

DOMINION PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Fellow Members,

Last night I tried to write this letter but was too weary to think and so asked God to give me a message and a clear head in the morning. No doubt you have experienced my plight too. This morning I am surrounded by workmen, and you will wonder how one could possibly get any message in that way. Well, I have! These particular men have come for a special job and I have been waiting for them for weeks. Now, why did I wait unvexed and untroubled at the seeming delay? Simply because the Contractor has a name for a high standard of efficiency; anyone who has the good fortune to have a job done by him, is satisfied that they have true value for their money, and that cannot be said of all workmen. So here I am at my desk, feeling quite happy, despite the additional work that men make with spades, shovels, picks, buckets, and plaster. BUT I am perfectly serene. The thought I want to give you is this:—The STANDARD. What actually is OUR Standard?

At our Dominion Prayer Meeting held last month, a younger woman prayed a prayer which was arresting and it was this "O God, give us courage today to have high standards," then haltingly she asked that personally she would be given a sense of conscience, so that she would not be satisfied to drift with the crowd, doing things simply because others did them. She also prayed for the Church that it would give a fearless direction to the young over the drink and gambling evils, which have brought New Zealand to a low ebb morally. My heart said "Amen," for this young mother, with a growing family, was seeking to raise a Standard.

This month New Zealand will go to the Poll and will be asked to give voice again on the Licensing question. Will our Standard be high for Righteousness? The Standard is important. God is not satisfied with any nation or people whose standard is low and who give themselves to foolishness: we cannot look with any degree of comfort at our country, when we know that it spends over £24,000,000 (1953 figure) on Liquor and that on-course Betting and the T.A.B. figure run to £38,681,000, and this startling amount does not include incessant Raffles, large and small. We would ask how low is our national Standard. Dare the Church be silent, dare the Christian be silent? Oh, for a revival of conscience, that will prod us wide awake, for God's standard is HIGH. "Whatsoever a nation or men sow THAT will they also reap." Alas, we have already begun to reap.

So I come back to my good workmen, who are whistling cheerfully, they are doing a job which will give them enormous pleasure and satisfaction. Does our Standard of behaviour bring joy and satisfaction to our hearts; more important still, has it made any difference to our nation, our loved ones, our neighbours? If not, the Standard is low. I pray God we will only be satisfied with HIGH STANDARDS.

Yours in Joyous Service,

CONSTANCE TOOMER.

Annual reports to reach Dominion Supts. not later than 15th December. Reporting all work done is important.

The Devotional Period

Scripture Reading: II Timothy 2:19-26. W.R.

Hymnal, No. 139.

Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, was a young woman completely dedicated to the service of Jesus Christ and His needy children. In her diary, she offers a comment on the 21st verse of our reading. She translates "sanctified and meet" as "clean and very usable," and recalls that she has three pens in her desk—one for ordinary writing, one a little finer, and one for proof-correcting. These three pens are kept cleaned and filled, always ready for use and therefore, very usable. There is no need for any one of the three to ask to be used. They are clean, at hand, never occupied about their own business, but always free for mine. Dr. Moffatt adopts the translation, "he will be consecrated and useful to the Owner of the House; he will be set apart for good works of all kinds."

The passage, however translated, is full of holy comfort, because it indicates that God's demands are not grievous and that it is possible for the humblest disciple to be consecrated and useful—heart and hand alike, expressing the fervent devotion of the ransomed soul for His Redeeming Lord.

We are not all called to do a magnificent work, such as Dr. Billy Graham is doing. But the helpers assisting him are many. Some of his prayer partners will never be known to anyone but God. How often we hear cruel criticism by even Church members, of other Christians venturing out in faith, courageously, to do a piece of work for Christ! Something different! Often it is so, even when souls are being won for Christ and who, in turn become workers in His vineyard. God is not a lover of sameness or monotony. All about us, we find variety, for even the flowers on the same plant differ. Too many of us are content to move in flocks, useless without another to direct us, when God, through the Holy Spirit, would work in and through us each one, as individuals.

A variety of personalities to be reached by a variety of Spirit-filled men and women. Dare we criticise the ways of the Almighty!

"God moves in a mysterious way,

His wonders to perform,
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.

Ye fearful saints fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy and shall break
In blessings on your head.

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,

But trust Him for His grace,
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan His works in vain.
God is His own interpreter
And He will make it plain."

—R. C. GREEN (Dominion Evang. Supt.)

Bishop Ralph H. Cushman's message to the 9,000,000 Methodists of the U.S.A.:—"We are not going to have a revival of religion in America, until the Church faces social evils, like the Liquor Traffic. . . . The solving of the Liquor problem is primarily your job."