joe's hard face that no one else could detect. Joe was no oil painting, and I used to reflect, "Nor were you, Jack, when the Parson, in friendship, found you; so go ahead, give Joe a chance."

Often at the entrance to the market, where I escorted Joe, I used to take a coin from my pocket, telling Joe to have a meal, and often, when he was quite sober, I got the loan of a basket and staked Joe a few shillings' worth of lettuce, and Joe set to work selling them, always paying me back and returning the basket. I learnt this self-respecting way from the Parson.

EASY MONEY A DANGER.

Every now and then Joe would disappear for about a week, and, coming back after a fearful debauch, he looked terrible.

One day, as we were making ti-tree brooms, Joe slipped in the door. All the attendants made a beeline for him. I said to them: "Leave him to me." After looking back over 30 years, I know IT WAS THE MASTER that prompted me. I took my unfinished broom, and sat away from the other attendants, telling Joe to sit down. Then Joe told me why he disappeared every quarter.

It was the old story of a little income and a drunkard without a friend. I know the feeling well.

After telling me that Mr. Arthur Allen, of Allen, Allen and Hemsley, was his solicitor, and how he received his share of his family estate quarterly, he said: "Jack, I wish you would draw my share in future, and try and keep me from drinking." I said I would try. I staked him a meal and bed, telling him if he was O.K. next day I would start him with something to sell, get him a room, then he could pay his own way.

This was done next day, my fellow work-mates calling me all the fools imaginable. I just said I was only giving "God a chance with Joe." What's wrong with it?

I rang up Mr. Arthur Allen and he told me it was as Joe said, adding, "Joe is helpless." I said, "Look out for Joe's next quarter." Much to the surprise of all Joe kept straight, and my taking Joe to hear the Parson helped a lot.

CAST YOUR BREAD UPON THE WATER.

The first full quarter under Christ's management came round. Joe dressed himself in his best, and while I waited in Martin Place Joe went to the big office and saw Mr. Allen.

All the staff previously thought Joe a pest, for he often went drunk, but he gave them a shock. As I have Joe's photo you had better see it, for the photo was taken just after Joe received his quarter's interest.



Mr. Arthur Allen knew of my arrangement with Joe, and he would not pay him his money. A clerk came down to tell me. I was ushered into Mr. Allen's office, and said: "Joe is O.K., Mr. Allen, pay him his money." Joe signed for it, shook hands with all the staff, and left with me. In the street he handed over to me the money, and it was put in the bank. Joe won a great victory over himself.

Joe E— never fell from grace, and my wife and I agreed to him taking a room we had with some spare ground, and then Joe bought young ducklings at the market, selling them when grown. Mr. Allen was so impressed that with my delight and approval he arranged to buy the small home I lived in. A very fine gesture, for I could never save the deposit myself. I paid on a weekly basis. After three years of clean living the call came for Joe. "Cancer," the doctor said. Joe said, "I can only blame myself, but I'm making a good finish. I'm not afraid to die now."

The day came when I took Joe to the Home of Peace, Marrickville. It was touching to see Joe saying good-bye to the ducks and the home he was so happy in. I watched Joe through a window, and the young ducklings followed him to the gate.

GOING WEST WITH GOD.

Joe spent about seven weeks at the Home of Peace. I visited him often. One day the doctor said Joe was near his end. Two days before he died he rang for the solicitor. Joe's earthly estate was put into a will, ducks and all. In answer to the question who was to get his property, Joe whispered my name and address. Not knowing anything about the will, I called on my dying friend just before his passing. He was cheering up other patients between prayers. His last words to the doctor was: "Tell Jack to take care of the ducklings and drunks."

After Joe's death Mr. Arthur Allen sent for me, telling me I was the beneficiary. Thanking him heartily, my home was paid off, and I was able to get out of other troubles. God sometimes backs such a fool as myself.

Strange all should call me a fool for helping such a lame dog over the stile, helping him into the hands of the Master, who taught me through the parson to do just what was my duty and justify my own salvation.

IS YOUR MIND A GARDEN.

While still confined to my home, improving slowly, my mind time and time again goes back to things that cheer, and those things concern us when we really do our duty. It's like a walk in a garden, often in spite of those around us. When we falter, dodge even our known duties, distress comes, some time through illness. I often think of Ephraim Adams' poem:

"There is a garden of the Lord—
Have you ever entered in?
'Mid the turmoil and the bustle,
Have you had no time to spare?
Have you never left the high road
Just to fall upon your knees
To seek for help and comfort
In the shadow of the trees?"

GOD'S PLAN FOR EVERY LIFE.

Anyway, my own experience proves God has a plan for me. My plan may not be another's, but if a Christian is earnest God will make our path clear. Then we must keep to the path. Every man and woman in their self-culture should study the art of giving up what on analysis proves a selfish or sinful motive. Selfishness is always a form of sin.

J. M. Barrie said: "Those who bring sunshine into the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves." This is very true. Any sunshine I have in my own life comes with greater light and power when I see some simple act of mine helping in the lives of others. Maybe the act is not appreciated by the one you want to help, and the full flood of sunlight is not felt. But you have at least tried, and that counts in your own soul, and is valuable experience and also helps you to justify God's love for you.

THE TRINITY OF HELP.

All kinds of help can be given as we pass along life's highway. There is the physical, material and spiritual. I call the first two useful, and carry some weight with those in need; but the third is SOUL HELP, and while this is really more plentiful if sought after, it generally is the last thought of, but often, in dispensing the physical and material necessities, the spiritual is tapped; then a complete salvation of a human being is brought about, and a complete job is done.

W. Carleton puts it well in these words:

"We thank Thee, O Father of all, for the power
Of aiding each other in life's darkest hour,
The generous heart and the bountiful hand,
And all the SOUL-HELP that sad souls understand."

There is an old sundial in England which carries this motto:

"The sunny hours that pass away
Belong to me and you to-day."

Giving God a chance in your own and others' lives can be done in the dark. A Christian crossing London Bridge one dark night called out in a cheery voice: "Good night, stranger; the best of luck to you." The man—a would-be suicide—took courage left the bridge, and took up life's problem again. He became a great worker in the Methodist Tabernacle, near the Bridge. When in London I often heard him tell the story.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IF YOU WANT TO BE HAPPY DO NOT TRY TO LIVE MORE THAN ONE DAY AT A TIME.

Who are your neighbors? The Bible will guide your thoughts on this important question. I know some people who will not say "How-do" in answer to that simple kindly salutation. Don't look on your neighbor as someone apart. Let's broaden the spirit of real neighborliness, and remember some neighbors in trouble need your smile and cheery word more than others.

YOUR WORK.

You cannot set the whole world right,
nor all the people in it;
You cannot do the work of years, in
just a single minute;
But keep one little corner straight, by
humble, patient labor,
And do the work that each hour brings,
and help your next door neighbor.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT.

Looking back through the many articles under the above heading I feel others could no doubt have written better. Much has been left out that now floods my mind; then the thought comes, "You asked God to help you with the pen and your experience, and there can be no mistake, so leave it there. It was not that others could have done better, but the fact that the task was given to you that counts."

"What though your lot in life seems poor and small?

What though in great accomplishment you fail?

Let not the thought of this your soul appal,
Nor think your days are spent without avail."

I again think, "But you have taken so much space to tell of certain incidents, emotions, desires, and ambitions, and up to now you have only covered in a small way a period of about eight years out of thirty-eight you have trusted God, and there is no doubt the other thirty years are more important than your baby years."

Now are they? What old persons exist that don't love to look back to their physical childhood days. I treat my spiritual childhood in the same way. Those years, every memory of them, fills my heart with joy. So bear with me when I tell you of another great incident that cannot be forgotten, that happened in my eighth year.

There was great excitement in my own and many other men's hearts when, after a church service in a near suburb, The Parson (still Superintendent of the Mission Zone Fund) said, "It's about time some of you chaps were confirmed in the faith, thus becoming real church members."

Charlie Woodward whispered to me, "Jack, the Boss ain't satisfied with us." I explained the position to Charlie and others in this way.

SOUND REASONING.

"When you and I were drunks, the cops and your friends called us confirmed drunks. Well, boys, now you're changed, some eight, some four, some six years, and the Parson thinks, looking us over, that it's about time we were confirmed Christians." My simple reasoning also enlarged this way:

"Confirmed drunks are thrown out by the licensees; confirmed Christians are taken into the church as members. A definite standard of conduct and faith must be accepted by a bishop at a church ceremony." That's how I see it. In a word, you have to take a spiritual pledge, as you did a pledge against booze. The Parson had us all guessing, and for hour-periods, on many evenings the Parson unfolded the confirmation service, and he sure had us scratching our brain pans and examining our hearts—all good exercise.

A GREAT DAY.

At last the appointed day came. I had told Charlie Woodward we would all go to St. Andrew's Cathedral. We felt proud, but that was not to be. Meanwhile the Parson had his eye on a disused church in Sussex Street, St. Luke's. Ecclesiastical law said, "One service a year had to be held in such a church." With early Sydney the old church had been packed, but the district had to make way for bacon, wool, butter and horse feed, so the congregation dispersed—what better place for our confirmation.

The day arrived, and a tough looking crowd of men met. The surrounding merchants must have been scared when they saw us, but when the Parson and the Bishop arrived they calmed down, and we (the confirmees) sat in the front seat, a few lookers-on sat in the rear. They had cleaned the old church up for the occasion, and it was now up to us to clean our hearts.

It was a very beautiful service, but it taxed everyone of those tough men. There was many a pause as questions were put to them. Harry Banks told me he nearly fainted. I know this, sitting in parks in sunlight, or in the shadows of a lone dismal room, my mind turned to my prayer book, and I drank in all it meant to my eternal happiness. How I wished often my heart had been stirred, and my understanding nourished in that way as a child.

YOUNG PEOPLE, TAKE HEED.

Whenever I see our young people being confirmed blood will rush to my head, and my heart beats faster, as I pray that they will see, as I did in that old disused church, and GIVE GOD HIS CHANCE.

CONFIRMED IN THE FAITH.

A chap named Green, an engineer, had cleared out from a ship, because he and his family were cursed by his confirmed drunkenness when he was paid off at home (England). Green was a fine mechanic and at an open-air meeting one night, he (very drunk) took heed of Charlie Woodward's testimony. After the meeting, at which the Parson came late from a meeting, finishing up in fact, Charlie and myself introduced him, and it acted like a charm. Green was broke, so I took him to my room. After the first few days, Green came home, and said he was back with Burns, Philp and Co., working on a shore job, and he was O.K. having received a loan. He never drank alcohol again, and this generous man used to throw down a sovereign instead of 10/-, telling the woman to buy something for the kids. Is there any wonder that with a new (Christ's) ideal in his soul he would long for his own family so far away.

Green confided in me, and I kept him to a pledge to write to his wife. Then a long wait, and one day a letter came with an English post mark.

JUST A PHOTO.

Wondering if the news were good, I made it my business to be home when he arrived. Said I, "There's a letter for you, Bill." He rushed up to our room, and after a while I entered. Green was in tears, the letter on the floor, and a photo of his wife and children in his hands, all poorly dressed—but Bill's wife and Bill's kids.

Green jumped up on my entry, and said, "Jack, the old woman has forgiven me." We were both happy, and after a good tea, we further celebrated at the Salvation Army Hall, their hand clappings, Amens, and fine band music fitting the occasion. Next day Bill sent a money order to the wife, and that became a regular habit.

Other letters came from Bill's wife, and four months after his confirmation Bill transferred as third engineer on a home-going boat. It was a great day when all were united. After two trips to Australia a letter came to tell me he was second engineer on a White Star American liner. Later he transferred as chief engineer on a U.S.A.-owned ship. Bill took his family to New York. Eventually I lost sight of him, only retaining the sweet memory of his win over sin.

THE PARSON PLANNED BIG.

The Parson continued holding services and missions in country and suburban churches with great results. I delivered hundreds of books to homes of converts in the suburbs for him. But he was not satisfied; there was no real attention being given to the social side of the people by our churches. Very little attention was given to crime, drunkenness, immorality, poverty and other devilish results of sin.

In many talks on the matter I saw magnificent plans for a central building and

activity that would house all Christian C. of E. workers who were interested in the underdog. The crowds going through the Police Courts, lunatic asylums, Coroner's Courts, and the poverty stricken, especially such problems as slums, etc., surely needed more study, attention and help from the biggest church.

How to raise the money for such an undertaking was also thought out, but the Parson planned, and the plan was put before the Mission Zone Committee. They turned it down, and the greatest chance Sydney ever had was passed over.

I will never forget the day the Parson heard the news. The State Premier (Mr. McGowan), school masters, doctors, and others whose hearts were constantly shocked by appalling conditions, would have helped. I am sure hundreds of converts from the Chapman-Alexander, also the Parson's missions, would have been drawn in for the work that can only be called noble.

One big idea in the Parson's mind was for all theological students to do a course studying those going through jails, Courts, old men's and women's homes, the neglected child and also crime.

Most parsons can tell you about the sin and social conditions in the times of David, Moses and others; but to-day our sin conditions and what causes them, also the way the trouble is handled now, is practically a blank, certainly a failure. How many of the clergy get the Police, Prison, Lunacy, State Child Welfare, and Health Departments' yearly reports. I make bold to say that their training should take them all in, then we would know how sinful our generation is. Beer, betting, lotteries and immorality win.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Temple) has opened up the question about fifty years too late. The Parson saw all he mentioned, and a lot more, thirty years ago, and a great chance was lost by the church the Parson has proved so loyal to.

THE BRIGHTEST SPOT.

Soon the Parson resigned, and while still living in Stanmore, old St. Simon's Church, Campbell Street, Surry Hills (practically empty) came into his hands. Just a single building, with no special rooms for Sunday Schools, or rectory. While Campbell Street was a good street, every house within 800 yards of rear was resumed as slum property, and the church had to go too, at a time when it had a good congregation. St. Simon's was known far and wide as "The Brightest Spot."

One of the first things done was to put up the "S.M.H." employment advertising page. The Trades Hall, on opening first, used to put the sheet up, but they soon tired of it, so it was up to at least one church to do it, and twenty-nine years have passed and every day the unemployed receive that practical service now at St. Barnabas, Broadway.

THE NEW CALL.

Soon a big change in my life was to take place, as I was offered the control of the

Church Welcome Home for Migrants, situated at Millers Point. After consultation with my wife, I agreed to serve, resigning from the City Municipal Council job that I loved so well. I have no knowledge of any other man resigning from that particular job, and the Council said they would keep

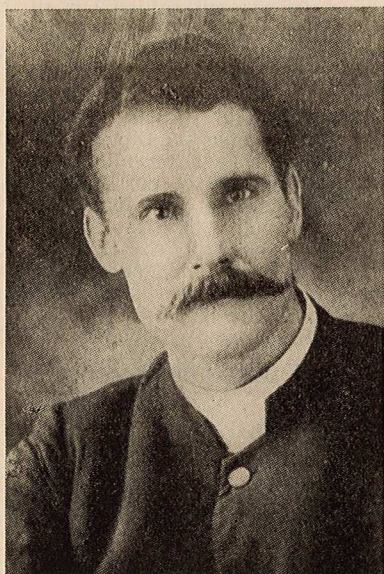
CHAPTER XIX.

"GOD POINTS A MAN LIKE A PENCIL, CUTTING AWAY HIS OUTER SELF AND BARING THAT WITH WHICH HE MAY MAKE HIS MARK."

—Hugh Redwood.

MEET THE PARSON.

At this stage I feel you should see what the Parson, Rev. R. B. S. Hammond, now Archdeacon, O.B.E., looked like when he put his arm on my shoulder in the old St. Philip's School porch on June 15, 1904. No parson, no friendly arm, no appeal to me to GIVE GOD A CHANCE would have meant that these articles, built on my test of the Parson's appeal, would never have been written. The Parson looked like this about 1904, thirty-eight years ago, a couple of years before "Grit" was started:



Rev. Mr. Hammond when first I met him.

Now look at yours truly (on page 39) taken about the same time, after getting rid of rags, whisky, booze and sin, then known as "Welsh Johnny O'Brien," or "Jack O'Brien." These names were adopted chiefly to save my dear old mother pain and sorrow because of my conduct.

PROMOTED.

At the end of nine years' friendship with Christ and the Parson I was offered a posi-

my job open in case the new job petered out. Most of the men I worked with have left on superannuation, many have gone West. I honor their memory. Under God's and the Parson's care I still serve with my motto, "The best still to come."

If you want to make your mark in business, medical, naval, military or any profession, certain rules and conditions must be accepted.

In the Christian profession the same rule holds, and those who fulfil the Christian standard, no matter what their economic condition, make their chosen profession noble, helpful and valuable to all. Here's God's conditions to you and me:

Be true, for there are those who love you;

Be pure, for there are those who care;

Be strong, for there is much to suffer;

Be brave, for there is much to dare.

Be friend to all—the foe, the friend-

less;

Be giving, and forget the gift;

Be humble, for I know my weakness;

Look up, and love, and laugh, and lift.

tion to manage a Migrants' Home, and became the missionary to those arriving in Australia from overseas.

The Home I took over contained thirty beds, and before six months of my control had passed, the Government, after inquiring into my fitness and methods, renovated six three-storey houses, once the British Military Officers' quarters, handing same over to the committee for our work.

After six more months, because of the old-fashioned, no-vision rules insisted on, I resigned. I thank God for the experience of that year, for it brought me in contact with a very deserving people, whose coming, to many of us, was not popular at the time.

The year was a hard one for me, but nearly thirty years after I meet those who thank God for the welcome and help I gave them.

I am watching very carefully what the attitude of our Governments will be to migration after this war. Much and careful attention must be given to it—a big asset exists there.

MORE PROMOTION.

What a joy it used to be, after a tough day, to go to the brightest spot, St. Simon's Church, Surry Hills, and listen to the Parson. And how the lads rallied to him! Because the Parson had this regular meeting place,

their numbers were added to every month. The church soon became too small.

Soon after my resignation from the migration work, joyful news came to the Parson from the then Minister for Justice, Mr. David Hall, that he had the Cabinet's permission to appoint a Missioner to work amongst the prisoners passing through the Central Court.

This came about just before the World War. I was appointed Missioner, and with Old St. Simon's school hall and men's home, then in Reservoir Street, Surry Hills, as headquarters, we set to work to sober up all the drunks in Sydney. This work was very near my heart, and still is in 1942. By the way, looking at the last number on our pledge book I find that number to be 97,038. Men and women, who have any desire for better conditions, have their chance, and many every month have made the effort. What a story that effort would make! But it will have to be delayed.

SOME ADVENTURES.

Many unique efforts at social improvement were made during the years the Parson was rector of St. Simon's, and not long after taking charge, St. David's, Surry Hills, was also taken over; that move added to the responsibility, but as a good rectory was included, this made it possible for the Parson and Mrs. Hammond to live with their two flocks.

WORLD WAR BREAKS OUT.

The war broke out, and Surry Hills, being a dense neighborhood, was well in it, and the retail selling places, liquor bars, being numerous, also many other low social attractions, the district soon became a disgrace. Sundays were particularly vicious. It was common to see about 40 to 70 soldiers, civilians and women drinking in the lane behind the church. This particular lane intertwined with other lanes, so was a good getaway. Often while Sunday services were being held riots and brawls took place. The police P.D. car would appear; then there was a rush, and often I stood on the side steps of the church and encouraged soldiers and others to come in. Very many did, and some known to me not only got away from the P.D. car, but Satan also. The Parson and I made many friends from those hard, foolish chaps.

Every morning I was at the Court. The Parson also was often there, and when the drunks passed through many came up to St. Simon's, where, with the sanction of the Parson, I opened the school half to them. They could shave, clean boots, mend clothes, wash wounds. Then about 11 a.m. I used to hold a twenty-minutes' meeting, after which we gave all who needed it (and most did) a meal ticket, available on the City Night Refuge and Soup Kitchen, the second oldest charity in Australia. The Parson and I were on the committee—another strange turn Christ made in my affairs, for the day I met the Parson and many other days I slept in one of the beds and shared the splendour, if very humble, fare provided.

After thirty years we are still on the committee.

A CABINET MINISTER HELPS.

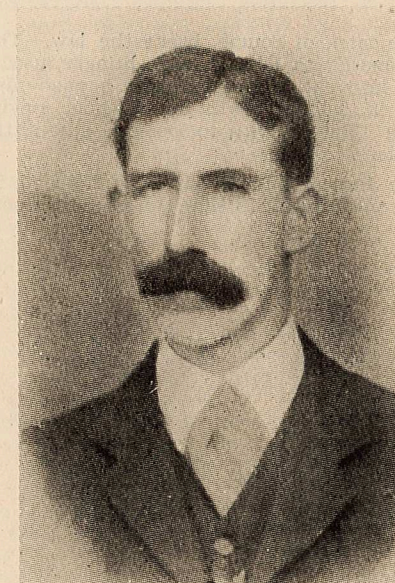
Dr. Richard Arthur, M.P., and some time Cabinet Minister, was a great friend and admirer of the Parson and his work and methods. One day the virile doctor got the idea of getting voluntary aid to clear a piece of land at French's Forest; then, by voluntary gifts, built some homes for badly-wounded soldiers and their families—a fine effort.

For a long time it was very popular. Large crowds made a picnic, and by boat and lorry they went over; but the work lagged. One Easter holiday hardly any went, and lorries were taken off.

The "Sun" newspaper pointed out that 90,000 went to the races, but few went to French's Forest.

I saw my chance, and with the Parson's help I spoke to 50 men about it. Thirty volunteered to go over, and the "Sun" took a photo of the men, and help was forthcoming.

There was a sale of old worn naval gear, and I interviewed Mr. Valentine, the auctioneer. He was very interested and helpful.



JACK CREAGH, 1905.

I was over early and marked out the things I needed on the lists; the buyers, mostly Jews, arrived, and the auctioneer gave me five minutes to make an appeal. I believe there were tears in many eyes when I finished.

I stood near the seller, and as the lots were knocked down I told the buyer what I wanted from it. They could have retracted, but none did, and soon I had a big load of

neessary equipment—tents, cooking and all other kitchen utensils. Dear Mr. William Winn, of Oxford Street, capped the lot, buying 80 jerseys, 80 pith helmets and a fine quantity of other goods, making a present of them. This firm was always helping; jobs were given to many men who made good, and some reached fine positions with the firm. Mr. Gordon Winn, son of William, is now head, and he gives God His chance in many charitable efforts, particularly as a tireless helper with Rev. Drummond, Far West Children's Scheme.

The Parson got a good gramophone, and with the assistance of a few men we used up many Sunday afternoons giving music and an appeal for people to enter the Brightest Spot; many did.

THE UNEMPLOYED APPEAL.

On day three men visited me at 6 a.m., telling me that over two hundred unemployed men had pitched a big tent in Hyde Park. They said they had no food and would I go over. I dressed quickly and soon was in the big tent, situated in the engine reservation that helped get out the open cut for the underground railway. The work had ceased for a time. There was an eight-foot fence around the place, making it very suitable.

The men, of course, broke the law. They were mostly ex-Diggers who, hungry, used to walk into eating places, order a good meal, then in a body walk out without paying, saying, "Put it down to Dooley" (the sitting Premier).

The Parson and I, with the help of the press, put an end to that state. I took some

men out and spent all the money I had (13/9) on tea, sugar and bread. Big kerosene tins were soon boiling, and with the aid of about 10 jam tins a breakfast was eaten. Going to the court I rang up the newspapers, also the Parson, requesting help. It came along. I went over to the tent to find Inspector Turbitt and two policemen had been sent to put the men (200) out and pull down the tent. I pointed out that the men were armed with long bolts and fire bars. They were desperate, and I urged the police to retire while we rang up Inspector James Mitchell. He saw the position and we went to his office, ringing up the Minister for Labor. I urged him to hold off and take the men's case up. The Parson and I would help (we took charge, in fact), and the mid-day dinner was fine, with 100 tickets for meals for the men coming along from various firms.

The Parson made a fine appeal, and firms, especially Anthony Horderns', Playfair's, State Bakery and Fishery, and many others, helping. The papers published letters from the Parson, and one morning the people going to work, in response to his famous SHIRT VERSE, threw over the fence hundreds of parcels, Bobby's Watson's old song bearing fruit, or rather SHIRTS. Bobby and others helped generously with their talent in many ways. The result, principally the Parson's help, was fine. Bloodshed and damage were stopped, gradually we started meetings, and a fine sober bunch came out of that old tent. The men built a pulpit and it was much used by the Parson and others. Within five weeks all men were in jobs, the tent taken down, and God GIVEN A CHANCE.

CHAPTER XX.

ONE WORD OF TENDERNESS CAN THRILL A HEART IN SORE DISTRESS. THAT'S WHY THE MERCY SEAT IS SO IMPORTANT TO A SINNER.

"From ev'ry stormy wind that blows,
From ev'ry swelling tide of woes,
There is a calm, a sure retreat—
'Tis found beneath the mercy seat.

"There is a scene where spirits blend,
Where friend holds fellowship with friend;
Though sunder'd far, by faith they meet
Around one common mercy seat.

"There, there, on eagle wings we soar,
And sense and sin molest no more;
And heav'n comes down our souls to greet,
And glory crowns the mercy seat!"

THE CHANCE.

While I have not often actually mentioned Scripture in "Give God a Chance," all I am, all I hope to be, is built up on the promises of God.

It does seem strange that, after thirty-one years with such a vast versatile experience in the physical condition that all spelt failure, I should turn to something religious and even a Person, Jesus Christ, for a chance. The Parson, Rev. R. B. S. Hammond, was the Master's servant in God's plan.

Only four times, according to my Concordance, is the word "chance" used in the Bible; yet it was from one of those four utterances of God that I found great wisdom, courage and hope that built up my faith early as I struggled to get right with God, whom I did not know, understand, or have any faith in. First I built on my own failure and the sincerity of the Parson.

Chance was a word often on my lips as a Godless man. Taking chances in many ways, even with the devil and all his human workmen. So, when the Parson's appeal as he preached to the men in the hall reached my own mind, I found my soul distressing me, and unable to get away, although I did not want to meet the Parson. With his arm on my shoulder, I said to him, "I don't know your God, but I'd like to give your God a chance to make a man of me." It was following my usual habit of "taking a chance"—of course, previously in the world. Would to God more unfortunate materialists, male and female, would do the same thing. Where I have seen them do it, there has never been failure.

Strange, yet not strange, that a preacher often in the hands of God says things that profoundly impress themselves on a sinner's mind. Naturally once interested, and getting over my first shyness, I looked to the

Parson for further information, and the fact that in 1942 (thirty-eight years after our first meeting) I am still faithful to my promise to the Parson, and through him to God, surely this counts as evidence as to the wisdom and reasonableness of my believing in God's salvation.

If you are honest to know God you will surely find Him. You may often fail, as I did, but I was quick to take notice of the fall, regain my spiritual poise, and press on, feeling I needed more of God's wisdom, which fortunately for me I sought after.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES.

Often have I been asked what part of God's word helped me most. There are many parts. Often a Scripture appeals when one is in a certain state of mind; but I have found there was no state I found myself in that some Scripture did not help.

That is why I feel sure great emphasis is placed on "search the Scriptures, for in them you have eternal life."

One Sunday evening, perplexed at my own slow thinking and spiritual understanding, I was in St. Philip's Church. The Parson took that service, and the Scripture reading and text made a profound impression on me, so much so that I studied the Scriptures with a more inquiring and open mind, from God's Bible preacher to His servant (the Parson) to the sinner (myself).

The Scripture was from Ecclesiastes, 9th chapter, 10th to the 12th verse (inc.):

10. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might: For there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."

11. "I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all."

12. "For man knoweth not his time; as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare: So are the sons of men, snared in an evil time, when it suddenly falleth upon them."

That deeply stirred me, but the text made even a more profound impression. Here it is found in same 9th chapter, 17th and 18th verses. Fix them as I did in your mind, then get away into a quiet room and meditate on them.

SIN DESTROYS.

"The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.

"Wisdom is better than weapons of war; but one sinner destroyeth much good."

With the world's worst war raging how does that Scripture work out, reader, in your mind?

For thirty-six years I have kept them in my heart. They have given me a vision to view the follies of the world, especially my own, and they have hauled me up to the spiritual wind, giving me an even keel on which to sail my life, swinging me away from many an ill wind of desire that would have wrecked my life and all its good intentions.

I CAME TO THE MERCY SEAT.

The Scripture that first made me desire a betterment in my life was "The Parable of the Prodigal Son." What other could have made me think, and act, at that time? But the Parson, like the father in the parable, came out to meet me, and when he spoke kindly, even putting his arm around my shoulder, while giving me words of hope, the parable was made perfect. Is there any wonder a difference was made in my mentality, even to bringing uppermost in my materialist and physical make up a desire to fathom the spiritual meaning and principle that was lying latent in my shivelled, sin-cursed soul? I had really found out—

"There is a place where Jesus sheds
The oil of gladness on our heads—
A place than all besides more sweet;
It is the Blood-bought Mercy Seat."

SEEK THE WAY.

At the Mercy Seat I said: "Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul to Thee." When looking back to that day in the porch it is not strange, or a virtue on my part, to hear, then use, then practise the beautiful principle of religion. It is so sensible and beneficial to do so, but the wonderful thing concerning my change is that I have been thought worthy to be used by the Master in helping His servant the Parson.

I certainly wanted to get away from my past folly. Who doesn't? But for God to use my foolish past—in fact, get rid of it—a free pardon—then to use my experience in my future, shows God does not waste anything.

Working amongst my fellow men and women, in the Police Courts, at St. Barnabas' Church, on street corners, by letters to those in jail, homes and hospitals I have found that—

"Give love, and love to your heart will flow,
A strength in your utmost need;

Have faith and a score of hearts will show
Their faith in your word and deed."

I did not grasp at the stars. My heart in gratitude wanted to do life's plain, common work. My heart has kept very close to the pavements, even the gutters, and the social dead-ends of society.

I knew the folk there, also how fine many of them were. If only they could see and act as I did, they sure would leave their awful state, as I did, and their salvation would be great.

John Bunyan, before and after his conversion, was a great help to me. He was a determined man and once said:

"I resolved to run when I can, to walk when I cannot run, and to creep when I cannot walk." And I add to that: "When I cannot run, walk, or creep, I'll just lay down and thank God for His wonderful goodness to me from that position."

Christ's love saw no obstacles to my salvation. In return there must be no obstacles in my love for Him.

My motto for the future is, "The Best is yet to Come." It was borrowed from the Parson. After thirty-eight years we are still together, and the motto holds good. Our hearts tell us this. After our experience why should we not see clearly in the distance that—

The day will dawn, however dark the night;
The right will win, however fierce the fight;
The end is sure, however far from sight—
Be brave.

Not ours to shirk or shrink, to doubt or dread;
Not ours to turn from hardship seen ahead;
Not ours to falter wherever we are led—Be brave.

The road will brighter grow throughout its length;
The load will lighter grow through added strength;
Peace, victory, and joy will come at length—
Be brave.

And so comes to a finish my humble efforts, and in the hope that the book will instruct, inspire, bring hope and comfort, and even salvation to some, I leave it in God's hands.

Reader, you will never regret—

GIVING GOD A CHANCE.

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