

Sunday Reading.

Poetry and the Poor.

"The world is very beautiful!" I said.
As yesterday, beside the brimming stream,
Glad and alone, I watched the tremulous gleam
Gleam
Slant thro' the wintry wood, green-carpeted
With moss and fern and curving bramble-
spray,
And bronze the thousand russet margin
reeds,
And in the sparkling holly glist and play,
And kindle all the brier's flaming seeds.

"The world is very horrible!" I sigh,
As in my wonted ways, to-day I thread
Chill streets, deformed with dim monotony,
Hiding strange mysteries of unknown
dread,
The reeking court, the breathless fever-den,
The haunts where things unholy throng
and brood;
Grim crime, the fierce despair of strong-
armed men,
Child infamy and shameless womanhood.

And men have looked upon this piteous
thing,
Blank lives unvisited by beauty's spell—
And said, "Let be: it is not meet to bring
Dreams of sweet freedom to the prison
cell.
Sing them no songs of things all bright and
fair!
Paint them no visions of the glad and free,
Lest with purged sight their miseries they
see,
And thro' vain longings, pass to blank des-
pair."

O brother, treading ever darkening ways,
O sister, whelmed in ever-deepening care,
Would God we might unfold before your
gaze
Some vision of the pure, and true and fair!
Better to know, tho' sadder things be known,
Better to see, tho' tears half blind the
sight,
Than thralldom to the sense, and heart of
stone,
And horrible contentment with the night.

O! bring we then all sweet and gracious
things,
To touch the lives that lie so chill and
dear,
That they may dream of some diviner
sphere,
Whence each soft ray of love and beauty
springs,
Each good and perfect gift is from above;
And there is healing for earth's direst woes,
God hath unsealed the springs of light and
love,
To make the desert blossom as the rose.
—The Spectator

Confess your faults one to another.

What shall those do who have no
faults? They must spend the more time
in deploring and denouncing the faults
of others.

In fact, those who are satisfied with
themselves are very liberal in their use
of time and tongue in commenting on
the errors of their fellow men.

Go into any church, attend the meet-
ings, social, business, conference; ob-
serve those who indulge most largely
and habitually in fault-finding, with
implied commendation of themselves.
Then let the church vote by secret bal-
lot what are the names of the ten
members who are most faulty and most
need to make confession. At least
seven of the ten will be persons known
as "fault-finders" by those who are well
acquainted with them.

There must be delineation of Chris-
tian ideals, and there must be admoni-
tion. But, in fact, those who incline to
set themselves up as reprovers of their
brethren greatly overrate themselves as
to true Christian character. — Watchman.

This is a timely word from the *Chris-
tian Advocate*: The prayer-meeting,
the spiritual thermometer of the church,
often goes down as the other thermom-
eter goes up. The piety of some people
seems to meet too severe a test when
the heat reaches to the neighborhood
of ninety degrees. Yet the choicest
blessings of Divine grace sometimes
are granted to the faithful servants who
take some trouble to get to prayer-
meeting in July. Many are away from
home just now, and it may not be
reasonable to expect as large an attend-
ance as at other seasons; but if all who
are at home, and who might be at the
prayer-meeting, would come out, the
meetings would be greatly enlivened,
and the effort would be richly rewarded
by the blessings that would come to the
Lord's faithful and obedient children.

There are briars besetting every path,
That call for patient care;
There is a cross in every lot,
And an earnest need for prayer.
But a lowly heart that leans on Thee
Is happy anywhere.

Associational Sermon.

Fidelity to the Word of God.

A SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE
NOVA SCOTIA CENTRAL ASSOCIA-
TION, ON MONDAY, JULY 30.

BY REV. W. B. BRADSHAW.

"Now therefore, gird up thy loins,
and arise and speak unto them all that
I command thee: be not dismayed at
their faces lest I confound thee before
them."—Jer. i. 17.

1. In every age of human history,
man has been an honored instrument in
the administration of the Divine Gov-
ernment. He is a "laborer together
with God," and in being a "co-work-
er," has developed the most laudable
human character, and won the worthiest
honors. Each dispensation furnishes
numerous examples. In the Patriar-
chal, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham and
Moses are witnesses, who in their gen-
eration bore living testimony to the
will and work of God, and were the
media by whom he fulfilled his pur-
poses.

2. Moses, emerging from the Patri-
archal, inaugurates the Mosaic dispen-
sation, by the marvellous deliverance of
the Israelites from Egyptian bondage.
Every step in that inimitable emanci-
pation, from the rescue of the child
Moses from death in the waters of the
Nile, to the song of triumph on the
eastern shore of the Red Sea, flashes
with glowing evidence of a present
Divine power, and that power exerted
by human instrumentality. And through
all the wanderings of the chosen people
towards Canaan, their conquest of the
inhabitants, and their extended sojourn
in the land, the most important transac-
tions witness to the presence of a
Divine power leading and upholding
the human instruments to victory.

3. And if we turn to the New Testa-
ment, we will clearly discover the use
of the same method. The Christian
dispensation is no exception to the rule.
The prominent feature of Christianity,
the incarnation, so mysterious in its
nature, and grand in its results, is an ex-
ample. God would instruct man more
perfectly in His duty and opportunity.
He would deliver him from sin. He
would expand his nature and develop
his character. He would prepare him
to enjoy the divine glory and elevate
him to His right hand. To accomplish
this he took hold of human nature, and
as man, by a human life, a sacrificial
death, and a triumphant resurrection,
exhibited the love and purpose of God,
and illustrated His power to save.
And when this same Jesus would per-
petuate the teachings he had uttered,
and consummate the work he had be-
gun, he gathered around him His
chosen followers and entrusted to their
hands and hearts the work of God, with
the promise of His own presence to
guide and power to execute. This
commission has been handed down
through the centuries, and rests as an
impelling force upon this generation.

4. The life and work of Jeremiah
the prophet, furnish examples of God
working by means of human instrumen-
tality. He lived during the decline
and fall of Jewish power, previous to
the captivity of Judah. We have the
account of his call to the prophetic
office and subsequent career, written by
himself. In v. 9 we read, "Then the
Lord put forth His hand and touched my
mouth, and the Lord said unto me, be-
hold I have put my words in thy
mouth, see I have this day set thee
over the nations and over the king-
doms, to root out, and to pull down,
and to build and to plant." It is God
working, but by means of his servant,
for the accomplishment of his designs.

Having briefly considered the gen-
eral principle of human instrumentality
in the unfolding of the Divine plan, we
will now proceed to consider our duty
of *Fidelity to the Word of God*.

What we shall say we deem appro-
priate to individual Christians, minis-
ters, churches, and associated churches.
These all, surely, are "the stewards of
the manifold grace of God."

1. Our duty is—
TO DECLARE OR PREACH THE WORD OF
GOD.

"Speak unto them all that I com-
mand thee." Christ's clear announce-
ments to his disciples were and are,
"Ye are the light of the world," and
"Ye are witnesses of these things;"

and he further enjoins upon them the
duty of "preaching the Gospel to every
creature." Their calling is to fearlessly
announce the truth of Revelation.
In the performance of this obligation,
the disciples became instructors, and
were used as the instruments of lead-
ing the spiritually blind "out of dark-
ness into light," and those under bond-
age "from the power of Satan unto
God."

1. There are two principal methods
of instructing—precept and example.
Precept may be oral or written; but it
is the enunciation and elucidation of the
principles in hand to the understanding
of the instructed, by means of language.
Example is a manifest representation
of those principles worked out in real
life. There is a disposition to give
undue prominence to the wholesome
adage, "example goes before precept,"
but this is folly. They mutually sus-
tain and complement each other, and
are both most powerful, when har-
moniously combined. It is true, to
give our words weight, we must live
them. But it is also true, to give our
lives meaning we must explain them.

2. The use of language, and particu-
larly of the living voice, can never be
dispensed with in the work of religious
instruction. The power of a direct
personal appeal is unmeasured, particu-
larly in matters of conscience. Christ
by His example consecrated this meth-
od, and His disciples faithfully fol-
lowed in His footsteps. It is not to be
understood by these remarks, that
written discourse is to be condemned
or even despised. But it is insisted that
after such labor is performed the other
remains, and cannot be disregarded
without loss and disaster. This is one
of the great needs of every age, a frank,
open avowal of dearly-prized principles
—principles that lay at the foundation
of our holy religion, and much lauded
civilization. Without this, how formal,
how cold, how lifeless our religious
ceremonies become!

It was an essential part of the Pas-
chal feast, to recount to the assembled
family and friends the gracious dealings
of God with the fathers. This gave
interest, life, reality to the Passover.
So our religious exercises in the family,
in the Sabbath School, in the prayer
meeting, in pastoral work, in preaching
the Gospel affect with a living power,
when the living man with a living voice
declares the living Truth.

3. As it devolves upon individuals to
declare the Truth of God, so it is in-
cumbent upon churches and associated
churches, to shew by the Word of God
and the facts of the case, the responsi-
bilities and possibilities of the hour. In
fact, it must surely be for this purpose
churches are organized and associated.
And from the various Boards of our
denomination we expect to learn the
present needs, plans and opportunities.
We want to know about our Home
Missionary affairs; and we expect the
Board is here to inform us. We are
anxious for the safety, expansion and
success of our Foreign Missionary en-
terprise; and we suppose the Board is
represented by some one able to give us
the necessary instruction. We are pro-
foundly interested in our educational
institutions at Wolfville; and we trust
that our interest will not be sacrificed,
by the lack of some one to speak out.
We regard it the privilege and duty of
these Boards, appointed, it is true, by
the Convention, to lay before our
churches and Associations from time to
time, what they consider can be done
towards the dissemination of the true
light in the world, if they are sustained.
And it is our duty as churches and
Associations to consider the matured
plans of our brethren, and if reasonable
and right sustain them financially and
morally in their development of the
purposes.

II. Our text indicates

THE AUDIENCE.

"Speak unto them," that is, those to
whom the prophet was commissioned,
first "Judah," then "the nations,"
and "kingdoms." "The field is the
world are the suggestively instructive
words of Christ, "Go into all the
world" and preach the gospel to every
creature," is the command of the risen
Saviour. "And ye shall be witnesses
unto me both in Jerusalem, and in
Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the
uttermost parts of the earth," is the
parting announcement of the ascending

Lord. These references include all
men.

1. All Christians. They are disci-
ples, and desire and need constant in-
struction, thus teach them from the
Word. Are they faithful, candidly
commend them. Are they unfaithful,
tell them frankly. Are they niggardly
and covetous and miserly, reason with
them kindly. Are they inexperienced,
advise them. Are they weak, strengthen
them. Are they cast down and dis-
couraged, comfort and animate them.
"Exhort one another daily and so
much the more as ye see the day
approaching."

2. The audience consists of the
ungodly. They are in our own land,
and, our immediate neighborhood, prob-
ably in our families and social circles.
By estimation from the National Census
and church statistics, only about one
third of our Christian population are
communicants, and alas, that so many
of them are doubtful Christians! But
the remaining two thirds should hear
the teachings of the divine Word, and
by repeated endeavor induced to receive
and obey them. Here our churches
and the Home Mission Board operate;
and if we desire our cash converted into
Christian instruction, for the conversion
and sanctification of our countrymen;
just pass it over to the Board of Home
Missions. It already employs as many
voices as it can maintain; and would
gladly engage many more, should the
funds allow.

3. But the commission of Jesus will
not let us rest here. "The field is the
world," keeps echoing in our ears. As
we enquire into the moral and spiritual
condition of the nations, we are com-
pelled to conclude, how much they re-
quire the gospel, the "good seed of the
kingdom!"

By the latest calculations the popu-
lation of the world amounts to nearly
one and a half Billions. The num-
ber of Christians including all sects
amounts to 390,500,000. That leaves
a balance who are, not merely nom-
inal Christians, but heathen, Moham-
medans and Jews amounting to 1,209,-
500,000. But of these nominal Chris-
tians only 115,218,000; are nominal
Protestants, and of these it is estimated,
that only one third, or 38,406,000, are
professors of spiritual religion. Hence,
the whole number of professors of
spiritual religion are to those who are
not, as 1 to 30. Now, what is this one
world doing for the conversion of 30
worlds from sin and woe? Or what is
the one world professing spiritual re-
ligion doing for the dissemination of
the Truth among 28 worlds of not even
nominal Christians?

There are 71 organized Foreign
Missionary Societies among Protes-
tants. They employ more than 2825
missionaries, besides native helpers.
They expend for this purpose about
\$7,350,000 annually. That is to say,
14,000,000 of people are under the
charge of each missionary society;
400,000 souls are under the instruction
of each missionary, and about \$1.20 is
expended for the conversion of 200
souls.

Thus, a survey of the world exhibits
the magnitude of the work before us!
What a host there is to speak to! What
an audience! And the sad condition
of this vast multitude calls to us loudly,
and emphasises the Divine command,
"Speak unto them all that I command
thee."

III. But the emphatic idea is,—
"ALL THAT I COMMAND THEE."

1. Christians are limited as to what
they shall say to the Word of God.
Paul's injunction to Timothy is "preach
the Word." They may not add nor
alter this. To add would be to corrupt.
To alter, would be to mutilate. Such
sacrilege is profane, and the violator
cannot escape the righteous judgment
of God.

The terms of the commission em-
phasise loyalty to the Word, "preach
the Gospel," and "teach them to ob-
serve whatsoever I have commanded
you." The apostles Peter and John
when arraigned before the Sanhedrim,
understood their position and obligation
in this respect as positive and binding,
when they replied to those proud per-
secutors, "Whether it be right in the
sight of God, to hearken more unto you
than unto God, judge ye. For we
cannot but speak the things we have
seen and heard." The Apostle to the

Gentiles received the Gospel that he
preached "by revelation from Jesus
Christ," and so impressed was he with
its divine authority and sacred charac-
ter, that no other gospel was to be
entertained for one moment, no, not
even if an angel from heaven proclaim-
ed it. Jude, the apostle, was impress-
ed with the same conviction, when he
exhorted those to whom he wrote "to
earnestly contend for the faith once
delivered to the saints," and charged
them to protect it from the inroads of
heresy. In the Revelation, Christ
commends the church at Philadelphia
above the others of the seven churches
of Asia, because she honored and kept
the Word of God, and resisted the
encroachments of false doctrine.

2. But we are not only limited to
the commands of Jehovah, but enjoined
to speak all that He commands. Paul,
when he was about leaving his friends
at Ephesus, amidst the deep feeling
manifested on that occasion, reminded
them that he had "not shunned to de-
clare all the counsel of God," and con-
sequently was "pure from the blood of
all men," and able to look forward to
the glad meeting with Christ in glory,
with great confidence. Jeremiah was
faithful to his trust, notwithstanding it
entailed upon him untold difficulty and
suffering.

Temptation to keep back something
may arise from various sources.

1. The message is disagreeable to
fallen human nature. It plainly reveals
the God of the universe, as a sovereign
of infinite love, justice, majesty, power
and glory. It clearly sets forth as the
law of human life, a code of spotless
purity and light. It lays bare the sin-
ful heart and disobedient life, and
arraigns man before the bar of inexor-
able justice. It repeats the curses of
the law upon the head of the offender.
It demands implicit faith in the Lord
Jesus Christ for atonement, and insists
upon true repentance and obedience as
the test of saving faith. Without this
firm reliance upon a personal Saviour
no ray of hope arises to chase away the
black despair of the transgressor.
Against all this depraved human nature
persistently rebels. It is too humiliat-
ing, too self-sacrificing.

2. So the teacher of Christianity is
often tempted to fear for the conse-
quences. He has been aiming to save
men, but finds certain salient points
obnoxious to their depraved ideas. It
is suggested to him, would it not be
wiser to keep those searching, scorching
verities in reserve, or even exclude
them entirely, in the prosecution of his
religious endeavours. He has witness-
ed some little indication of interest, and
something whispers to him, if you
should speak the whole truth, all is
lost, and these hopeful ones will "go
away and walk no more with Jesus."

3. So the counsels of God are recon-
structed to suit the depraved sentiments
and feelings of fallen humanity! The
harsh edges are taken off, and the dis-
tasteful elements are eliminated, as
being more suitable to a bygone age,
or perhaps a more genial climate! Thus
heresy has made its inroads. Corrup-
tion and dissension have followed. The
church of God has been mangled,
maimed and corrupted. Many have
gone down to perdition, and the infidel
world has looked on with "decisive
triumph. Dark and sad is it for the
character and career of that individual
or church that picks and chooses be-
tween the commandments of God, or
"shuns to declare all the counsel of
God!"

IV. Hence, we have a caution, "Be
not dismayed at their faces."

1. The medicine of the Great Physi-
cian is bitter to the "carnal mind,"
and wry faces, fierce expostulations and
bitter resistance may be anticipated. Be
not deceived. This is to be expected.
The sinner is not immediately willing
to humble himself by an open confession
of his transgressions, nor to trust in the
atonement of the Saviour. He will
struggle under the bondage of the law;
and strive to wriggle out of its power,
and resist its claims and curse, in any
way that fancy or the evil one may
suggest. He says with disdain, "your
account of the whole matter is too
horrible! Your way of salvation is too
beneaming to the feelings! Cannot you
modify it in some way? Or is there
not some other way known to man by
which he may escape the ruin of sin?"
And so he mourns over the matter,

with conflicting emotions of resistance
and surrender. He is not left to settle this
matter with the light of revealed truth. A
number of—spiritual quacks, we may
call them, attempt to comfort him with
their nostrum. We will linger just a
moment to become aware of their aims
and methods.

(1.) The first is Tradition. He is
hoary with age. He comes from the
misty past; and the furrows of centuries
are upon his brow. He is dignified but
patronizing. He pities the sinner in
his sad condition, but commiserates
him more than all that he is so ignorant
of the past, and that his knowledge of
God and duty, of ways and means, have
been limited to the written word, which
is but a fraction of all he knows, and is
able and ready to communicate. Listen,
he speaks, "My son give more heed to
the words of the Rabbis than to the
words of the law." "My son the
written word is but the shell, tradition
is the kernel." "If you would be near
to God and happy, keep close to the
traditions of the fathers." "What is
the chaff to the wheat?"

(2.) Now Ritualism makes his ap-
proach. He moves with measured ease
and grace. His dress is of endless
variety of pleat and fold and form. But
every curve of his movements and every
particular crease and fold and fashion
of his robe has a deep spiritual meaning.
He goes through his religious exercises
with studied precision and pious regu-
larity. Every joint and muscle and
nerve of the face and body are brought
solemnly into requisition, to complete
the sanctimonious performance. "This"
he says "is the ancient and most hon-
orable way to secure the favor of God,
and gain the noblest end of your being,
not found indeed in the Word, it is true
but better, an inheritance of our honored
ancestry, and also, is more in harmony
with the dignity of enlightened man-
hood."

(3.) Still you find the sinner is
accosted by another who pities his sad
misfortune, and would render assistance.
He is of more modern mein, yet, withal
of strange manners. There is a deep
mystery about him. He walks loftily.
Nothing scarcely about him is worthy
of his attention. And, if you narrowly
mark him, now that he has found his
man, you will discern that his eyes are
tightly closed to the regular surround-
ings of an external world. You may
call his attention to this and that, but
he waves his hand with impatient su-
periority, and says, placing his hand on
his head or heart, "I have it all here!"
Nothing past, present nor future, in
heaven nor in earth, can alter his con-
victions. He confidently says to our
suffering friend, "The Bible is all
right enough, but there is a higher
tribunal," Inner-consciousness. "Fol-
low what harmonizes with your feel-
ings. Reject what is disagreeable to
your sensitive nature, or replace it
with what you may deem as good or
better, or more convenient."

(4.) And now, Philosophy, falsely
so-called, proudly and impudently steps
forward. He looks around upon every-
thing about him profoundly, as though
he was familiar with all things, and was
fully acquainted with all the mysteries
of nature and destiny. He condescend-
ingly greets our heart-stricken
brother: "If you could only look
through my spectacles, how differently
you would see matters! You would
immediately recognize an infinite num-
ber of theories that would assuredly
satisfy your mind. It makes no dif-
ference which of these you take, only
lean towards the latest. The Bible has
had its day, and doubtless suited the
times of barbarism for which it was in-
tended, but now the world has outgrown
it. Seeing nature has unlocked her lore,
and exposed her treasure to the admira-
tion of the millions. Follow nature."

(5.) You need not be surprised that
blatant and coarse infidelity now uses
his endeavours to bring peace to the
awakened conscience. All creeds and
sects, "broad" and "narrow," and
"liberal" are exposed to his keen-edged
ridicule. He gives assurance that he
has tried all the nostrums recommended
to no purpose, and perhaps honestly
but vainly thinks there is nothing to
offer but sham and clap-trap. He is
confident and boisterous. He strikes
right and left at all religious feeling
and doctrine, and the sinful and unwary
are often made easy victims to his
guile.