

Sunday Reading.

For the Christian Messenger. The Lord's Prayer.

In the following composition the initials capital spell, "My boast is in the glorious cross of Christ." The words in italics, when read from top to bottom and bottom to top form the Lord's Prayer.

Make known the Gospel truths, Our Father King; Yield us Thy grace, dear Father from above; Bless us with hearts which feelingly can sing, "Our life Thou art for ever, God of Love."

Assuage our grief, in love for Christ we pray, Since the bright Prince of Heaven and glory died;

Took all our sins, and hallowed the display; Infinite being—first man, and then the crucified.

Stupendous God! Thy grace and power make known, In Jesus name let all the world rejoice!

Now all the world Thy heavenly kingdom own, The blessed kingdom, for Thy saints the choice.

How vile! to come to Thee is all our cry, Enemies to Thyself and all that's Thine; Graceless our will, we live for vanity, Lending to sin our being, evil in our design.

O God! Thy will be done from earth to Heaven;

Reclining on the Gospel let us live; In earth from sin deliver-ed and forgiven, Oh! as Thyself but teach us to forgive.

Unless it's power temptation doth destroy, Sure is our fall into the depths of woe; Carnal in mind, we've not a glimpse of joy, Raised against Heaven, in us no hope can flow.

O give us grace and lead us on Thy way, Shine on us with Thy love and give us peace; Self and this sin that rise against us slay; O grant each day our trespasses may cease!

Forgive our evil deeds that oft we do; Convince us daily of them to our shame; Help us with heavenly bread; forgive us, too, Recurrent lusts, and we'll adore Thy name.

In Thy forgive-ness we as saints can die, Since for us and our trespasses so high, Thy Son, our Saviour, bled on Calvary.

The Mission of the Church.

SERMON BY THE REV. J. F. BART-LETT PREACHED IN THE LEINSTER ST. BAPTIST CHURCH, ST. JOHN, N. B., FEB. 4, 1883, THE FIRST LORD'S DAY OF HIS PASTORATE.

Reported for the Christian Messenger. "And He saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."—MATT. iv. 19.

Behold a picture! The scene is upon the beautiful lake of Galilee. No storm rages now upon its bosom, but the gentle waves murmuring over the pebbly beach, make sweet and dreamy music. A little distance from the shore, two men clad in the humble garb of fishermen are making ready to secure some of the unsuspecting inhabitants of the deep. They are just now engaged in casting their net, when, lo, the silence is broken by the tones of a well known voice, and looking up from their employment they behold the stately form and benign countenance of Him upon whom they had seen the Holy Ghost descend at the baptism in the Jordan; and while they stand in silence gazing upon that lovely form eager to catch the utterances that fall from those holy lips, they hear the words of mingled command and invitation: "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." And without a single word of excuse or act of hesitancy they put into shore, and leave boat, nets and all they have and follow Him.

My theme this morning will be THE MISSION OF THE EARTHLY CHURCH, AND HOW TO FULFIL IT.

1. The mission of the earthly church is to lead lost men to a saving knowledge of Christ.

When the church's Divine founder was robed in mortal flesh, and tabernacled among men, He did not veil His mission behind some learned theological definition, over the meaning of which the anachronical mind might puzzle and despair. No! plain, simple, searching, not to be misunderstood was the one grand purpose for which he came down from heaven. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

Now when the clouds of heaven received His ascending person, and His

ministry in the flesh had ceased, He commissioned His Church to the carrying forward of this stupendous work, and with the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the waiting disciples began the new dispensation of the Spirit. Formerly God was known only through His communications to the prophets; then after the fullness of time, the second person of the Godhead walks and talks with men; and when the end for which He came is compassed, the third person in the Holy Trinity takes up his abode on earth for a season. There has been no real change of plan; the difference is only in the time and the instrumentalities which God sees fit to use. The same being who prepared the ark for the salvation of faithful Noah, and called the righteous Abraham to a work whose end He could not see, is He who walked in the land of Palestine, preaching repentance and salvation through a heaven-provided sacrifice. When the day of Pentecost brought into the midst of the infant church a new Presence, not indeed seen with the natural eye, but by spiritual discernment the disciples at once recognized the presence of the same Being who had been the hope of the righteous ever since the nations of the earth began to have a history. And from the day of that blessed Pentecostal outpouring, God, in the person of the Holy Spirit has been the mighty unseen power under whose wise and beneficent dispensation the kingdoms of the earth are being rapidly won over to justice and virtue.

In ancient days, God the Father was heard; then God the Son was seen, and now God the Holy Ghost is felt. And the Word of God in those days of fiery trial, grew and multiplied, and scores, and hundreds and thousands were won from paganism to Christianity, until the little handful became a large and powerful organization. But, little by little as the fires of persecution died out and the Nazarenes were no longer a despised, handful, but a rapidly growing body, many sought a home within the church's portals who had but little love for the Son of God, and who only took this step that they might minister to their personal advantage. Soon offices were multiplied and rites were added, and the church once poor became rich, and began to lay great stress upon the external aspect of her services. As her popularity increased, corrupt but wealthy men built temples of worship, and in return were hoisted to seats of honor and influence in her councils. Soon she who was called the bride of Christ courted and flattered by kings and princes, was led to ally herself with the secular power, compromised her spiritual principles, and in six centuries after the exit of the Son of Man, the earthly church designed of Heaven to be the refuge of sin-cursed souls had become the instrument for wielding a temporal power. A form clad in the eternal garb of righteousness, but with-in a growing putrefaction. Yet, thank God, that noble men were raised up when the fullness of time had come to clear away rubbish which for centuries had covered the Word of God. And there is no reason to fear that medieval darkness will return, for brighter, clearer, purer than the orb of day "became the light which the Blessed Son of Righteousness has caused to shine through the portals of his earthly church. Never was virtue so highly honored, never was religion so universally valued, never was Christian principle so sacred as it is at this very moment.

Again the mission of the earthly church is to teach the saved, and train them to be fishers of men. If Christianity is a sentimental thing, an intangible, fanciful imaginary affair, existing only in words and humanly created emotions, then of all beings on earth, are we the most foolish, and he who spends the most of his time in religious exercises is by so much the more a fool than all the rest. This hour of service is a farce, and he who plays the most conspicuous part deserves to be crowned with the cap and bells like the court jester of "ye olden time." But if Christianity be an established reality, and the Holy Bible contains the rule of man's life on earth, and a guide to peace beyond, then surely he is wise who makes himself acquainted with the letter and the spirit of its teachings, and he is the greatest benefactor of the human race,

who does the most to teach a blinded people the blessed truths of revelation. 2nd. How shall the church fulfil her mission? By following Christ. Follow me and I will make you fishers of men. This is the sole condition of success. This command meant no more to Andrew and Peter, than it means to every disciple in these modern days. True we cannot see, the Saviour in His bodily form or hear His word as did they, yet there is not one of us but comprehends the scope of this invitation, as those early disciples did not. But what is it to follow Christ, and so fulfil the condition of success? To imbibe His Spirit. If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His. The spirit of Christ in the hearts of His disciples subdues selfishness, and spiritual pride, draws the members of His body together. The stronger that spirit burns, the purer the Christian love existing between member and member, and the warmer the spirit of affection. The greater the mutual forbearance, self sacrifice and consequent unity, and in this consistent unity is continual and ever-augmented power over evil. To follow Christ is also, 2ndly, to imitate His example. He went about doing good. The smallest part of His work was done in the synagogue. Wherever was found a human need there was He, ready with the supply. He was not disturbed when aroused by night to teach an anxious inquirer the mysteries of the new birth. When weary and faint from hunger He did not deem it too much trouble to speak to a sinful woman of that living water, by drinking of which no man should ever afterwards thirst. No sacrifice was too great, no toil too severe, no suffering too intense, if by these means he could lighten the burdens of a sin-en-slaved race. True, the times have changed, and no such bitter experiences await the disciples as met the Saviour and his immediate followers. But the object of the christian religion is now the same as then, and the Example of it, is as truly the Guide of the disciple of today, as he was 1800 years ago.

And what is the outcome? See yonder stream, just a little silver-thread, coursing down the mountain side, a child might almost stop it with his hand. But look, little by little it broadens, and deepens until a mighty irresistible torrent it rushes through the land into the entrance of the grand old ocean, so advances this kingdom of Christ. The stream began its flow beneath the Saviour's cross, a little trickling rivulet whose waters were often choked by the foul deposits of sin, until its bed could not be found but ever and anon it emerges from the rubbish, clearer, stronger, larger than before. Its banks are fringed with verdure, its waters cool the fevered brow of the fainting pilgrim, and revive the drooping traveller in the desert. The sun does not dry its source in summer, the cold of winter cannot kill the verdure on its banks. On, on it flows, broadening, deepening, multiplying its tributaries, and the end shall only come when the Son of God shall "see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied," when; through the faithfulness of the earthly church, upheld by the Holy Spirit, the Lord shall become the Saviour of the heathen and the uttermost parts of the earth shall learn to love the name of the blessed Christ.

Oh where are kings and empires now, Of old that went and came, But Lord thy Church is praying yet, A thousand years, the same.

We mark her goodly battlements, And her foundation strong, We hear within the solemn voice, Of her unending song.

For not like kingdoms of the world, Thy Holy Church oh God, Though earthquakes' shock are threatening here, And tempests are abroad.

Unshaken as eternal hills, Immovable she stands, A mountain that shall fill the earth, A house not made with hands.

Just what is found to be the result of the combined working of the various denominations in Temperance work in England such is the evangelistic work in France notable for. At Lyons especially does this appear to be evident. All good work blesses those who give as well as those who receive.

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THE BAPTISTS—WHO ARE THEY?

is the title of a well written brief article in the London Baptist, by the Rev. L. Nuttall. An extract or two will be read with interest on this side of the Atlantic.

The Baptists bear an ancient, significant, and Christ-given name. It is remarkable that this name has never been held by those who have substituted sprinkling for immersion, and baptized infants instead of believers. It has been asked, Why do you take to yourselves this name, seeing that others practise what they believe to be Christian baptism as well as you? We reply, We did not take it; it was given to us, and has been applied to us by those who differ from us. But we none the less like it on that account, knowing it to be appropriate and scriptural. It was given by Christ to His forerunner John, because he immersed, and we do, those who "bring forth fruits meet for repentance." Christ Jesus often spoke of His faithful forerunner as John "The Baptist." Therefore, since Christ used the name to designate one who baptized or immersed the people, and since the first man who was called a "Baptist" was one of whom we need not be ashamed, we glory in the name, so time-honoured, expressive, and Christ-given. John the Baptist never disgraced the title by inconsistency or cowardice, and he died, as many a Baptist has done since, a martyr to truth and fidelity to God.

The Baptists have a distinguished origin and history. They trace their origin to the days of Christ and his apostles. They claim the Lord Jesus Christ as their founder. Since those days when John was baptizing, and our Lord was immersed that He might fulfil all righteousness, there have ever been Christians who, under different names and in divers places, have maintained this Gospel ordinance in its primitive simplicity and design. "Seeing that there is no record in the Word of God of the baptism of an infant, and that there is not so much as a single hint that sprinkling or pouring water was baptism, and that all instances of baptism mentioned in the Scriptures are invariably those of believers on a profession of their faith, and seeing that the word itself and the use of it necessarily involve immersion," it can safely be affirmed by an appeal to the New Testament that the earliest Christians were Baptists.

Dean Stanley affirmed "that for at least four centuries any other form than that of immersion was either unknown or regarded as exceptional."

In the sixteenth century the Council of Trent was sitting, and the president, Cardinal Hosius, in the course of his address gave a remarkable testimony to the existence and fidelity of the Baptists during the 1,200 years before that time. He said, "If the truth of a religion is to be judged by the readiness and cheerfulness which a man of any sect shows in suffering, then the opinions and persuasions of no sect can be truer and surer than those of the Anabaptists, since there have been none for the last 1,200 years that have been more grievously punished, or have more cheerfully undergone the most cruel torments, than those people." Therefore, before the close of the third century, 1,500 years ago, there were Baptists nobly and bravely witnessing and suffering for Christ.

Turning to our Fatherland, we find our history remarkable for its antiquity and trials. For anything that is known to the contrary, for the first 400 years the British Christians were all Baptists. Immersion was the general practice in England until within 300 years ago. And up to the time of Queen Elizabeth it continued to be the general custom. In her Prayer-book still in use, "dipping" is the prescribed form, and sprinkling or pouring the exception allowed in cases where immersion could not be "well endured." Dr. Whitby, a learned Episcopalian and commentator, says, "Immersion was observed by all Christians in England for thirteen centuries, and it were to be wished that this custom were in general use now." What he devoutly wished might be, is the invariable and unchanging practice of the Baptists to this day. Some people are apt to think and speak of the Baptists as being some new sect,

whereas they are older than any other existing body of Christians. From the earliest centuries they were found not only faithfully adhering to apostolic practice, but "suffering cheerfully the most cruel punishments" for their allegiance to Christ. The Baptist flag has thus "borne the battle and the breeze for nearly twice 1,000 years," and though oft torn and tattered by hard usage, it has never been captured; and it will, we believe, yet float from the battlements of every Christian community. We do not mean the Baptist denomination will ever become dominant, for that is not what we care for, but we do yet hope that the Christian Churches generally will adopt believers' baptism as "from heaven," and as the "one baptism."

In Great Britain eight-five years ago there were only 200 Baptist churches reported. There are now nearly 3,000, with about 300,000 members and 500,000 Sunday-school scholars. In America in 1740 there were only 3,000 Baptist members; now there are about 2,400,000. Our principles have taken root in all our colonies, and on the continent of Europe God has greatly blessed the labors of our brethren. In India, China, Japan, and Africa, God has done great things for us, whereof we are glad. Besides those who are identified with us, there are many Baptists not dwelling with their own people, but found in other Christian bodies. These are the Baptist leaven that may eventually leaven the whole. The Baptists have not been endowed with much of the wealth of this world, but God has raised up from amongst them many men whom all Christians have delighted to honour. There have been many who have borne our name, or believed in our principles, amongst the champions of religious freedom, scholars, writers, distinguished preachers, and leaders of thought and action. Roger Williams, who crossed the Atlantic to find an asylum for religious freedom; John Bunyan, the immortal author of the "Pilgrim's Progress;" Andrew Fuller, the most advanced thinker of his day; and Dr. Carey, the first English missionary, were Baptists. Robert Hall, the finest pulpit orator of his age, was a Baptist; Joseph Hughes, the founder of the British and Foreign Bible Society, was a Baptist. General Havelock and General Garfield were Baptists.

The Baptists have been the victims of cruel and shameful persecutions from time immemorial. In every quarter of the globe they have been imprisoned, exiled, and put to death, because they believed and declared that infant baptism was of man, and not of God. And heavy fines have been inflicted upon them because they refused to have their children sprinkled. Even some of the reformers have persecuted them. They have been slaughtered by tens of thousands in Germany and Italy and other places. In England, from the days of Henry VIII down to 1687, they suffered grievously from every dominant religious party; and they have had the honour of leading the van and bringing up the rear of the noble army of martyrs in England, for the first and the last English martyrs were Baptists. More than any other Christians the Baptists have had to suffer for adherence to their distinctive principles.

To inherit a fortune, is sometimes a misfortune to a young man. To have no necessity of struggling for a living, may keep a man from living a life worth living. A well-known American is reported to have been asked, recently for a sketch for his biography, and to have answered frankly, that he had been nothing, and had done nothing, worth telling the world about; and this because enough of a "competency" had been left him to practically destroy his competency. The estate left him by his father, was, he says, "ample enough to allow me to decently defray all my expenses. I have followed no calling, and given no cause for a biography." If an heir to a fortune comes to be a useful and an efficient man, it will be in spite of the drawback of his inheritance, not because of it. If you are an heir-expectant, beware. If you expect nothing by inheritance be thankful. In either case your hope is in God, and in His blessing on what you are, and on what you do; not on what you have.

The latest instance of the acceptance of English modes of usefulness in religious work is the introduction of the Friendly Letter Mission, instituted by Miss Skinner, of Bath, and the similar work just started by M. Fosberry, who reads the journals, and to each family represented by the Births, Marriages and Deaths columns, he despatches a prepared letter. In fact, he has well considered and provided for the various circumstances which newspapers usually reflect to turn them to good account.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

From Wolfville to Carleton, Yarmouth Co.

The railway station at Wolfville presented a scene of lively interest on the morning of Dec. 22nd, as crowds of joyous, light-hearted students separated for the holidays. There were many hasty farewells spoken, and many compliments for the approaching festive season exchanged. There was the wild enthusiasm which usually characterizes the homeward-bound college student, as well as the quiet, almost regretful parting of some whom stern necessity compelled to be absent from friends and home. Soon the train with its living freight is in motion, and ere long the familiar towers and classic walls of Acadia are lost to view. Then for a time the past, with its hours of mental toil, and its season of sunshine and shadow is forgotten, and the future with its bright visions as well as its unknown possibilities occupies the mind.

The journey from Wolfville to Yarmouth was exceedingly pleasant, at least to your correspondent, to whom the country, comprising, as it does, almost every variety of scenery, was entirely new. A drive of sixty miles through the beautiful valley of Annapolis, with its snow-clad, forest-crowned mountains rising up on either side; a passage of twenty miles down the swift-flowing Annapolis River; a ride of seventy miles from Digby to Yarmouth, through flourishing settlements, among wooded hills, by ice-bound lakes, all afforded us no small amount of enjoyment.

Leaving Yarmouth we drove by "express" to Carleton. The evening air was clear and frosty. The sleigh skimmed over the frozen snow. Away we sped beyond the busy life of the city, past suburban residences and cozy cottages, past farm houses whose homelike appearance awakened reminiscences of more distant and familiar scenes, past orchards where the leafless trees looked ghost-like in the gathering twilight, past churches that "nested down among the hills," and imparted an air of solemn stillness to the scene, past schoolhouses that stood by the wayside like mute reminders of the flight of years, past boisterous lads and rosy lassies who coasted down every hillside and filled the wintry air with gleeful shouts, past mills and factories where babbling streams murmured and fretted as they turned the "laboring wheel." Soon the way became more solitary. The road now winds through groves of fir and scattered beeches, along the margin of forest lakes, up winding, rocky hills, till at length, after a drive of twenty miles, we are set down in the little village of Carleton.

This flourishing village is the centre of a large lumber interest. It contains three churches, and some fine private residences. The Baptist meeting-house is said to be the neatest and prettiest building of its kind in the county. The little band of Baptists in Carleton deserve the highest praise for their energy and perseverance in erecting such a gem of architecture. It is not only a credit to themselves, but also to the entire denomination. It was begun and completed within eighteen months, and after the seats were disposed of, the people had the satisfaction of knowing that the building was virtually free from debt. It was opened for public worship in November last. The dedicatory services were of more than ordinary interest, and were participated in by Revs. J. A. Stubbart, A. Cohoon, C. Goodspeed, J. A. Gordon, and L. M. Young.

The church is small numerically, but strong in zeal and united in purpose, and its members are, in every respect, worthy pioneers of Baptist principles in this new and promising field. Here the minister feels that he is but a leader of a band of workers as earnest as himself, and he grows stronger and more enthusiastic in consequence. To your correspondent this short visit of four weeks to Carleton was an extremely pleasant one. The friendships he formed, the kindness he received, will not soon be forgotten, and his prayer will be that the Master may continue to reward with special favor the church and people at Carleton.

Jan. 22nd, 1883.

The latest instance of the acceptance of English modes of usefulness in religious work is the introduction of the Friendly Letter Mission, instituted by Miss Skinner, of Bath, and the similar work just started by M. Fosberry, who reads the journals, and to each family represented by the Births, Marriages and Deaths columns, he despatches a prepared letter. In fact, he has well considered and provided for the various circumstances which newspapers usually reflect to turn them to good account.

Mr. Ed. If you copied fr... words ca... and the... some ot... circumst... christia... at the ti... touching... I enclos... has his... He reme... the sea i... the great... their an...

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N. Y. Pe

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