

Messenger and Visitor

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HOME MISSIONS.

BIBLE PRINCIPLES.

The Lord your God hath given you rest, but ye shall pass your brethren armed, all the mighty men of valor, and help them until the Lord hath given your brethren rest, as he hath given you and they also have possessed the land which the Lord your God giveth them.

These words spoken to the Reubenites, Gadites and to the half tribe of Manasseh by Joshua (see Joshua 1:12) may appropriately be addressed to the strong self-supporting churches today. The Lord hath given you rest. You have comfortable houses of worship in which to assemble and faithful pastors to preach the word every Lord's day. Now help your brethren of the weak churches in their efforts to take possession of their portion of the land. Little bands of brethren at Lunenburg, Sydney and other places struggling hard to possess the land which the Lord your God giveth them. Help them, brethren of the strong churches by contributing liberally to Home Missions so that the Board may be in a position to give them the needed assistance.

"Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached."

So said the Christ to the messengers of John the Baptist who came with the enquiry "Art thou he that should come or look we for another?" He put it forth as one of the proofs of his Messiahship that the gospel was being preached by him to the poor. If we would imitate Christ we must see to it that we give the gospel to the poor. This is the work of Home Missions. The poor of this world, rich in faith, are those whom God chooses as heirs of the Kingdom. He filleth the poor with good things while the rich are sent empty away.

"And ye shall be witnesses to me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Acts 1:8.

Here is the Divine order in witnessing for Christ or preaching the gospel—First, local; second, provincial; third, world-wide work. It is not wise to disregard the order and pass over the two first, nor should the last be neglected.

"But if any provide not for his own, and specially his own household he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." 1 Tim. 5:8.

Does not this principle require us to care for the weak churches. They are our own—they belong to our household—to the denomination. They have a special claim on our hearts. We do not care for them they will not be cared for. If they are to live and grow as Baptist churches the care they need must be given them by the Home Mission Board.

ENCOURAGEMENTS TO HOME MISSION WORK.

BY THE SECRETARY.

1. The first encouragement to which we call attention is the promise of the Master "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." We are accustomed to quote this with special reference to Foreign Missions. It belongs as much, however, to the workers at home as to the worker abroad. In giving the commission he took care, according to Luke, to instruct the disciples to witness for him in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria, as well as the uttermost part of the earth. We know that He was with his disciples as they did Home Mission work in Jerusalem and Judea, and we are sure that he keeps His promise to the Home Missionary today.

2. A second encouragement to Home Mission work is the field of operations. This is work among the poor rather than the rich. This is true whether the missionary labor in the city or the country. Experience has shown this to be the most hopeful place for soul-winning. Paul's testimony is "not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, nor many noble are called." It is not, usually the rich church of the city, with its eloquent pastor, his choice and complete appointments, that wins the largest number of converts. We have even known the little mission Baptist church gather in more than all the other Baptist churches of the city.

3. The appreciation with which the work and the workers is received is another encouragement in the prosecution of this work. In no other department of christian work is there so much of appreciation on the part of those for whom the efforts are made as in this. The weak churches are thankful for the help extended to them and are encouraged thereby to put forth greater efforts themselves. The missionaries find the people ready to welcome them to their homes, and in most cases eager to hear the word of life. While a few of the "leaders" of other bodies may oppose, "the common people" to use a New Testament phrase, hear our missionaries gladly. Their interest in the word preached is often manifested by their coming long distances to hear it.

4. A fourth encouragement to Home Mission work is the success that attends it. It has already been shown that the conditions for success are favorable. As might be expected from such conditions, the numbers gathered into the churches through this work are greater, in proportion to the efforts put forth than in any other. Of the work in Ontario last year the Superintendent writes "Of the 5,219

baptisms reported in Ontario last year more than one half were from Home Mission fields."

"This work has always been successful in these provinces. Before the days of organized effort when the "Fathers" as we are accustomed to call them, went forth as the Spirit prompted them, their efforts were crowned with rich blessings. To these mission tours, we owe many of our best churches to day. Ever since 1814, when the work was formally taken up by the denomination, the blessing has not been wanting. Then, according to the minutes, we had 26 churches with a membership of 1,494. Now we have 400 churches with 45,100 members. Very much of this increase is due to Home Mission work. How much it is

We have long wished to see all our mission fields supplied with continuous labor. We are nearer to it now than ever before, much nearer than we hoped to be a short time ago. This is due to the increase in the supply of laborers. In former years we have had abundance of men after the schools closed; this year the supply has kept up through the autumn and winter. It looks now as if we could keep our fields constantly supplied with laborers if only the money support could be helped to help the churches carry them.

3. There is an increasing desire on the part of the mission churches to make up as much of their pastors' salaries as possible, and to become self-supporting as soon as they can. Three of the fields in

ground among a people who undervalue the ordinances of religion. Vice and dissipation of all kinds would be indulged in without shame, business would steadily decline and general squalor over-spread the entire community. Let the H. M. Board send a consecrated missionary to such a place and with God's blessing, what a change in that community. Through the publication of "glad tidings" not only would the sweet songs of Zion be heard in place of the drunkard's rude mirth, but signs of material comfort would surely appear on every side. Homes before bare and desolate would become neat and cheerful; paint would adorn the buildings, trade revive and an era of prosperity begin. "So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith and he that smoothes with the hammer him that smote the anvil, saying it is ready for the soldering and he fastened it with nails that it should not be moved."

"On the prophet would still further exultate on the blessings of Mission's reign he calls the attention of the people again to the material benefits of religion as a proof of God's love and mercy—"The wilderness and solitary places shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the albatra tree and the myrtle and the oil tree. I will set in the desert the fir tree and the pine and the box tree together, that they may see and know and be satisfied, and shall say together that the hand of the Lord hath been there."

If the blessings and benefits of civilized life be not traceable to religion, then to what source can we trace them, as the Foreign Missionary opens heaven-lands to the commerce of civilized countries and so enlarges the trade of the world, and causes the desolate wastes of heathenism to smile with the comforts of christian nations, so the Home Missionary cleanses the hearts and reforms the lives of the people, stimulates all lawful industry and changes the very face of nature about him. Religion makes better farmers, better mechanics, better tradesmen and better professional men. How few among the people have intelligently grasped this idea of the dependence of material upon spiritual prosperity. Because the people have not clearly seen this truth the bearer of good tidings, our H. M. Board is left to wrestle with an empty treasury. It would not be difficult to show that a community can rise as high, and no higher in material prosperity than in spiritual life. This is the mission of the Home Missionary. John in writing to his beloved Gaius could wish him no more than this, "That you may be in health and prosper even as thou prosperest." Education and refinement cannot take the place of religion, nor the schoolmaster of the squire as a factor in the problem of our country's advancement. Religion is the pioneer and education follows in its wake.

The work of Home Missions contributes to the welfare of the country in another way, viz: by sending into our towns and cities from the country districts young men and women whose characters are firmly fixed upon principles of christian morality and truth. Many of these young people being honest and religious are admitted to places of trust and soon

temptations which there abound and to conquer in the fierce battle of life. Let those who look upon such with pride and call them the back bone of our country, not forget the part our H. M. Board plays in producing and giving them to the country.

The missionary, too, is always on the look-out for those choice young spirits to be found in all our country districts whose abilities and inspirations incite them to seek an education. Such as these hunger and thirst after knowledge but see no way by which they can satisfy their cravings. Just at the opportune time the H. M. Board sends a bright, cheerful, consecrated missionary into the place where one or more of these young aspirants for higher things lives. The youthful preacher and these young people are naturally attracted to each other, and an intimacy springs up which leads to the unobscuring of secret longings.

These young people tell, the missionary all their hearts as they would not sell them to any other besides on earth. Then begins a series of plans which result in rich blessing in future years. The missionary on the field is practically a student from our Educational Institutions at Wolfville and so is able to make explanations and clear away difficulties before considered insurmountable. A little encouragement; a conversation with the parents and everything is arranged. At the proper time the young man or woman is sent to the college, and the world would miss the help of their clear heads and tender hearts, but would not know the reason why. Then too the evangelization of the people bears as directly upon our social system as upon the industrial life of the country. Social morality is wholly dependent upon the precepts and commandments of the christian religion. In deed we reach here the head waters of the stream. At the proper time the sound morality is the source from which intelligent industry and inventive genius come. To teach men to love, not hate, each other; to be unselfish; to rejoice in the prosperity of another, to regard it as their duty to be honest in business; to live at peace; to be courteous and of a forgiving spirit; to settle disputes by reason rather than by brute force, these are the principles upon which good society can alone be built up. In view of the gains which have come to our country through the work of Home Missions society, it placed under a heavy debt to the organization which is carrying forward this good work.

No money is so well spent in this land of ours as that which is laid out by the H. M. Board in Home Mission work. This money, as I have wished to show, should not come from the churches alone, but from all the people because the blessings coming out of this work are shared alike by all the people.

Yarmouth, N. S.

SYDNEY, C. B., BAPTIST CHURCH.
The Church at Sydney, C. B., represented in this cap, was dedicated Dec. 9th, 1884. The exterior is made and set in appearance and the interior neat and comfortable. It is built and equipped in approved modern style. The audience seats 200 and by turning open the lecture room 300 can be accommodated. The total cost including site and furnish was \$4,200.

impossible to tell because the records are wanting. This we do know, however, since 1880, thirty-six churches have been organized and 6,036 baptisms by the missionaries sent out by the Home Mission Board. Of the 18,700 baptisms reported by our churches during the last ten years, 4,531 or nearly one fourth were in connection with our Home Mission work.

This is seen also in the growth of the weak churches. Sometimes it is said that it is no use to help the weak churches for they will always remain weak. This may be true in some cases for the constant removals prevent growth, but it is not true in all. Nine teen of the groups in N. S. that have been on our mission roll since 1882, have in all 33 churches, are now self-sustaining. In 1882 these 19 fields gave \$623.48 to our denominational work. Last year they gave \$1,696.

5. Another encouragement to Home Mission work is seen in the reflex benefits that proceed from it. There are always reflex benefits from all work for Christ. In many cases however these are spiritual rather than material. In the case of Home Mission work they are material as well as spiritual. We can do little more than name these at present:

(1) It cements the denomination by bringing the strong churches to feel an interest in the weak churches, and the weak churches to think kindly of the strong churches because of the help given them.

(2) It strengthens the denomination by increasing the number of the churches, and building up many weak ones into self-sustaining churches, by supplying many valuable members for the strong churches, especially of the towns and cities, and by furnishing many good men for our ministry.

Seeing then that there are so many things to encourage us to appeal to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ and desire the advancement of his cause to contribute liberally towards removing the debt of \$2,600 that now hinders the Board in the prosecution of this work, and to continue a generous support in time to come.

Wolfville, N. S.

Home Mission Work in Nova Scotia and P. E. Island.

The condition of our Home Mission work in Nova Scotia and P. E. Island, is in many respects in a most encouraging condition, more so in fact, than at any time during my acquaintance with it.

1. The churches are conveniently grouped. Some of the groups are too large, perhaps, and did funds permit would be divided, but all the churches are included in some one of the groups, and receive at least a share of the pastor's labors. This matter of holding our weak churches together in groups, most convenient for working, is a much easier matter than it was a few years ago. The churches are coming to understand that there is such a thing as inter-dependence as well as independence, and that churches as well as individuals are to look not only to their own things, but also on the things of others. Now and then something occurs to break off a church from the group to which it naturally belongs, but it soon falls back again.

2. The churches are well supplied with ministerial labor.

The five mission interests on P. E. Island all have men to minister to them. So have twenty-two of the fields in Nova Scotia. Two have supplies and one now un-supplied is arranging for a pastor to settle with them in May next, leaving but one to be provided for as things are at present. None of these are short missions, i. e., missions that end in a few weeks, but are supposed to continue till circumstances require a change.

Nova Scotia and one in P. E. Island, that received aid last year, are supporting their pastors this year, and others are expecting to assume the burden of self support in the near future. There is being willing to remain dependent churches being willing to remain dependent. The manifestation of a readiness to carry all their own burden is therefore most gratifying, especially when along with this the churches continue and even increase the amount of their offerings for denominational work.

4. Besides the pastoral supply above referred to, Bro. Mearl, General Missionary, is constantly at work holding special services at places that seem most to need his services. Applications for these services are more numerous than can be attended to. We desire that his labors be used especially for opening up or developing new interests, or in lifting up churches that for some reason have fallen into a weak or sickly state.

By the advice of the Halifax District Committee, Rev. D. G. McDonald, has been appointed to labor in Halifax County. It is expected that his labors will be in the direction of opening up new interests as well as strengthening old ones. The conviction grows upon us that we have not been as aggressive as we should be in our Home Mission work. True we have always tried to enter open doors, but by reason of lack of funds and laborers we have not pushed out as much as we should. The blessing that has always followed efforts to enter new fields should encourage us to attempt greater things in this direction.

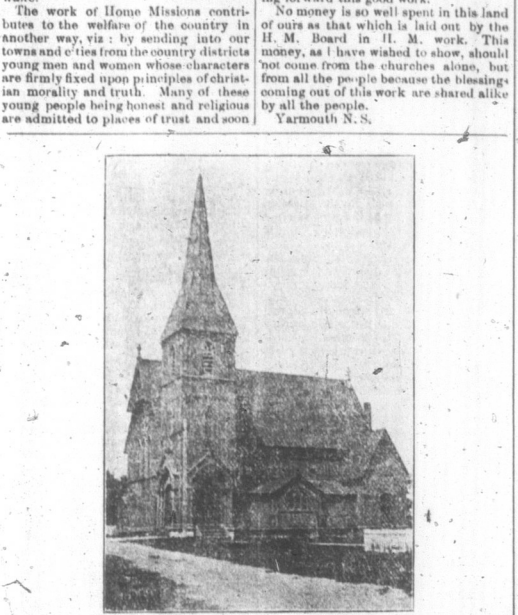
Such then is the present condition of our work in Nova Scotia and P. E. Island. Shall we go back from this position or shall we advance? Brethren and sisters it is for you to answer this question. If you will come forward and give of the \$2,600 that is now due, a generous support to the work all will be well, otherwise we shall again have to call a halt or even to a retreat. What say you? The Master says GET IT, what say you, HALT, or still worse, RETREAT? WOLFVILLE, N. S., Feb. 27.

Home Mission Work as Related to the Welfare of our Country.

REV. J. H. FOSBAY.

When our Home Mission Board makes an appeal for money to help carry forward the work intrusted to it by the denomination, the appeal should meet with a quick and generous response, not only from the members of the churches, but from all the people. No doubt there will be deeper and more general sympathy with the work of the Board and more liberal giving into its treasury, so soon as the work of spreading the gospel is seen to be related to every department of industrial life, and so vitally related to them that it can be truly said to lie at the basis of all real prosperity. It is true the chief aim of mission work is, and always must be, the salvation of souls and the blessing of God's people spiritually. But it is also true that the enjoyment and edification of weak churches is not all the Home missionary aims to accomplish, nor is that all that results from the preaching of the gospel and the regular services of God's house in a community. Wherever the missionary goes he carries with him the heaven with which to leaven the entire population with those principles which underlie thrift and good government. I am sure not one of the many who give seldom or grudgingly to our Home Mission work would give his voice for discontinuing the work, because the condition of things which would result from ceasing to evangelize the people must be apparent to all.

Sin against God and man rapidly gains



DIGBY, N. S., BAPTIST CHURCH EDIFICE.
The Digby Baptist Church was organized in 1843. It had many obstacles to contend with and for some time its growth was slow. The Convention Board assisted it for five years, but since 1848 it has been more than ever a self-sustaining church, home and other property. Beside the church building shown above, it has on the right of it a commodious parsonage, a Sunday school building, a vestry, a hall for social and other purposes. Digby Church is a fine illustration of the benefit of Home Mission work to a devoted band of workers. It is now one of our best contributing churches to denominational work.

become influential in the world of business and firm friends of all moral reform. We all know what a large proportion of the men who control the trade, manufacturing and shipping interests of our towns and cities come from humble homes in the more obscure sections of our country. In our city churches, too, are to be seen men and women from these same obscure places who are the pride and comfort of their pastors hearts; with which to leaven the entire population with those principles which underlie thrift and good government. I am sure not one of the many who give seldom or grudgingly to our Home Mission work would give his voice for discontinuing the work, because the condition of things which would result from ceasing to evangelize the people must be apparent to all.

The importance of Planting and Fostering Churches in the Towns.

REV. W. B. SMITH, M. A.

The Gospel is destined to bring the world to the feet of Christ. All theories and philosophies will absolutely fail to accomplish this. In claiming to be Baptists we stand wholly upon the Bible and loyally maintain that the whole Gospel and nothing but the Gospel, shall be proclaimed to all men. We protest against coloring the truth; we protest against taking anything away from, or adding anything to, the Gospel; we protest against the practice of anything that is not definitely authorized by a "Thus saith the Lord." Although we agree with others on important points, yet there are important points on which we disagree, and it is these very points of difference

which distinguish us as a denomination. These entire Biblical truths which we hold will never be proclaimed and practiced by other men, and as we are commanded to go preach to them it is apparent to all that we are under obligation to plant and foster our churches everywhere.

1. The importance of planting churches in the towns.

1. Because we are working by apostolic methods. Paul was not satisfied in having a church at Jerusalem only, but manifested that enterprising missionary spirit which led him into other centres for the express purpose of proclaiming the truth and planting churches. But some one may raise an objection, and say, "Why establish a church in a centre where some other denomination has a church already established there?" I think Paul's method fully answers that question. They had a system of worship at Ephesus, the worship of Diana, goddess of the Ephesians. Did Paul say, "As there was a system of worship and religion there he would not undertake to plant a church?" Assuredly he did not. He probably reasoned this way: "That system of religion at Ephesus is not in harmony with the Gospel, therefore the true church of Christ, which will maintain every principle of the Gospel, must be planted;" and he planted it. Thus we find Paul working in the centre—Ephesus, Colosse, Philippi; Corinth and Rome. On the same ground are we authorized and obligated to plant churches in the towns. We are forced to say, in the light of revealed truth, that other denominations practice error; and shall we stand idly by and see error instilled into the minds of the perishing multitudes without showing them the truth, and the necessity of obedience to it.

2. By establishing churches in the towns we are able to reach the masses—We ought not to allow the children of darkness to be wiser than we who are of the light. Business men are easily led astray in the light of central cities in order to secure a large trade and a handsome income. And as we are about our Master's business, and are desirous to secure the allegiance of all t'rist, it is not imperative upon us that we shall plant churches in the centres in order to accomplish such a high aim? The sooner this is done the easier it will be to accomplish the desired end. A church early established in a town is in a position to take advantage of all opportunities in reaching those who are first to time moving to the centre. If the planting of a church be deferred until other denominations have installed their principles into the minds of young and old, and have erected against us strong walls of denominationalism, we will find it very hard to gain a footing. Our principles are worthy of the highest recognition, therefore we should early establish ours—lives among the masses.

3. By planting churches in the towns we are able to do the people good—We will right one must stand right; to be wrong is to end in despair. It is dangerous to teach that the soul's salvation rests upon sacramental grace; it is unsafe to teach that the saved can be unsaved; it is misleading to instil the principle that salvation rests wholly upon the election of God, and that man has no part to perform; it is unscriptural to teach baptismal regeneration, for this is crying out grace, grace when there is no grace. These are the very abominations which many a soul will be cast away. Thus the necessity of establishing Biblical principles everywhere in order that men may make no mistake in regard to their salvation; and in so doing we will be conferring a lasting good.

II. The importance of fostering churches in the towns.

1. In order to reap the individual members in the faith to plant a church is one thing; to foster it is another thing. Paul not only planted churches, but he fostered them by preaching to them, and confirming them in the faith. But there is another consideration in fostering a church. There must be benevolence and generosity on the part of self-sustaining churches, in order that a pastor may be supported to feed them upon treasures both new and old. Strength depends upon health, food and exercise; and fostering our weaker churches in our country is giving them spiritual health, the pure bread of life, and leading them to active service; therefore strength must be the necessary result.

2. To secure economical growth. Far be it from us to aim solely at numbers. We aim at thorough ground work in relation; and if that is well founded there is no need of our confining ourselves to a limited few, for a few good, if accepted by the many, do them good. In denominational growth there will be more work and more burden, therefore the evangelization of the world will be easier. And, further, it will be a source of encouragement to more earnest and devoted service. There is nothing like the sound victory that will encourage the weary soldier.

3. To foster weak churches will soon make them leaders in other. Where divine principles have been planted, we naturally look for developments, and we have not looked in vain. This has been the case with several churches that have been planted and fostered in our towns. They have gradually risen above support from the H. M. Board, and have given liberally to the support of other weak and struggling churches; and these weak interests will, if well fostered, become in due time feeders for others in like condition. Thus we are encouraged to plant and foster churches in our towns ever believing that God, who changes not, will give the increase.

Springhill.

F. F. Worms in Children—Oberles Vornifolge.