ON THE JOB

"I am doing a great work so that I cannot come down"...Nehemiah 6:3

Happy is the man that has a job. We who work get tired sometimes, but there is nothing so exhausting as idleness. This man has a job. He has a good job. He tells about it with such enthusiasm that it quickens the pulse beat after almost twenty-five centuries.

I

How did he come to get this job? He is engaged in the difficult task of rebuilding the walls of the ruined city of Jerusalem. We are surprised to find him here. This is true because he had what seemed to be an excellent position before his coming. He was cup bearer to the King of Persia. He had a position of honor, a position that offered him luxury and vast wealth, therefore it was hardly to be expected that he would throw this enviable position down to undertak the work that he is now doing.

How did it come about? He heard that God's people that were in Jerusalem were in great reproach. Instead of shrugging his shoulders and thanking God that he was not there, the news broke his heart. He actually wept over it. His tears were manly tears. As they sparkle upon his cheeks that mean what apple-
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blossoms mean to the boughs of the apple tree. They show that it has springtime in its heart.

Not only did he weep, he prayed. In his prayer he did not simply ask the Lord to send somebody. He said, "Here am I, send me." God answered his prayer and thus this young man who had such a promising position open to him in the Persian Empire, found himself engaged in the work of rebuilding the walls of his ruined city.

II

How did he fare in undertaking this task?

He met with opposition. That may have surprised him, it may surprise you. But such need not be the case. Every man who ever tries to do any worth while task, meets opposition. We have repaid all of our prophets and reformers by stoning them. We could give Christ Himself nothing better than the Cross.

Just as every man who would climb is opposed, so is every movement that seeks the betterment of the race. There has never been a reform that has not been desperately fought. You can start in with the Eighteenth Amendment and travel back over history and it is always the same. Every movement that has blessed the world has been brought about at the price of blood.

III

But Nehemiah persisted and completed his task in spite of opposition. How did he do it? The answer is in the text.

1. He said, "I am busy". One of the greatest safeguards
that we can possibly have is hard work. When one asked Napoleon's most dashing marshall if he ever got frightened during battle, he answered, "No, I am too busy fighting." To do nothing is to allow your heart to become the galloping ground of any cloven footed demon who wants to enter. Work is a tremendous safeguard.

2. Not only was this man working, but he had the conviction that he was working at a job that was worth while. Of course if what you are doing is not worth doing, it will be very easy to lure you away. If it is easier to get you to the card party that to Prayer Meeting, it is because to you at least, prayer has ceased to be worth while. If you would rather sleep on Sunday than go to church, it is because you count rest of the body of greater importance than rest of the soul.

This man was doing a great work. If work is to be truly great, there must be two elements in it.

(1). It must be done from a worthy motive. The poor widow gave less than one cent, but she did a great work because there was a great motive behind her giving.

(2) Then, if work is truly great, it must be constructive. It takes neither brains nor heart to tear down. All you need to knock, is a hammer. If you are living a worth while life, you are doing more than criticise. You are doing more than tearing down. You are building. Christ summed up the very purpose of His life in this, "I will build my Church."

If you are building a Christlike character, if you are helping to build the Kingdom of God, if you are helping to build that which will make life easier for those that live and for those who will come after you, you are doing a great work no matter how obscure your part may be. If you not, you are an utter failure,
no matter how conspicuous you are and however much noise you make in the world. We cannot all be famous but we can all face time with this declaration upon our lips, "I am doing a great work, so I cannot come down".