

Circular Letter.

HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD.

THE CIRCULAR LETTER FROM THE N. S. CENTRAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION TO THE CHURCHES OF WHICH IT IS COMPOSED, GREETING.

(Published by direction of the Association.)

Dear Brethren,—

We send you this our annual letter, and it is fitting that our first note should be one of thankfulness to God for the privilege we have had of again assembling together in order that we may obtain knowledge of the circumstances of the churches that compose this Association, and forward the same to you with such suggestions as may occur to us, for the furtherance of the cause of our Redeemer.

If we may judge of the state of religion within the limits of this Association by the letters read from the various churches, we can come to no other conclusion than this: that there is great need for a gracious outpouring of the Divine Spirit upon our churches, and for a more complete consecration of ourselves as members of the Church of Jesus Christ to the cause of God, and for that personal holiness which is so essential in the christian life and service.

We have therefore thought it well to ask your prayerful attention to the subject of Personal Holiness or Consecration to the Lord.

In dwelling upon the nature of personal holiness, we would remark that it is divine in its source.

It may be defined as the result of the Divine Spirit's work in the soul of the believer, or as the development of the principle of spiritual life implanted by God. Just as the ivy by its clinging and the bird by its song, express their possession of life in their own ways, so the possession of spiritual life shows itself after its kind, in holiness, uprightness, and devout aspirations.

Every pure thought or acceptable service must be attributed to the operation of the Holy Ghost—our blessings, our instruction in righteousness, our hopes, are all traceable to His working.

The influence of personal holiness is such that it pervades the whole of the consecrated man's nature. The all-pervading influence of the Holy Spirit is not only a source of great joy to the believer, but a means by which his every word and deed are regulated.

Its influence is such that he is led to hate those things that were once precious in his sight, and love what was once despised. As the sap courses through every living bough of the forest tree, so the grace of God runs through the entire man, and influences for good his whole life.

The manifestations of personal holiness are various. Some would have us believe that severity of manner, gloominess of countenance and an unyielding solemnity in religious life, are unmistakable evidences of personal consecration or holiness. We believe otherwise, and that a man may be personally holy and yet "rejoice in the Lord always," and continually have a new song in his mouth, even of praise unto God. Holiness and happiness are closely related.

Of the internal evidences of personal holiness, we may mention humiliation of heart, deep spiritual longings after full and complete consecration to the Lord, intense love for Christ, and of entire dependence on Him at all times. With such feelings as these within us, we can readily understand what our Saviour meant when He said "The kingdom of God is within you."

Such devout and holy aspirations as these must of necessity lift the soul upward and Godward.

Among the external manifestations of personal holiness, faithfulness in the discharge of secular duties may be mentioned, pureness of heart and consecration of life will make a man not only "fervent in spirit" but diligent and honest in business, the tradesman of holy life will write over his counter, and on the first page of his ledger, "Holiness unto the Lord," and the godly father will erect an altar in his household with this inscription: "Dedicated to the worship of the true God."

The more holy a man is the more useful and respected a member of society will he become; he will invest every office he holds with honor, and by his consistent life, will commend the service and religion of Jesus to those around him. Further, in the discharge of christian duties, he will be found faithful also. He will engage earnestly in the work of the Lord, and like David, will be found seven times a day praising God; for earnestness is a great sign of spiritual life, even as the lack of it is a sure sign of spiritual declension, if not death. With earnestness the holy man unites generosity; when he consecrated himself to God he laid his all upon the altar. In fact, there can be no true consecration or holiness without this. That christian who does not give of his substance as well as his service to God, is guilty of keeping back part of the price, and of withholding the tithes that belong to the treasury of the Lord's house.

May not this be the reason why our Home and Foreign Missions and our educational Institutions are not supported as they deserve and as they need; that we forget, that as christian men and women who profess to be consecrated to the Master's service, that we are obligated to give liberally to the support of the Master's cause.

Christian Benevolence and Holiness are inseparable, and no man can be personally holy without being correspondingly generous; our purses need consecrating as well as our hearts, for this is an unmistakable evidence of personal holiness that with earnestness in christian work, we unite liberally in supporting the cause of Christ.

There are many means by which personal holiness may be developed, for it is not perfected here, but is progressive in its nature; the climate of this world is not suited to the full growth of so choice a plant as holiness; it is reserved for the more congenial clime of Paradise to cause its bursting into eternal bloom. Nevertheless we are charged to "grow in grace," and to go "from strength to strength until we stand in Zion before Christ, who is perfect in holiness. When "seeing him we shall be made like unto Him."

This holiness may be developed by a prayerful and careful study of the word of God; in it we shall find examples worthy of imitation—commands for obedience, promises for comfort, rules for guidance, instruction in righteousness—that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Fellowship with Christ is another means, communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. There is nothing like

personal intercourse with Christ to promote holy living. Even as the brightest star is the one nearest the sun, so the purest and most holy christian is the one closest in the presence of His Lord, his face, like the face of Moses, shall become radiant with the glory of the Divine presence. The soul that is often in the mount of communion shall gather strength and grow in grace, "perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord."

The importance of personal holiness may be judged of by the prominence given to the subject in Scripture. We read:—"As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation," "Walk worthy of God," "Be ye followers of God," "He gave himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

The happiness it brings to its possessor is another proof of its importance. Holiness is a joy-giving and joy-sustaining principle. It is when we are most holy that we are most happy. The reason why many professors of religion are so miserable is because they lack holiness, without which no man can enjoy the privilege of communion with God, which is the secret of true spiritual joy.

Every member of the Church of Jesus Christ should keep before him as the motto of his life, "Holiness unto the Lord." How else can the church be kept pure, and how can discipline be beneficially administered unless there be such a manifest depth of spirituality and holiness among its members as to make the wrong doer feel that he is in the presence of a spiritual tribunal? Discipline under any other condition must prove a failure. Personal holiness is important because it is the secret of success in christian work, and a sure fore-runner of the Divine blessing.

The great danger before the churches of Jesus Christ to-day, is not persecution nor science, falsely so called, but worldliness and formality. We have to meet the danger and we can do it most successfully, by lifting high the standard of holiness and purity of life, and seeking a more thorough consecration to the Lord and devotion to His cause.

By this means shall we repel the spirit of worldliness from the communion of the church, and place ourselves in a position to receive the much needed and much prayed for blessing of a gracious and mighty outpouring of the Divine Spirit upon every church within the limits of this Association.

For this let us pray and labor during the coming year, ever keeping as our watchword and motto "Holiness unto the Lord."

In addition to the above excellent Letter to the Churches, we may mention that the Report and discussion on Education secured earnest attention, and are worthy of consideration by many others besides those present. We therefore insert the former, and on another page give a few of the thoughts expressed by the brethren in reference to the subject:—

REPORT ON EDUCATION.

The Institutions at Wolfville continue to do work of vital importance for the Baptists of these Lower Provinces.

In the Academy the attendance has been, during the year, about the same as for the year previous. The instruction given has been reported to be thorough and satisfactory.

With a view to easier and more efficient government of the school, it is proposed to refit the old Academy boarding house, and place the younger pupils in it, under the immediate eye and control of the Principal, the elder ones continuing to occupy the new building as heretofore. About 20 of the Academy students are expected to be prepared to enter the College next year.

The Ladies' Seminary is in a very satisfactory condition; the attendance being larger than heretofore. The pupils studious, and deportment good. Five young ladies graduated at the close of the last school year. The exercises were exceedingly interesting.

Miss Graves, the Principal, appears to be growing in the confidence and esteem of the friends of the Institution.

The College was never more useful or more efficient in its work than at the present time. Sixty pupils were enrolled during the last year. Nine of whom having completed the course of study, and passed satisfactory examinations, were admitted to the first degree of A. B.

The President says, "The work of the year has been done with earnestness and thoroughness. Our chief anxiety is in regard to finances. The Convention has not made adequate provision for the regular expenses. We need some \$4,000 from the Convention plan. Last year we did not receive one-half of that sum, consequently there was a debt; and we fear that the result in August will show that this debt has been increased the present year. If anything can be done between this and the meeting of the Convention to prevent this result, it certainly should be done." He further says: "The conviction seems to be extending, that the Theological department must be sustained. It is to be regretted that the subscriptions to the Rev. Dr. Tupper Professorship, come in so slowly it is hardly respectful to the memory of a good and honored man, that the making up of this Professorship should be by a slow and tedious process. It should be accomplished by a spontaneous and immediate movement."

Dr. Schurman having received another appointment, has resigned his Professorship in Acadia College. However much the Governors may regret this change, they will have, with the limited means at their disposal, no alternative but to accept this resignation. But it may be hoped that at an early day the place may be adequately filled by another.

Your Committee would urge the absolute necessity of vigorous and harmonious action. The Institutions cannot live without the hearty co-operation of the denomination. The denomination in these days of mental activity, cannot expect to maintain a vigorous life and growth without the Institutions. They rise together or they sink together. They must help to hold each other up or they must help to pull each other down. It is for the Associations, which both mould and voice the sentiments of the people, to give no uncertain sound, but to say to the Convention "Go forward in this work, and every loyal Baptist will bear some humble part so long as you build for our country, our denomination, and our God."

Respectfully submitted,

T. A. HIGGINS,
Chairman of Committee.

The Central Association is having a series of sketches of the history of the older of its churches, prepared and read at the annual sessions of the body. The following was presented at Chester on Monday of last week, by the Rev. S. B. Kempton, the pastor:—

THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST CORNWALLIS CHURCH

may be said to commence in 1776. Henry Alline was its founder, as he was also the first pastor. It was composed of persons holding a diversity of views of ordinances and of church polity. Mr. Alline was succeeded in the pastorate by Rev. John Payzant, who, after a few years, removed to Liverpool. After his removal, Rev. Harris Harding preached for a time to the church, but whether he was really the pastor of the church or not, I have not been able to discover.

In 1795, Oct. 19, Rev. Edward Manning was ordained pastor of the church. He was then a Congregationalist, and practiced both sprinkling and baptism. But he was led to question the propriety of such diverse modes of administering a divine ordinance. He soon embraced scriptural views of truth and duty, and was himself baptized in 1798, at Annapolis, by Rev. Thomas H. Chipman. This step produced some trouble and confusion in the church, and numbers of his hearers forsook him. He held on his way, however, and the Lord gave manifest token of His presence. "A few years after his baptism" says Benedict in his History of the Baptists, Mr. Manning was obliged to relinquish open communion, and in 1807, soon after the church was reformed to its present unimixed and consistent plan, he was led to call in question the validity of his former ordination. He was therefore re-ordained in 1808. In this he received advice and assistance from two missionaries of the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society, Bros. Isaac Case and Henry Hale.

When Mr. Manning was ordained of the church in 1808, it consisted of seven members, viz: Mr. Manning and his wife, Wm. Chipman and his wife, Isaac Willoughby, Dorcas Hall, and Thomas Bligh. He remained pastor of this church till his death, which occurred Jan. 12, 1851, a period, if we count from the date of his first ordination, of 56 years. During that long period he saw many trials. It was not a season of continuous peace in the church, and blessing upon the labor of the pastors. There were years of the right hand of the Most High, when many turned to the Lord, and there were frequent seasons of severe trial, when sin and Satan seemed in the ascendant.

Mr. Manning once resigned his charge, and went away. After about two years' absence he was recalled by the church to resume the duties he had laid down. He cheerfully responded, and remained with the church until his death. In 1846, Mr. Manning being infirm, and often ill, Rev. A. S. Hunt was called by the church to act as co-pastor with him. The two men, the old and the young man laboured together in loving harmony until death took the old pastor, when Mr. Hunt became sole pastor. Under Mr. Hunt, the church saw many seasons of refreshing from the hand of the Lord, and many were added to the Lord.

Mr. Hunt resigned the pastoral charge of the church in Nov. 1867. For two years he was laid aside by severe illness, but the church cheerfully sustained him, supplied the pulpit on the Sabbath and bore his enforced absence from their homes in their time of sickness and trouble without a murmur. They would have retained him and allowed him time to recover his strength before resuming full work, but he thought it best to seek a less extensive field. In Jan. 1868, the present pastor, S. B. Kempton, was called to the church. Again the severe and protracted illness of the pastor has taxed the faith and patience of the church. But it stood the trial. For fifteen months the pulpit was supplied, the sick pastor tenderly cared for, and his return to his work in the church acknowledged as an answer to prayer.

From 1795 the church has enjoyed the labors of a pastor, except the brief interruptions referred to, and yet during the whole time, a period of 87 years next October. There have been but three different pastors.

About 25 young men have gone out from this church to preach the gospel. Most of them have been ordained to the ministry. Some of them have become prominent in the cause of truth and righteousness. A succession of noble and excellent men have filled the deacons' office in the 1st Cornwallis. The names and the devotedness to the interests of truth of Deacons (Coggswell, Reid, Chipman, Eaton and Rand, are known beyond the limits of the church they served, nor has the worth of the deaconship departed with the demise of these worthy ones.

The 1st Cornwallis church is the parent of several other churches, of whom brief notice may be taken here. In 1828, a church was formed at Berwick, called then the 2nd Cornwallis Baptist Church. Rev. Wm. Chipman was ordained its pastor. With this church he remained till his death. He has been succeeded by faithful men, by means of whose labors the church has grown, until its membership out-numbers that of the parent church.

In 1874, the Cambridge Church was organized of members drawn chiefly from the Berwick church. The 3rd Cornwallis Church, was organized at Billtown, in 1835, an off-shoot of the 1st Church. This church, by its annual reports to our Association, shows a large number of conversions to Christ. It is situated in the midst of a populous and promising section of country, whose spiritual interests seem wholly under its care. May it make for itself a grand history.

Again in 1861, the 5th, the Pereaux Church was formed of members wholly of the 1st Church. From a membership of 56 in 1862, they now report a membership of 179. Rev. D. Freeman became pastor of the 5th Church at its organization, and served faithfully and well for 18 years. They now enjoy the labors of a young and vigorous pastor, and of their future may we hear good accounts.

Besides the churches already mentioned, others have organized in the section of country, once under the supervision of the pastor of the Cornwallis Church—the church at Canning, organized in 1870. So that the district of country represented in 1808 by our church with a membership of seven now contains seven churches, with a reported membership of 1884, and a corps of six settled pastors. These churches own 14 or 15 meeting-houses that may be valued at least at \$30,000, furnishing more than 4,000 sittings.

There have been over 1200 baptisms into the 1st Cornwallis Church. There may have been considerably more than 1200, as our Records date no further back than 1816 or 1817.

No account can be given of the multitudes that have been saved, we trust, through the agencies employed by these churches at home and abroad. All this is to be unwritten in the annals of time.

In view of what is written may we not devoutly say, "What hath God wrought!" and give to Him all the glory.

S. B. KEMPTON,
Chairman.

June 19, Mr. Spurgeon's birthday, when he completed his 48th year, was observed by the Pastor's College Association as a day of special prayer. The usual birthday *fete* at the Orphanage was to come off on the Wednesday following, the 21st instant. "We hope," said Mr. Spurgeon, "large numbers of our ever-generous supporters will come and see for themselves the progress that has been made with the additional buildings for the use of the girls, and help us to celebrate our 48th birthday by liberal contributions for the maintenance of this holy work of caring for the widow and the fatherless." The institution has benefited to the extent of £900 from the estate of the late Mr. John Edwards.

THIRTEEN YEARS WITHOUT SLEEP.—Thos. McElrath, of Marlboro, N. Y., whose case attracted wide attention three years ago because he said he had not slept a wink in ten years, is still living without sleep. He says he has not closed his eyes in sleep for three years, and indeed that he has not slept at all for thirteen years. His neighbours say that they have been at his house at all hours of the day and night, and have invariably seen him alert and wide awake. He is a member of the Presbyterian church of that place, and his word is trusted by all who know him. He is in good health and weighs over 200 pounds. He is over 70, and does not work, except on small jobs about the house. He says he "takes no comfort at all" in life, but he has given up taking all medicine, and waits "for the coming of the Lord."

Sunday Reading.

Graven upon God's Hand.

By Rev. J. W. COMFORT, OSSETT.

"Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands."—Isa. xlix. 16.

God's hand is the most sublime fact in the universe. We talk of universal laws, and the more they are contemplated the more wonderful they appear; but behind them all is the hand of God. This grand fact remains the same, although by some the hand of God, is unrecognised, or even denied. Jesus thanked the Father that some things had been revealed to babes, which had been hidden from "the wise and prudent." Men are not true students of the world and "nature" who do not recognise the hand of God and the day will come when those who did not know so much about the governing laws of the universe, but who could see and feel "the hand," shall be called the truly wise. It does not require much knowledge to recognise that worlds move, winds rise and fall, seasons change, and seas ebb and flow, by fixed and unchanging laws; it needs more wisdom to look behind and beneath the surface of "laws" and see the motive power.

How sublime a fact is God's hand in the world's history! His hand there, before the world had a recorded history, working out His plans from those vast spaces of time when He was getting ready the world for you and me. His hand shifting matter He had previously made; His hand moving the beds of the seas, altering the earth's levels, and preparing the different strata.

And then in the written and known history of the world, from that simple account of the "Origin of Species," and that sublime story of the "Descent of Man," told with such graphic beauty in the book of Genesis, down to the present, how every event shows the hand of God.

But it is even more profitable to recognize God's hand in our own life. Even in the matter of our simple existence, it is well for us often to say, "I am a creature of God's hand." It seems strange that man, who of all animals is credited with most intelligence, and who looks down upon meaner creatures, should be the last to say this. The beasts of the field, could they speak, the birds of the air, the very insects would acknowledge God's hand. They have done so by silent obedience. When God has lifted His finger, lions have shut their mouths, and a Daniel has been delivered from their paws; and when he has angrily pointed the way, they have faithfully torn in pieces even a prophet. Birds have fed an Elijah at His command, and when He has but beckoned to them with His hand, locusts and caterpillars have done His will.

Always recognise God's hand in your trials and sicknesses, and even in the difficulties of your station in life; otherwise there is many an event that will cause you to repine. Why did Israel murmur when they had no bread, and long to go back to the flesh-pots of Egypt? It was because they did not recognise God's hand leading them in the wilderness. They would never have said, "Our soul loatheth this light bread," if they had remembered God's hand opening the windows of heaven to pour out the daily blessing.

Endeavour by these thoughts to appreciate the statement of the text, "Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands." Much that is very beautiful, much that is sublime, is lost upon us, because we cannot appreciate it. A man without artistic education is shown a small picture value £1,000; he cannot understand how anyone can waste his time by spoiling a good piece of canvas, or anyone else waste his money over buying it when so spoilt. Or a man without poetry in his soul is put down, in the midst of a spring landscape: it is true he sees trees and flowers, growing crops and a few live creatures, but he cannot appreciate the voices of nature or enter into the real beauties of the scene. And so it is with many a Scripture truth. Men without eyes fail to see its loveliness; men without ears fail to recognise its melody; men without spiritual discern-