

ON TRIAL
—FOR—
3 MONTHS
—FOR—
25 CENTS.

The Reporter

AND TEMPERANCE JOURNAL.

EVERY HOUSEHOLD
SHOULD HAVE
THE REPORTER
—ONLY—
\$1.00 PER YEAR.

Herman H. Pitts,
Editor and Proprietor.

FREDERICTON, N. B., SATURDAY, JULY 23, 1888.

[100 per Annum.
Vol. XLIV, No. 39]

Professional Cards.

F. J. SEERY, M. D., C. M.

LICENTIATE OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF EDINBURGH.
LICENTIATE OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF EDINBURGH.
LICENTIATE OF THE FACULTY OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS OF GLASGOW.
SPIRIT CERTIFICATE IN MIDWIFERY.

—OFFICE FISHER'S BUILDING

I. C. SHARP, M. D., C. M.

(Late Resident Surgeon Montreal
General Hospital)

Marysville. N. B.

FISHER & FISHER

Attorneys and Solicitors.

OFFICE IN

Fisher's Building, Queen Street,

FREDERICTON, N. B.

C. H. B. FISHER, Q. C. G. FRED. FISHER, B. C. L.

Quebec Fire Association Company

ESTABLISHED IN 1818.

A Non-Tariff Company.

Insurance effected at reasonable rates.

FISHER & FISHER, Agents.

William Wilson,

SECRETARY-TREASURER, YORK,

Barrister and Attorney - Law

Conveyancer, etc.

Office, Queen St., F'ton, Opp. Post Office.

Accounts Collected, Loans Negotiated.

B. H. TORRENS, D. M. D.

DENTIST

OFFICE:—

FISHER'S BUILDING,

QUEEN STREET

RESIDENCE. ST. JOHN ST.

JULY 6, 1888

Remnants,

Remnants.

We have just received another lot of

MILL REMNANTS

—IN—

Grey Cotton, Gingham and Shirtings from the Gibson Mill, also a lot of other Remnants which we are selling regardless of cost.

Ternant, Davies & Co.,

202 Queen St., F'ton.

C. & E. EVERETT,

MANUFACTURERS OF:

FINE FURS

Ladies' Seal Sacques,

Ladies' Astrakan Sacques,

Ladies' Fur-lined Circulars,

Gents' Fur-lined Coats

11 King Street

Our Pulpit.

The Abiding Presence.

SERMON PREACHED BY

REV. A. J. MOWATT.

In St. Paul's Church Fredericton, July 22nd.

"And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."—MAT. XXVIII. 20

It is early morning. Jerusalem's business and devotion are not yet much astir. The Lord and the chosen Eleven may be seen quietly threading their way through the well-known streets. They emerge from the city, cross the Kedron, pass along by the garden of Gethsemane now so memorable because of His agony, slowly climb the western slope of Olivet, go over the summit, and descend on the eastern side towards the village of Bethany. They talk as they walk, but not perhaps in continuous discourse as on some other occasions, rather indeed in snatches, desultory remarks, for a something, they hardly know what, is weighing heavily upon them, and making them moody, taciturn. They do not want to let the idea come home to them, but it is doing so all the same, that their blessed walks and talks together up and down the sacred slopes of Olivet are drawing to a close, and they cannot help feeling sad, troubled, anxious. They find it hard to let go the dream of years, their fondly cherished hope of the kingdom's restoration, and so they venture once more to thrust it upon His attention and ask Him about it. "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" Ah, how weak and worldly-minded, and how blinded by national pride and prejudice are even Christ's disciples, you see, clear up to the last moment of His being with them! The dream of world-power had taken fast hold of those simple Galilean fishermen, and so pleasing was it to them that they did not want to wake up to the grim realities of life. But they must wake up, and so, with something of sternness, almost sharpness, He shuts their mouths, telling them that it is none of theirs to know the times and seasons.

He stops. They gather close around Him to hear what He has to say. He gives them to understand that the time for His parting with them has come. He enjoins them very specially to await at Jerusalem the fulfilment of the promise of the Spirit's outpouring. He repeats to them perhaps their great commission. You see them yonder, the handful of corn on the mountain-top that is yet to sow the world's wide fields with the seed of truth, and the grand results of which are yet to shake like Lebanon! But His last word is said, and now lifting up His hands He blesses them, and as He blesses, He rises from their midst, higher, higher, higher, and from His truth-speaking lips ere He is lost to view, seem to float down to them these comforting farewell words: "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Now, in further illustrating the text, consider first the reality of Christ's presence. He promises to be with His people Himself. "And lo, I am with you."

But there is something perplexing and paradoxical here. We ask how He can both be with His people and not with them. He goes away from them, ascends from their midst, and as they watch, with tears in their eyes, His ascension, a cloud receives Him out of their sight, and they see Him no more. But just before He ascends, or perhaps as He ascends, He assures them that He will never leave them, that He will be with them, and stand by them, down to the end of time. Is there not something cruelly deceptive here? At all events, is there not something here that needs explanation?

An unwise mother will sometimes say to her little children as she is putting on her things to go out, with a view to put them off from wanting to go with her, or to stop their crying: "Children, what is all this crying about? I am not going away; I am going to stay with you." And then when they are not looking, she slips away from them, and is down the street before they know it. But the foolish mother has broken faith with her children, broken faith with all that is sacred in their souls, and they will never be able to trust her again.

And does Jesus here, in order to take the edge off the keen parting pang, play fast and loose with His disciples at the last moment, and so tell them one thing and do another, tell them He is not going away when He is? No. That cannot

be. Whatever the being with is that He promises here, it is clearly not inconsistent with His going away. In another place, and on another occasion, for He had talked this matter over with them before, and had tried to make it clear to them, as clear as it could be made, we find Him putting it thus: "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you."

His being with them as He had been with them for the last three years and more, His being with them in person, in the body, however satisfactory and necessary and advantageous for the time being, could not continue to be so. In the body He could only be in one place at a time. If here, He could not be there. But in spirit He could be here, there, everywhere at once. It was thus expedient for them that He go away from them in one form so that He might come to stay with them in a better. Thus His going away was, in a most important sense, in order to His coming to stay with them.

It must be granted indeed that there was more or less of loss to them in the withdrawal from them of His visible presence, for it must have been much to them to have Him before them, to see Him, to look into His face as men look into one another's faces and watch the ebb and flow of emotion, to hear His words as they came warm from His own lips, and to feel the touch of His hand, the glad thrilling magnetism of His presence and power. There was indeed loss in that. But the loss there was more than made up by the gain in another direction. If there was physical going, there was spiritual coming, and just as Spirit is more than body, so His coming was more than His going. To have His spirit come and take up His abode within us, to enjoy His spiritual presence in that larger fuller way than His bodily presence could be enjoyed, to have Him in the midst of His people as He is to-day, in His fullness and power, in the riches of His grace and mercy, and in His blessed nearness and helpfulness, is to have Him as He could not be had if He had continued in person upon the earth. O blessed going away, since it was to give place to a still more blessed coming, and not only a coming, but an abiding forever!

"And lo, I am with you." That little word *lo*, that has almost come to be obsolete as a word, and has shaped itself into the usual exclamation point, calls our attention to the wonder of this *being with* of His. You know what a presence is, how sweet, how cheering, how helpful, how comforting, how inspiring. You have been alone in the night perhaps, alone with danger, alone with disease, alone with doubt and darkness, alone with duty and trial, and your loneliness has made you feel faint and weak, and ready to fail. But some one with a simple faith, some one who has been far in and through the darkness and knows what it is, some one who is full to running over with sympathy, comes to watch with you through your night, feel for you and weep with you, take hold with you to help you to bear your burden, pray with you and cheer you, and now you are brave and strong, now you are not afraid, now you can overcome. Thus, what a presence, a being with, may be to you and do for you.

But it is not always thus. Better the absence of some than their presence. A presence may be a source of weakness instead of strength, a hindrance instead of help. It brings temptation, weakens faith, multiplies difficulties, increases burdens, adds woe to sorrow and blackness to darkness. "I am with you," there are those who are quick to tell us when it is more to their advantage than ours to be with us. "I am with you," say so many when there is money in it, honors to share, a good to be had. And sometimes they thrust themselves upon us—their unwelcome presence, their useless help, their minion partnership, and now it is ill with us. They think they are so much, they have high ideas as to what they are and can do, they do not see how anything can get along without their having to do with it; whereas, so often, their—"I am with you"—is a real drawback. Thus, not every presence, not every being with of men, is an advantage.

Here is One, however, whose—"lo, I am with you"—is so much more to us than I can tell you and you can know. We look at Him, and we think Him weak like ourselves. We see tears in His eyes. We see Him sit down sometimes to rest His weary steps. We see Him lay down His head and sleep. We see how human kindness refreshes Him, and men's rudeness abuses Him, and

their cruelty crucifies Him. And seeing this, we do not well see perhaps what His—"lo, I am with you"—can do for us. But we look again, and we see Him walking on the waves; we see Him stilling the tempest; we see Him heading diseases; we see Him raising the dead; we see Him coming forth from the tomb; we see Him rising up to the awful unseen; and when from His lips there come to us these words—"lo, I am with you"—we begin to see who is with us when He is with us, and what His being with us can do for us. When He is with us, God is with us; when He is with us, who can be against us? when He is with us, mountains are removed; we run and do not weary, we work and do not faint, we soar with the eagle, we sing with the lark.

With us, and yet as if not with us. With us, and yet unseen. No obtrusiveness in His being with us! With us, and so much with us, but not to take the work out of our hands, not to lessen duty, not to do away with the need of effort on our part, not to relieve of responsibility, not to paralyze usefulness, not to quench enthusiasm, not to crush ambition. On the contrary, with us, to quicken into life all that is best in us, to help us to do our noblest, to give us to rise with Him to be where He is and like Him. O blessed presence of Jesus, what it is to enjoy it! And how wondrous it is! "And lo, I am with you."

Again: observe the conditions of Christ's being with His people. It is only on certain conditions we can have anything that is worth the having. So soon as we take for granted that this and that good is to be ours, ours any how and whether or not; then, it is not ours, it gets away from us and we lose it. So often men lose what they have by making themselves too sure that they have it.

Now, in the context we have the conditions of our Lord's being with His church and people. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations," or as it is in the Revised Version, "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Thus, you see, the church must be a missionary church that would enjoy the Lord's abiding presence. And then she must be careful to do as her Lord commands, and to keep what He has given her to keep. Only thus can she enjoy the rich fulfilment of His promise that He will be with her. When, therefore, a church comes to be full of her own importance, her antiquity, the glories of her past, her place in history, her position in the world, her creed, her testimony in other days with regard to certain doctrines, her being this and that, and loses sight of her great commission, the Lord is not with her, and the church that the Lord is not with, can do no good, and must fade and fail.

And the same is true also of congregations and individual christians. We say, and we like to say, and we are too ready to say, and especially when there is any advantage or supposed advantage to be gained by it: "The Lord of hosts is with us." We have built Him a house where He may dwell among us, a grand steepled House, and we have made it comfortable for ourselves if not for Him. We honor Him in words, if not in works. We call ourselves His, and claim that we have a special interest in Him and He in us. We assume He is with us, and perhaps we are making ourselves quite easy about it. But let us not be too sure, for He may not be with us. We may not be doing what we can do, and what He wants us to do, to help the natives of the world still groping in the utter darkness of heathenism to the light, and so He is not with us. We may not be a comfort and guide to the ignorant and sinful in our own streets, and if not, He is not with us. We may not be true to Him and true to the truth as we have it here, and if not, He is not with us. In so many things we may be coming far far short of what as His people we should be, and He may not be with us, He may not be among us. And if the Lord is not with us, how poor we are, and how weak. Without Him we can do nothing, we can save no souls, make no inroads upon the world, win no trophies for the kingdom, fulfil in no measure the work it is ours to do and the purposes it is ours to live for. Without His being with us and in us, there can be no power here, and no life there.

What has come over certain churches that were once mighty for good, pillars

of the truth, beacon lights on the shores of life's treacherous sea to all who voyaged there? What has become of the churches founded by the apostles, the churches of Asia? What has become of the church of Calvin, and Luther's church, and many others that could be named? Ah! the dust of the ages lies thick on their ruins. The sacred buildings perhaps still stand, grand historic monuments of other days, but the glory is departed. Calvin is gone, and Luther is gone, but it is not because Calvin and Luther are gone, that the churches they once preached in are so dead and deserted. No; it is because Christ is gone, His truth not taught, His gospel not preached and believed; and in the truth's place a deadly scepticism, a worldly philosophy, a religion that has nothing of religion but the name, and so the people are gone, and the power and life gone.

And let us fear lest a like judgment may come to our churches. If through any neglect of ours, any wretched worldly policy, and letting down of great fundamental principles, any loosening of our hold upon the unseen and eternal, any seeking after novelties and nonsense for the sake of effect, we should weary Jesus away from us, how undone we would be! Our hope as a people and our hope as individual christians must ever be in Him, and if in any way that should come to be wrecked, all is wrecked. But we will seek to be with Him, and He will be with us, we will live and grow and shine.

Again: consider the abiding of His presence. "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

In our English Bibles we do not see the beauty and force of the word "always," and the phrase "even unto the end of the world," coming together as they do here. It looks like a repetition of the same idea, and repetition is not always either beautiful or forceful. If He abides with us always, He abides with us to the end of the world, and longer indeed, so that we do not see the sense of supplementing the word "always" with the phrase "even unto the end of the world." It is saying much the same thing over again, and in weaker words, if anything.

In the original Greek, however, it is clear the expressions are not mere repetitions of the same idea, weak wordy redundancies. The original for "always" here, is literally "all the days," and the original for "even unto the end of the world," is literally "even unto the consummation of the æon." Now, days and æons are different things. Our life is made up of days. It is only day by day we live, one day and then another, one day and then another, so that to our short uncertain human life, the day is in many respects the most important division of time. With an æon, however, in the meanwhile, we have almost nothing to do. An æon is the world's lifetime, or the duration of a dispensation, or the age of the soul when it comes to enter upon its new state of being.

I am not sure that I can make it plain to you all, but let me illustrate it in this way. Day by day we live, when we are children, day by day we grow. When we are older, day by day we learn. When we are still older, day by day we do our work, we transact our business, we make our money, we serve the purpose of our creation, we fight our battles and overcome or are overcome, we fulfil our responsibilities and achieve our successes or make our failures, we do our good or our evil. Then again, still later, day by day we bear our burdens, feel more and more our growing infirmities, find ourselves becoming weaker and weaker, until by and by the day comes when we die, and our days are at an end. Thus, you see, our poor earth-life is made up of days, and if we can put to a grand use the days as they come to us one after another, we can make our life a holy thing, a grand success.

Now here, Jesus comes to us as we are living our life day by day, and He promises to be with us, not merely till the end of life, or to the end of an age, or to the end of all things, but *all the days*, whether few or many. Thus, it is a daily presence His, and it is His daily presence we need. It is not enough to have Him with us here every Sabbath, or once a month, or on the great occasions, the communion-seasons, or the glad solemn anniversaries, or the blessed revival-times, but we need to have Him with us every day, and that is the promise He makes here to His people. "And lo, I am with you every day," or "all the days," or "always."

Concluded on fourth page.