

The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness
THE ORGAN OF THE
REFORMED BAPTISTS OF CANADA

Published Semi-Monthly at Moncton, N. B.
by a Committee of the Alliance

Editor and Business Manager - Rev. H. S. Dow

— Committee —

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SUBSCRIPTION PRICE

Per year, in advance	\$1.50
Ministers, per year	1.00
Four months' trial subscription40
Sample Copy	Free
Unoted States Subscribers	1.75
Ministers, U. S. A.	1.25

SPECIAL NOTICE

All correspondence for The Highway should reach us before the 12th and 25th of each month.
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MONCTON, N. B., MAY 31ST, 1934

EDITORIAL

THE IMPORTANCE OF PREACHING

So we preach and so ye believed" I Cor. 15:11.

The above words by the apostle Paul give us some idea of the responsibility that rests upon the preacher of the gospel of Christ. In fact, according to his teaching in Chapter 1 of this book, God makes preaching the chief agency in saving lost men. We read, where the apostle was reproofing unbelievers, he says, "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness." "But it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." We infer from what he says, viz. "So we preach and so ye believed" that men are likely to believe the things or doctrines which they continually hear preached. Hence, I say the responsibility that rests upon the preacher is great. When we remember that what a person believes moulds his character, directs his action and determines his destiny. In the light of these facts, that very popular saying, "No matter what a person believes, so long as he is sincere." breaks down. Being sincere while ignorant of truth never saved anyone from often terrible consequences. For instances, when they made mistakes, and took poison supposing it was medicine, or poured gasoline on a fire instead of kerosene or drove their car straight ahead and over an embankment to their death, supposing that the road ran straight instead of making a sharp curve.

So our Heavenly Father, Who knows our needs, has taken great care to give us instruction in His Word, as to how we must walk in this world and also to qualify us for the life to come. And the great apostle in his letter to Timothy, the young preacher writes, "Preach the word." Of course there is no preacher who does not preach a part of the Bible. Although there seems to be a tendency on the part of some to pass judgment on the word as to what parts are necessary to man's welfare, and what are not, and they govern themselves accordingly in their preaching. And often these preachers preach what they think the people want to hear, rather than what the people need. And this may be one reason why there are so many irregularities in the lives of professing Christians and church-members. I knew a preacher several years ago, who confessed to his church, where he was preaching a farewell sermon, that he had not preached a full gospel there during his pastorate with them. I also heard another preacher pray one evening as I sat in his congregation: "Lord forgive us for preaching only half a gospel." We have reason to believe that a whole Bible is necessary to make a

whole or normal saint, and that preaching only a part of it will produce abnormal, lop-sided, spiritual monstrosities. If we study the preaching of our Lord who knew men as no one else does, we will see that He preached on hell and the judgment to warn the impenitent and sinners, He preached on repentance and faith and the love of God to encourage those who were seeking after salvation, He preached to His disciples and all believers on the great truths pertaining to holiness perfect love etc. See the sermon on the Mount. And if our so-called holiness work is to be sustained and made to advance, we preachers will need to keep before our people continually their need and privilege of a second definite work of grace after their conversion to sanctify them wholly. I Thess. 5:23, or to perfect them in love. Some one has said that what this generation fails to preach the next one will not believe, and to this agree the words of the apostle, "So we preach and so ye believed." If we are faithful in preaching the Wesleyan doctrines of the "double cure" for sin, which is also a doctrine of our church, we will see the fruits of our labors in souls converted and sanctified wholly. But if we fail to preach the two works of grace our failure will be manifest in a church that is dwarfed spiritually with no great desire for holiness preaching, such as the class that the apostle wrote to in Hebrews 5, where he said, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk and not strong meat." So brethren let us be faithful in preaching a whole Bible to all the people that we may have churches fully saved, and strong spiritually, lovers of the whole truth of full salvation and functioning normally under God to bring others to Jesus. And remember the words. "So we preach and so ye believed."

THE OXFORD GROUP IN BOSTON

By Rev. W. Edmund Smith

On the week-end of Sunday, April 29th, the Oxford group consisting largely of English and Scotch representatives, was in Boston. Their coming was not much advertised and they were here a day before I knew of their meetings. Having read and heard so much about this peculiar movement, I was indeed interested to hear their speakers first-hand. I had the privilege of attending two of their sessions held in Ford Hall where all the radicals in politics and religion have their meetings.

I dropped into a Friday afternoon meeting, or rather was there half an hour ahead of time, when only two or three had gathered. After a while men came in in twos and threes and talked in little groups in a merry fashion. No one ventured to shake my hand and I felt so lonesome that I asked if the meeting was for the public, and being assured that it was I remained for more than an hour and a half. When the time arrived for the opening of the service about seventy-five men gathered in the front seats and the leader and speaker sat on the level with the others. No one bowed in silent prayer. There was not the slightest show of devotion; no more than you would expect in a political meeting. The leader arose and made a few remarks and then called upon different ones to speak till seven had spoken in rapid succession, none speaking more than fifteen minutes.

Their speaking was wholly in the nature of testimony as to the good the Oxford Movement had done them. Most of them spoke of being mal-adjusted to neighbors or wives or business. They began to "Share" or confess and then they found peace and joy. They all talked so quietly that

some were heard with difficulty a dozen seats from the front. They all said some good things but they showed no emotion till they told some funny story, and they had a good store of them, and then the audience roared with laughter. No prayer was offered till the close of the service when they bowed and a preacher sitting prayed a little prayer. No song or hymn was sung in all the meeting. Among the speakers of the afternoon was a doctor, several preachers, a diplomat, an organist of a big church and a business man. They all gave testimony to the peace and joy they had found in this new way of living which is in Christ. They read no scripture nor did I hear any quoted as I remember. There were no amens or praises to the Lord when any speaker testified to his new found joy. It reminded me greatly of a meeting I attended in a Christian Science church. Several testified to the wonderful peace and joy they had found in Christian Science but no one said Amen. There was no praise.

I went again on Sunday night to hear the Group in the same Hall beginning at 8.30, after other churches had about finished their services. Some three hundred people were in the auditorium, this time men and women. When the speakers took the platform, (I tell this to show their informality). Several had hands deep in trouser pockets. Not a head bowed in prayer. No song was sung, nor prayer offered in the opening, which began after the congregation had whispered, talked and buzzed for half an hour, waiting for the time of opening.

The chairman, an Englishman, arose with one side of his coat wadded under his arm and his hand deep in trouser pocket and made the preliminary remarks in which he told of the powerlessness of the church and the rise of this movement to spiritualize the Church. He was followed by at least eight other speakers. A couple of Oxford graduates and an Edinburgh seminary professor made the chief addresses. The latter with both hands (fists doubled) driven into the pockets of his short clerical coat, nearly all the time. They seemed to want to be unconventional. They wanted to surprise "cultured" Boston. I was indeed surprised at the smallness of the night audience—They had been in Boston three days and had held many services in different parts of Greater Boston on Sunday morning and afternoon and in the evening before coming to Ford Hall. While Dr. Brougner was preaching to nearly 2,000 in an ordinary Sunday evening service in Tremont Temple the Oxford Group did not get more than three hundred in proud Boston's great Ford Hall.

In the two meetings I attended I did not see a prominent Boston preacher present. Very little was said of the meetings in the papers. In fact I read not a word of what any speaker said. They were not reported. In the evening it was all on the line of personal testimony of help received from the Oxford movement. One lady said that she was terribly troubled with pride and ambition for her son at college, and when she went to a football game she dreamed of the day when he might be a great football captain. But now that is all gone; but the Lord may make him one just the same but she bows to his will. One man said he had to confess to selfishness in his home with his children, for locking up his tools for fear they would be lost or injured; now all this is gone and the family is well adjusted. Some went deeper than this but on the whole it was a most agreeable story of confession and sharing, etc. Nothing was said of being delivered from worldliness and all the popular amusements or carnality by the expulsive power of a new affection. The Group have their house parties in the ball-room of big hotels where most of them put up and