

THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

"HOLD FAST THE FORM OF SOUND WORDS"—Paul.

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SAINT JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 1884.

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Correspondence.

ONTARIO CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editors of the Visitor:—

Perhaps I could not better interest your readers than by giving a brief account of the jubilee services of the First Baptist church, Brantford, from which I returned on Saturday. These services were held on Sabbath, December 30th, and Tuesday, January 1st, inclusive. On Sabbath morning a sermon of much power was preached by Elder Reese, the first pastor of the church, now 80 years old. For one of his age, his vigor seems wonderful.

In the afternoon a mass S.S. meeting was held, and addressed by Bro. J. Alexander, a former pastor, by letter, and by the writer, who also as the last pastor of the church preached in the evening, to a very full house. At the close of the service, Pastor Tuttle baptized twenty candidates, fruits of the recent evangelistic meeting by Mr. Chubbuck. I understood that several others were expected to be baptized the following Sabbath.

On Monday afternoon some of the old former members and pastors of the church, talked over earlier days, in a meeting of more than usual interest, and spiritual tenderness and power.

In the evening Deacon Shenston gave a somewhat lengthened account of the first thirty years of the church's history. Several others followed with brief addresses.

On Tuesday evening, the grand jubilee New Year's Tea Meeting was held, with a full house, good tea and good speeches, which closed up the services of the jubilee celebration.

Not many churches have had more trials and struggles in their early history to encounter, and few more wonderful prosperity. To-day about one thousand Baptists in Brantford alone, look up to her, directly or indirectly, as their spiritual Alma Mater. While hale and vigorous, she looks forward, with God's blessing, to a still more useful and prosperous future.

Some features were pointed out by one of the speakers at the closing meeting, as having been, under God, elements of her success in the past, and necessary to her success in the future, viz., a good moral and religious atmosphere in the community, promoted by the influence and example of influential and leading citizens, and for the continuance of which, the church itself would be largely responsible. "Happy art thou, O people, when thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness."

When Israel's rulers went into idolatry, the people followed, "and because iniquity abounds, the love of many shall wax cold." Another element of growth and strength mentioned, was, the large-mindedness and strength of the church's early ministers and leaders.

They had laid the foundations broadly, strongly, wisely, and in their history had proved that "the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand." Another feature was, that through them "the poor had had the gospel preached to them," and "the common people had heard them gladly." And so, as with their Divine Head and exemplar, the spirit of the 72nd Psalm had been fulfilled in them. Peace and prosperity, wealth and dominion, because, "he shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also, and him that hath no helper." O that the church might eventually, though reluctantly learn, that in the kingdom of grace, it is, to stoop to conquer.

A happy and prosperous New Year.
Yours,
W. H. P.
St. Catharines, Jan. 7, '84.

CHRISTMAS DINNER AT MCMASTER HALL.

To the Editors of the Visitor:—

This was a very pleasant and enjoyable occasion. The great majority of the students had gone to spend their vacation among the churches or in visiting their friends at home. A few, however, remained, and to promote their happiness especially, the wives of the three Professors residing in the Hall devised this dinner, to which also all the Professors and their families, Senator McMaster and wife, and a few invited friends—about thirty five in all—sat down. There was upon the table everything to tempt the palate and please the eye,—turkeys for the physical man, and beautifully arranged flowers for the aesthetical. After a half dozen courses had been successfully disposed of, a feast of reason and flow of soul followed. Dr. Castle led the way in a neat speech of fifteen minutes, in which he briefly detailed the history and growth of the College during the two or three years of its existence, and paid a just tribute of praise to the noble man who had devised such wise and liberal things for the Baptists of Canada. Three years ago, at the beginning, there were but two professors and few students, now there are six professors and nearly students enough to fill the Hall. Dr. Castle adverted also to the very pleasant relations existing among the members of the Faculty and between the Faculty and the students, and to the zeal and noble enthusiasm with which all the work of the College was being done.

Then followed the other Professors, each from his own standpoint, confirming the words of the President. It was now the turn of the students to speak, which they did in a handsome manner. Two of them representing the great North West and two the Maritime Provinces, declaring how delighted they were with McMaster Hall and how kindly they had been treated by the Baptists of Toronto since coming among them.

Mr. Turnbull, of Montreal, son-in-law of the President, next spoke, expressing his regret that Montreal had to part with Dr. Clark, but rejoicing that their loss was McMaster Hall's gain.

The last speech was by the founder of the Institution—Senator McMaster. This wealthy and benevolent Baptist answers completely to the type of the men whom the world must agree in pronouncing great; that is to say, he is great in moral rectitude, in devotion to the cause of Christ, in large-hearted giving, and in unaffected simplicity of character and spirit. However worthy his deeds might be lauded, he is the last man to desire it; and in his address he assured all present that he was doing no more than his duty, and that he was abundantly rewarded in knowing that the Institution was becoming a means of good.

I ought perhaps to say that among his recent New Year benefactions, he remembered the McMaster Hall Library to the extent of five hundred dollars.

The prospects of the coming term are excellent. Among the additions to our student ranks will be one from New Brunswick, who has already arrived, and three from Morgan Park. ONE PRESENT.

HEROES.—The true hero is the great wise man of duty—he whose soul is armed by truth and supported by the smile of God; he who meets life's perils with a cautious but tranquil spirit; gathers strength by facing storms, and dies, if he is called to die, as a Christian victor at the post of duty. And if we must have heroes and wars wherein to make them, there is no so brilliant war as a war with wrong, and no hero so fit to be sung as he who has gained the bloodless victory of truth and mercy.—H. Bushnell.

THE FOOL HATH SAID.

BY EDWARD WILLEY.

"There is no God"—an easy thing
For any fool to say.
The fool hath said it in his heart
This many and many a day.
"Prove this and that!"—the fool demands.
"Explain eternity!"
Reveal to me that awful form
Which mortals cannot see!"

Of microscope and telescope
The limits we can find;
The limit of the human eye.
The limit of the mind.

What we perceive is all that is,
The sudden fool insists;
Beyond the limit of our ken
Nothing at all exists.

But any fool must still admit,
If any fool reflects,
That there are many things unknown
Except by their effects.

We do not know the life within
The merest blade of grass,
Nor can we see the vagrant winds
That lightly come and pass.

Nor form nor size the lightning has;
We only feel the stroke.
An unseen force, we hold and bind
And tame it to our yoke.

We mortals boast of what we know,
Exalting reason's throne,
While there is, far beyond our reach,
An infinite unknown.

The lessons of eternal space
The fool takes not to heart,
And all the endless universe
He gauges by a part.

If he could pass his narrow bounds
And freely range abroad,
He must confess that all he sees
Are but effects of God.

—Independent.

For the Visitor.

SPECIAL EFFORTS.

BY REV. G. H. GOUDREY.

This is the season amongst the churches of supernatural efforts—a time especially fixed upon as most congenial to the agency of the Spirit in quickening christians, and in converting sinners. Strange as it may appear summer weather does not seem to favor the Divine modes and methods half so well as December's or January's breezy air. Who first made this discovery we do not know; but it may have been suggested by falling upon that passage: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, we hear the sound thereof—so is every one who is born of the Spirit," or "Come from the four winds O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live."

The term "Special Effort," to say the least of it, is misleading. It seems to indicate that the church ordinarily is quite *unspecial* in its efforts. Is not every effort of the church a special effort? Every sermon delivered, every prayer offered, every exhortation given, every song of Zion sung, every dollar donated is a *special specific* effort to reach the aim and purpose for which that church exists. If it is not *ought* so to be, and if it is not *there is no just cause why that particular church as a church of Jesus Christ should exist!!!*

Is it not just here that the difference is seen between a *living*, a thriving, a growing church—a church which is after the Divine ideal; and a church which satisfies its highest aims and broadest purposes in discussing the problem "To be or not to be that is the question?" The former gives prominence to the needs and demands of the *present* hour and gives in its active devotion emphasis to the Saviour's mandate, "Go work to-day in my vineyard." The latter chants in its dreamy semi-somnolence:—

"Asleep in Jesus blessed sleep
From which none ever wakes to weep,
A calm and undisturbed repose
Unbroken—"

We have just reason to fear that a spirit of procrastination has seized upon many of our churches—that what we deprecate in the sinner and denounce as most ruinous to his hopes and damaging to his higher interests, we actually put into practice in our desires to save him. We wait for a *special time*, and vaguely imagine that nothing can be successfully done until this era dawns, in

which under the influence of some special power miracles of healing are to be wrought or moral wonders are to be performed. We have come to think that nature's processes must necessarily illustrate methods of grace; and so we have winter—long and dreary, spring—blushing and glowing, when the flowers appear upon the earth and the time of the singing of birds has come, and then a short, hot summer of sweat, worry and toil. Is it not a *fact* that many of our churches while forgetful of the needs of the present hour, neglectful of the use of present means, unwatchful in the matter of saving the lost, ignoring all vows and all claims resting upon them as churches of Jesus Christ, are consoling themselves with the idea that by-and-by they will in a special effort coax the Lord to come around and pay them a short visit, just as a circuit judge visits his legal constituency.

These "Special Efforts" always suggest to us the church's sin and transgression. They say very plainly christians have violated their solemn obligations, have forsaken their most binding covenants, have broken their most sacred vows, have sacrilegiously opened the wounds of their precious Lord, have caused them to bleed afresh and have put him to an open shame.

The effort is made and if successful the pressure brought to bear upon all, for whose benefit it is held, induces them to honor the obligations, for the time being at least, they have *formerly* made, only to relapse into indifference and sin again, and so bring a darker experience into the church and a deeper disgrace upon the cause of God; and in the case when persons are professedly converted the question is still pertinent, "Were there not *ten* healed, where are the nine? Only this *one* hath returned to give glory to God." Facts go to show that those whose protestations of permanent faithfulness are the loudest, and whose promises of loyalty are the most vehement will, alas! for human resolve, go back like the dog to his vomit again, and like the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. Then, too, the extra strain made upon the pastor (which perhaps he is illy able to bear) as well as the severe tax levied upon the people—mental, nervous and muscular—often results in permanent and fatal disorder of the body, and—though of course rarely,—derangement or dethronement of the mind.

"Special Efforts," or the highly wrought mental and moral status of the church as accompaniments of those, are by some pronounced to be the *normal* condition of the church while the ordinary life of this organization is *abnormal*. This conclusion does not commend itself to us as sound or sensible. A revival or "special effort" is not normal but *abnormal*, is not health but fever, is not safe and salutary mediocrity, but fretful stimulation—but fever. Stimulation, excitement means weakness, and even death. Many of our churches to-day, we firmly believe, are enervated and almost helpless because of these frequently occurring moral fevers, or as a consequence of repeated over-stimulation. In all nature what is the product of rapid growth is characterized by proportionate weakness and quick decay. It is doubtless true that some churches are saved from demise by special efforts, but even in these cases the advantages accruing are of a questionable character, as their existence, strange to say, in many cases, proves to be a greater calamity than their decease could possibly have been. We verily believe, and do declare, that some of the churches in our own land instead of receiving real strength from special efforts are literally dying of intermittent, moral typhus fever.

Paul likens the church to a body

and in its individual and collective capacity denominates it the *body of Christ*. The chief aim and frequent result of special efforts is the addition of members. Now a living, healthy, growing member adds to the comeliness, symmetry and strength of the body; but a member of the body, *dead*, or unhealthy, or non-developing detracts from its healthy symmetry, strength and efficiency. Many under the powerful influences of a special effort are added to the church, but when the revival is over and the excitement has subsided evince by their subsequent conduct that they are not *growths* but lifeless *grafts*—not *sons* but "*sows*" not *saints* but *sinners*—they prove to be diseased limbs, or lifeless members of the sacred body of Christ. And with what results? Here, too, the analogy holds. They effect the symmetry, deform the beauty, cripple the efficiency, interfere materially with the action and effort of the living members of this body of Christ, and thereby bring shame, confusion and despondency upon the *few* while the *ungodly* world looks on in derision.

Whatever is consonant to the mind of Christ must be the best policy for the churches, and therefore should be accepted as the rule or law of their action. *Now* we are led to believe that God has a set time to favor Zion,—that as in nature so in grace we must needs have our seasons,—that *Special Efforts*, preceded and succeeded by special *ease* and special dearth are things that occur divinely and naturally.

The apostolic church, we assume, was fashioned after the Divine ideal; but to that church the Lord added *daily* such as should be saved. Why? The answer is found not so much in the ten days' prayer meeting as in the fact that each member was wholly consecrated with a "purse and all" devotion to a single purpose and that the salvation of perishing souls. And if we are authorized to take this church as a model church, then we are justified in drawing the inference that *without special efforts* as now understood, a church can grandly accomplish its mission in the world.

The question remains, and it is an important one, how can we cure this sickness of the church which has become chronic,—on the one hand prevent fever with its consequent weakness, and on the other, still with its disastrous results? How shall we be able to deliver ourselves from the disastrous consequences of fever heat and ague chill? Who will help us?

ADVICE TO A YOUNG MAN.

BY R. J. BURDETTE.

My son, did you ever think what a fool you are for swearing? That profanity isn't an ornament to any speech? That the story that has to be pointed with a dash lasts only so long as it is being told? That the brightest gems in English poetry and the most eloquent passages in all oratory, live through centuries of admiration and criticism, and thrill the souls of people to-day, as they thrilled the now pulseless hearts that caught their inspiration hundreds of years ago, with never a "damn" in a line? Did you ever stop to think why you swear in a ball-room, but never in a parlor? You can't improve Shakespeare by mixing in the lines a little cow-boy profanity. If Bryant had written,

"To him who in the love of nature holds
Communion with her dashed visible forms
She speaks a blank blanked varied language,"
the poem would have been ruined. And it ruins the force and beauty of your conversation, just the same. Moreover, indulgence in the habit ruins the force of your profanity. Nobody cares for the swearing of a habitual swearer. His volleys of profanity have no terror in them. They

mean nothing. It is the man who never swears who scares you out of your boots, if once in a lifetime he does swear. So far as we can learn, Washington only swore once during all the eight years of the Revolutionary War. But that one time counted. It turned back the tide of retreat, changed a rout into a victory and made things hum. But the fellow who swears on all occasions, and swears hot and cold with the same mouth, the intellectual pauper who ekes out his barren supply of ideas with an abundant crop of profanity, whose conversation is a long chain of mill privileges and who talks as a beaver works, his swearing is weak, rapid, tiresome, disgusting. So if you want to swear with any effect, my boy, be very seldom about it. Be exclusive in your profanity. If you can't get along without it, bring it out occasionally, like rare old family diamonds; don't keep it running six or eight hours a day, like the kitchen hydrant. And—you won't be offended, my son—but if you will observe closely, you will perceive that young men, boys, fledglings of about your age, swear more than men. More frequently; more awkwardly; with less point and direction. A man becomes ashamed of it. It belongs to the cigarette and matinee period of life, my boy. It is a habit that flourishes in the bread-and-butter days, along somewhere between the high-school and the college and while the blue ribbon on the diploma is bright. It belong to what *Puck* so aptly calls the "unsalted generation;" the fresh young men. So put it away and put on many things.

And just one word more. Suppose you are given to a habit of profanity. You enter into conversation with a man who never swears; in other words, a gentleman. By and by you begin to perceive that he is the superior man. Your remarks have a tame, flat, feeble sound to your own ears. Your cheeks begin to burn with a sense of your friend's excellence. Your pert little damns sound rough and coarse and vulgar, as they are. They begin to drop out of your sentences, ashamed to remain in the company of good, honest English words, until as you discover that you are carrying on your part of the conversation without swearing, you feel easier and your intellectual nature is increased by a foot. Just observe this, my boy, and see if I am not right. But you will rip out some time. Oh, yes, in some way you will. I know some good men, some of the best in the world, who will confound it, and even dog-gone it; and in New England even a deacon has been known, under a terrible strain, to "condemn it." But, as a rule, my son, don't do it. Don't swear. It isn't an evidence of smartness or worldly wisdom. Any fool can swear; and a great many fools do. I, my son? Ah, if I could only gather up all the useless, uncalled-for, ineffective swears I have dropped along the pathway of life, I know I would remove stumbling-blocks from many inexperienced feet, and my own heart would be lighter by a ton than it is to-day. But if you are going to be a fool just because other men have been, oh, my son, my son, what an awful, what a colossal, what a hopeless fool you will be.

PATIENCE.—The Son of God lived till thirty in an obscure village of Judea, unknown; then came forth a matured and perfect man—with mind and heart and frame in perfect balance of humanity. It is a divine lesson! I would I could say as strongly as I feel deeply. Our stimulating artificial culture destroys depth. Our competition, our nights turned into days by pleasure, leave no time for earnestness. We are superficial men. Character in the world wants *root*.—Robertson's Living Thoughts.