

Circular Letter.

(Published by direction of the Association.)

Rooted and Grounded in Truth.

THE CIRCULAR LETTER FROM THE N. S. EASTERN BAPTIST ASSOCIATION TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCHES OF WHICH IT IS COMPOSED.

Dear Brethren,—

The importance of being rooted and grounded in the truth cannot be over estimated. God's word is truth, able to make us wise unto everlasting life. It is an expression of his righteous will and character, an unfolding of our relations and obligations to God and to each other. It gives a view of man's position as he came fresh from his Creator's hand, created in the image of God, pure and spotless, fitted for uninterrupted communion with him. It shows us how man was ruined by the fall, how sin has degraded him, marred the image of God in his soul, robbed him of fellowship with God, and brought him into condemnation. It teaches us that God in his infinite mercy, has provided a remedy for sin, made a sacrifice in the person of his Son which satisfies the demands of justice, and enables God to be just and yet the justifier of those who put their trust in him. Glad news! salvation peace and pardon are freely offered, to the guilty and the erring, without money and without price.

Man's interests for time and eternity require that he should know God and his truth, that he should have a practical, experimental knowledge of the grace of God in Christ. This the believer professes to possess. He should not only know the truth, but be rooted and grounded in it. This phrase is suggestive. It demands much more than a mere theoretical knowledge, or a superficial experience of the truth. It requires a deep, thorough, practical, experimental, God-given knowledge of the truth, which insures a rich experience of the grace of God. Jesus says, "I am the truth." Hence to be rooted and grounded in the truth is to be rooted and grounded in Christ.

But what is the meaning of this phrase "rooted and grounded"? It brings before our minds the picture of a tree, strong and vigorous, which has sent its roots out far and near, struck them down deep into the soil, and taken a firm grasp of the earth, so that with its numerous roots and rootlets it obtains an abundant supply of nourishment to make the tree both strong and vigorous. It thus secures nourishment, strength, security, growth and fruitfulness. The storm may rage, but it has no power to uproot the tree. It is safe because it is firmly rooted.

The idea of being grounded in the truth is slightly different, but equally precious. It points to a sure foundation upon which one may build with safety. The wise masterbuilder digs deep, and lays a sure foundation which cannot be moved. So the believer who is grounded in Christ is resting upon a sure foundation, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever,"—the life, the light, the joy of believing souls.

The phrase rooted and grounded in the truth, in Christ, has a wealth of meaning which the human mind cannot fully comprehend. It contains thoughts which are infinite, grand, eternal—thoughts, which eternity alone can reveal. "For in him (i. e. Christ) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

To be rooted and grounded in the truth is to be complete in Christ, to rest upon the sure foundation of Christ; grounded in the truth the believer will be built up in Christ, a spiritual temple unto the praise and glory of God. It places the believer in a position where he can grasp the promises of God, and by faith receive the blessings which are so fully and freely offered. The richest gifts of heavenly grace are placed within his reach.

Man cannot fulfil the end for which he was created without knowing God, and being rooted and grounded in the truth. The nature of the human soul, its capacity for growth in wisdom, knowledge and spiritual understanding, as well as its grand destiny point to the same fact. The believer professes to have seen his condition by nature, felt his need, sought for mercy and obtained pardon. He recognizes his obligations to God and pledges himself to fulfil them.

To be rooted and grounded in the truth is important:

1. Because it is essential to the believer's happiness. The normal state of the human soul is one of uninterrupted communion with God. Hence the believer, in order to fulfil his mission, must maintain the closest union and communion with God. Through a knowledge of God and his will, and by obedience to his requirements, this holy communion of soul will be enjoyed. His whole being must be permeated with the truth, so that it becomes a part of himself. His soul pants after God, and he can only be truly happy when he is enjoying the fulness of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. His happiness requires that a vigorous Christian life shall be maintained, that his life shall be hid with Christ in God. The Saviour prayed that his disciples might have his joy fulfilled in that they might be one with him and abide in him. Thus the believer's faith will become strong, his hopes bright, and his joys deep, pure and abiding. As the tree draws nourishment from the soil, so he will be nourished by the truth. It will be his meat to do the Master's will. Living in the sphere of truth, in the love of the truth, drinking in the truth, strengthened by the truth, he will reflect the truth, secure the sweetest joys of earth and an abundant preparation for the joys of heaven. Present experiences and future prospects will minister to the believer's happiness.
2. Because it is essential to his growth in grace and in the knowledge of God. The human soul possesses wonderful capacity for growth. The Apostolic injunction to every redeemed soul is, "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Growth is a necessary result of living in obedience to the laws of God's kingdom. The babe is to grow until he attains to the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus. To remain a babe is to dishonor God and rob his own soul. The truth affords all the nourishment necessary for the believer's growth, all the treasures heavenly wisdom minister to his growth in grace. Being rooted and grounded in the truth, he will be strong in the Lord, and will bear much fruit.
3. Because it is essential to the believer's usefulness. He has been called into Christ's kingdom, not merely that he may be blessed, but that he may be a blessing to others. He is to be a witness to the truth, a living epistle known and read of all men. He is to bring forth the fruits of righteousness, to walk holily,

righteously and unblamably before the world. He is to walk in Christ. His thoughts, words and actions are to be in harmony with the principles of truth. His usefulness will depend upon his being rooted and grounded in the truth, wholly subject to the truth, and showing a zeal according to knowledge. Thus he will be led to make a wise use of his time, and consecrate all his talents to the service of God's will.

4. Because it is essential to the believer's security. "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." To know the truth, love the truth, and live the truth will give to the believer a sense of security, which otherwise he could never possess. It will give strength to labor for God, to resist temptation, and to overcome sin. The believer is secure in Christ, but in order that he may be "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," he must be rooted and grounded in the truth.

5. Because it will promote the glory of God. The end for which he was created was to honor and glorify God in his body and spirit which are his. The believer is under special obligations to live to the honor and glory of God. To do this he must have clear views of the fundamental truths of God's word, heartily receive them, firmly grasp them, and live in conformity to them. Thus he will possess stability of character. The principles he professes will have a moulding and controlling power over his life, and in all things he will have an eye single to the glory of God. Being rooted and grounded in the truth, he will secure his own happiness, growth, usefulness and security, and in the highest degree promote the glory of God. For the believer in Christ, there can be nothing more important, than to be rooted and grounded in the truth. His life will be in harmony with his principles, and ensure constant communion with God.

There are special reasons why Baptists should seek diligently to be rooted and grounded in the truth. God has given them a noble mission, entrusted them with his own truth, and commanded them to receive love, and obey the truth, to preach the gospel in all its fullness, its simplicity and purity, to every creature, to maintain the ordinances as they were given by Christ, and practised by the Apostles. They are chosen by God to be a "peculiar people." Hence how important that they should rightly understand the nature of their mission, and faithfully discharge the obligations laid upon them. In order to do this, they must be thoroughly versed in the Scriptures—rooted and grounded in the truth.

A church composed of individual believers, who are inspired with the grandeur of their mission, with a burning love for souls, with a holy zeal for the truth, having God's glory as the object for which they live, labor and pray, and in all things seeking wisdom from God to direct them, will have an irresistible power in the world. Such should be the characteristics of every Baptist Church.

Having their membership rooted and grounded in the truth, they will be fruitful in every good word and work.

Report of Committee on Missions.

Since last Association our Foreign Mission has been re-inforced by Rev. J. R. Hutchinson and wife, who sailed for India shortly after the ordination of Bro. H. at Danvers in September last. Miss Hammond was thus relieved from the great burden of the sole charge of an important station; and we hope that her health, which had become impaired may by this time have resumed its wonted vigor.

During the year, Mrs. Sanford's health having failed, it was necessary that she seek recuperation in her native land. Brother Sanford accompanied her as far as London, and then chose to return to his field of labor in Bimlipatan.

Mr. and Mrs. Churchill are thus enabled to prosecute their work at Bobbili.

The expenditure of the Foreign Board is large and constant; and the only way to enable them to meet their liabilities is for the churches to make constant remittances. Your Committee would also suggest that, in addition to the regular funds sent by the Convention Scheme, friends of the Foreign Mission forward special donations, as the monies by the regular denominational channel are thus far inadequate to meet the expenses of the mission.

Your Committee can with the more confidence ask this, as the results of the labors of our missionaries are already manifest.

We have laid this stress upon the Foreign side of our Missions, because at this moment, that branch of our denominational work needs the special attention of our people. It must have more assistance than it has been receiving during the year, or disastrous results will follow. Brethren, grant the missionaries abroad your prayers, and your money.

THE HOME CAUSE is one that is always dear to us, but we do not act up to our knowledge or our theories. There is a great deal of work to be done which the regular missionary can not well perform. We mean that there are hamlets where the gospel is seldom heard. The regular service is miles away, and the people have no desire or energy enough to go thither on the Lord's Day, the neighbors visit one another gossiping, talking of business or politics, the young people lounge about the place, and as the missionary drives through the locality on his way to his "appointment," leaves the inhabitants without any supply, and so they are left. Now, your Committee believe that all such places should be supplied with the gospel. Our Lord did not say "Let the world come to you," but "Go ye into all the world." Is it possible that there are not enough of old-fashioned Baptists to look after these places? Our fathers in the old world and in the new, did not wait until duly ordained men could take up this work, but as they had ability, they held forth the Word of Life. Many of our deacons are efficient in this respect, and everlasting blessings would result if they could be induced to go and look after the destitute. The Master would smile upon such efforts, and there would be a large increase of converted persons to our membership.

The Home Mission Board are aiding about fifty different fields. The grants to them will be about five thousand dollars, the debt of last year was \$850.00. So that this year about six thousand dollars will be needed. A good work is being done; nearly two hundred baptisms reported.

In conclusion your Committee commend the Home Mission Board to the confidence of our people. They make their grants with the greatest care, and always urge the churches aided to do all in their power for the Convention Fund.

D. A. STEELE, Chairman.

GIVE A KIND WORD.—A friend of the Lord Jesus one day met a lame man. When he saw the poor man stretching out his hand to him he stopped and said: "I have neither gold nor silver; but what I have I give unto thee."

"What did he give him?"

He healed him. No one now can give such good help to a poor person; but there is something which every one can give.

"What is it?"

A kind word. Even little children can give that. The poor and unhappy are pleased when any one speaks kindly to them.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Valedictory Address

Presented to Rev. C. C. Burgess by the North River Baptist Church, P. E. I., on his resignation of the Pastorate, to remove to Hopewell, N. B., July 26th, 1882.

Read, and Dear Sir,—

As duty now calls you to resign the pastorate of the North River Church, we wish to express the regret we feel that a connection which has been so filled with true pleasure to us, and which has proved so advantageous to the cause of religion here, should thus suddenly terminate.

During your charge of this Church seventy-two have been added to the ranks of Christ's disciples; and, under the blessing of God, the active strength and efficiency of the Church for the Master's work have been eminently increased.

Your urgent, faithful appeals will long be remembered in this community; and your kind brotherly admonitions will still breathe, like balm, to our remembering hearts when you are far away.

In you we felt that we had a true brother, one who sympathized with our joys and sorrows, and yet whose devoted heart forever strove to upward lead our souls, where joys alone are found.

We deeply appreciate the interest which you have taken in all the institutions connected with the Church. Our Sabbath School felt your encouragement; the Prayer Meeting was ever animated by your earnest spirit; and the "service of song" owes much of its culture and excellence to the assistance which you afforded.

We have also realized that your able expositions of our denominational tenets and principles have done much for the confirmation of truth in our midst.

We part, dear brother, but rest assured that the recollection of you and your beloved partner will ever remain with us as the sweet fragrance of memory's fairest blossoms; and that our heart's best wishes and most fervent pleadings at the Father's throne will be for your welfare wherever you may be called to loving and faithful labors for the Redeemer's cause.

(Signed in behalf of the Church.)

JAMES WARREN,	ALEX. MCKINLAY,
CHAS. WARREN,	JACOB BAIN,
ALLAN MCPHREE,	JOHN MCKINLAY,
WM. WARREN,	CHAS. DOCKENDORFF,
WM. CUMMINGS,	DONALD SCOTT,
DANIEL HOWARD,	JAMES DOCKENDORFF,
ROBINSON WARREN,	F. BAIN.

REPLY.

Beloved Brethren,—It affords me much pleasure to know that my labor among you has proved both agreeable and advantageous.

Of this I have been forcibly reminded, not only in your kind and loving address, but by your words of encouragement, and deeds of benevolence throughout my ministry in this place.

Gratitude to Almighty God fills my heart, because it ever was my privilege to labor where talent, and devotion to the work of Jesus Christ, were so evident.

The success which has attended my ministrations, has, under the blessing of God, been largely due to the faithfulness with which you have upheld the Pastor's hands. My aim has been to lead the flock of God into the green pastures of eternal truth; and by that truth to arrest the careless.

The tenets and principles to which you refer, are dear to me because taught by the word of God; and it has been very satisfactory to know that to you they were precious.

The days of my ministry with you, have been days of happiness—deep and never to be forgotten. I shall cherish the fondest recollections of the church; and in me you shall still have a brother, whose love will never cease in time for you.

I thank you for the interest you have taken in me, and for the assurance that at the throne of heavenly mercy I shall still be remembered. In you I shall feel an undying interest, and it will always be a source of comfort to hear of your prosperity.

I also thank you for the kindly reference to Mrs. Burgess, who joins me in the prayer that God will always lift upon you the light of his countenance, and that at last we may all enter upon the long, sweet rest of heaven.

Yours sincerely,

C. C. BURGESS.

North River, P. E. I., July 29th, 1882.

For the Christian Messenger.

From Germany.

BERLIN, July 24th, 1882.

The German Government has introduced a new feature into European diplomacy by attaching specialists to its various Embassies for the purpose of obtaining early information as to important discoveries in science. A scientific agriculturist has quite recently been sent to the Washington Embassy for the purpose of drawing up a detailed report as to the state of American agriculture. He has been requested to pay particular attention to American agricultural machinery and to advise on the possibility of introducing it into East Prussia on an extended scale, as the recent heavy emigration from that district has caused quite a scarcity of manual labor. The heavy emigration of Pomeranians to the United States causes the Prussian Government a great deal of uneasiness and anxiety.

Among the medical students of the Berlin University during the course just finished, the appearance of a genial white-haired "hexagenarian" greatly contrasted with that of his youthful fellow-students and excited much attention. He is a native of Berlin, who after his theological studies some forty years ago, had gone to the Cape and become a missionary in the interior of the Dark Continent. A few years ago he met there Professor Fritsch, of the physiological department of the Berlin University, and accompanied as well as assisted him in his expeditions among the natives. Their joint researches having revived the aged missionary's old love for the natural sciences, for medicine in particular, he left his distant fields of usefulness last year, came to Berlin, matriculated himself in due form as a student, and after passing his examinations, intends speedily to return among his dark converts as the physician of their bodies as well as of their souls. This, in brief, is the history of the "oldest" student in the Berlin and probably of any other university in the world.

While Russia is strengthening her fortifications in Poland, Germany is doing the same in her Baltic ports. The ports in the harbor of Kiel being completed and the narrow entrance to the bay protected by four strong works, a number of detached forts on land, surrounding the town in a wide semi-circle, are to make the same almost impregnable. For strategical reasons the Russian Government is desirous of constructing a railroad from Rostock to Stralsund (44 kilometres). That once accomplished, an uninterrupted communication by rail will run along the whole Baltic coast, and heavy guns, used with effect at Memel one day may, in case of need, pour forth their thunder at Weimar the next.

Rudolph Sumering's celebrated Luther monument, intended for the great reformer's native town Eisenach, is now ready for casting at Gladenbeck's Court Bronze Foundry in Berlin. The statue is of colossal size and Luther represented holding and crushing in his hand the Papal bull of excommunication, which he is on the point of throwing into the flames, the hands are to be fire-gilt which will give them a warm flesh tone in contrast to the dark green shade of the lightly oxidized drapery. It will rest on a high granite pedestal, the four sides of which are to bear appropriate sculptures in relief of scenes from Luther's life, portraits of his family, friends, and his allegorical victory over Satan.

Sunday Reading.

The Joy of Christ the Worker's Strength and Prospect.

The Joy of Christ, an ocean vast,
Deep as the love of God;
Strong as the Saviour's changeless grace
And merits of his blood.
See how it rises, drowns the hills,
In myriads now itself fulfils.

The joy of Christ, 'tis like the sun,
All hindrances it spurns;
And it shall rise till all redeemed
With its own glory burns.
All kingdoms yet shall own its sway,
Its kingly reign all shall obey.

O joy of Christ! O deeps unknown!
O vast, O shoreless sea!
Strong as our King it yet shall rise,
And reign eternally.
O who shall stand before its might,
The glory of the infinite!

God's promises, how bright they shine,
Dispelling all our night;
Through them what prospects bright and clear

Burst on our ravished sight!
Bright as our Lord's own kingly crown,
Who lives to pour His own joy down.

O weary workers, drooping hearts!
Depressed by many fears,
Your seed in dark, rude furrows lost,
Long watered with your tears.
Your Master's joy, all others fled,
Shines through these tears you often shed.

Be cheered, the Master's joy your strength,
His promises your sun;

See, see the light! mark how it spreads!
Why, lo! the victory's won!
Sweet joy of Christ! which works, endures—

The glory is already yours!
Brighton. W. POOLE BALFERN.

The Influence of the Richmond Institute in the State of Virginia.

BY REV. C. H. COREY, D.D., PRESIDENT.

Without any desire to magnify unduly the influence of this School in the State of Virginia, the following statements can be made without exaggeration.

The Institution itself has been a means of spiritual blessing to many of its students. They have here found the "Pearl of great price"; and some of them have here received those impulses that have sent them forth to preach the Gospel. During the last session all the pupils professed conversion except one. Some of these will enter at once upon the preparation for the ministry. The students are doing good service for the Master in the City of Richmond. Every month from thirty to forty of them are engaged in Sunday School or missionary labor in and around the city. Revivals of religion have sprung up through the influence of these labors.

During their vacations the students are laboring in various parts of the State. From statistics gathered annually it can be asserted that not less than seven thousand persons have professed conversion on the fields occupied by students during their Summer vacations. Not less than one hundred Sunday schools have been established, and more than fifty churches have been organized by these student preachers.

It is quite impossible, except in a general way, to tell all the work done by those who go forth from the Institution. Some are working in remote parts of the State, self-denyingly, and faithfully, silently yet surely doing a work that cannot be gauged by reports and statistics.

Of those who are settled in the more prominent fields, I may mention the following: Rev. R. Spiller and Rev. M. Bowler are doing excellent work at Norfolk; Rev. J. M. Aumstead has succeeded the lamented Corprew as pastor of the large and important church in Portsmouth; Rev. J. W. Patterson, of Danville, has baptized in his ministry more than 1,100; Rev. J. B. Matthews of Appomattox Co., has added to his church nearly as many; Rev. Jesse Herndon, of Charlottesville has baptized 637, and is highly esteemed by both races. He exerts a commanding influence in his section of the State. Rev. M. T. Lewis in the same town, is building a fine church; at Abingdon, in Southwestern Virginia, in a com-