

THE CHRISTIAN.

"FAITH COMETH BY HEARING, AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD."—Paul.

Vol. 2.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., JANUARY, 1885.

No. 3.

The Christian.

OBSERVATIONS.

I notice that it is but very little use to waste time and labor with those who do not read and think for themselves. There is great need of much reading and thinking in this age of shoddy and sham. "More light" is the universal cry; but what good is light without the eye, and what good is the eye unless it is used. Eyesight will give us insight, but the eye without sight is as unfortunate as a day without light. Many now, as in former times, have eyes, but see not, and ears, but hear not. To trust in what another thinks is right, without seeing it ourselves, is as unwise as settling accounts with your neighbour by his figures, without keeping any account yourself. I wonder how many would do it? Why not be as honest with our soul as we are with our pocket?

I find it very pleasant work to talk and preach to those who weigh and measure what is said by the standard of right—the Bible.

In our meeting at Weymouth, Digby County, I noticed that the best attention was given to what was said. The intelligence of the hearers showed plainly they "kept their own accounts," and were able to judge for themselves—the truth will never suffer in the midst of free thought and honest intelligence.

I notice, however, there are places where the door of investigation is closed, and in such places the doors of the meeting-houses are also closed against any but "our own." One good brother once said, "The difference between the jail and the meeting-house was seen in the fact—the one locked persons in and the other locked them out." I venture the remark here, that where the light can't get in, the darkness can't get out. It is a noticeable fact, that where hearts and houses are closed against those who differ from us, the golden rule is at a fearful discount, and the ninth commandment is a positive drag in the market. This "shut out" principle is so far behind the age, and behind the spirit of the truth, that we tremble for those who indulge in it, lest they are so far behind they will be forever shut out when "the door is closed."

The brethren in Gulliver's Cove, Digby County, were quite discouraged when we went there—they were not keeping up the order of the Lord's house. It seemed, at first, hardly possible to revive them again. We are happy to say our fears were not realized. After a few evening meetings they took hold of the work in good earnest, and are now in a good working condition. They have had every form of adversity with which to contend. We think the tide has turned in their favor, and that prosperity will follow them. Their pledges for the Mission work the coming year compare favorably with other churches. We greatly desire their prosperity, and trust we shall hear of their continued efforts in the building up the cause of Christ in that part of their County.

During the month's labor in that County I preached thirty times; preaching in ten different

places, five of which were in new fields; I made eighty visits. The success of the meetings in Gulliver's Cove, and in Southville, have already been reported. My stay in Southville, including Woodville and Riverdale, was very enjoyable.

The splendid success of the meetings under the continued labors of Bro. Gates, will more than compensate them for all their trials and discouragements in their earnest and anxious efforts to sustain the cause during the dark times of the few past years. We remarked last year when we were there "that the Church in Southville would see good times in the near future," and now they have come, but the end is not yet. From them the Word of the Lord will be sounded out not only in Southville, and Woodville, and Riverdale, but also in other places in Digby County. Their faith toward God will spread abroad. And now that a door is opened, we shall expect to hear of their continued success in building up the cause of God in that part of Digby County.

It rejoices our hearts to notice the continual growth of interest in the Mission work, and there is room for growth. We notice that those who feel too poor to help the Mission work, are generally too indifferent to help any good work. The Mission spirit is the mother of Christian activity, and not the daughter. Where there's a will, there is generally a way. The Mission work is the question now in the religious world. It should be constantly agitated. Every one should feel the importance of it, and understand how they could co-operate in this work. A good sister said to the writer, "She wanted to help the Mission, but she was not able." Are you not willing to give a hen and feed it, and save the eggs for the Mission. "Most certainly I would." All right, now make an estimate of what the amount will be. After figuring on the amount she received for eggs last year, we made it two dollars for the hen at the very lowest estimate, and I will venture the guess that when the hen finds out she is laying eggs for the Mission cause, she will do much better at the business than she did last year. I speak of this case to show how it is possible for every one to help advance the cause of God if they feel so disposed. It is easy enough to make the head level on this question when the heart is level.

I notice that our American brethren show a grand work in Foreign Missions. They have established seven new Missions this year. They now have sixteen Mission stations, and twenty-five missionaries. The additions last year were 365. This is enough to inspire every heart with the Mission spirit.

I observe that Barak would not undertake to deliver Israel from Jabin, and Sisera, unless Deborah would go with him. Barak was quite right. It is useless for us to undertake to pull down the strongholds of Satan unless the Deborah's work with us.

The Women's Aid Society has commenced in good earnest. We noticed in the last CHRISTIAN that the sisters in St. John have organized, and are pushing the work. Here, in Milton, the sisters have made a beginning. They have had

two meetings, and they now have twenty-two in their Society, and others yet to join. We hope the sisters in all the churches may make a move in this direction. There is certainly an advance movement. We can already hear a moving in the tops of the mulberry trees. Let it come. We want to see a grand revival this year in the Mission work.

The Mission work in Queens County is still moving on. One difficulty we find in Port Mouton, and in Summerville, *i. e.*, the halls are not large enough to hold the people who come to hear. The friends in these localities are talking of building a meeting-house. We think they will; but talking isn't money, if it was we would be monied to death. We will have the same difficulty in building the house, we fear, that the man had in cooking the hare, he couldn't catch the hare. There are hopeful signs of success in our County, notwithstanding the hard times that is driving so many away.

I wish some one would tell us how to secure good prayer-meetings. It is one of the most important questions, and yet the least attention given to it. Some prayer-meetings remind me of the boy who, when asked if he learned to read at school, answered "No!" Did you learn to write? "No!" Then you learned to spell, I suppose? "No!" Well, what do you do? "I wait for school to let out." The influence of a good prayer-meeting is unmeasurably great, and a very little effort on the part of each one will make a live meeting. A few words, or the reading of a portion of Scripture, or brief prayers promptly offered, would revive every heart. Why it is that the brothers and sisters will not take hold of this work, where there is so much good accomplished by it, and such a little sacrifice on the part of each one, is as strange as it is amazing. There are very few places on earth I had rather be than in a good prayer-meeting, but a dull prayer-meeting is the worst form of punishment to me. I know how to spoil a meeting better than I know how to make one. One successful way to destroy the interest of a prayer-meeting is in the beginning: Let the leader of the meeting read a long hymn, and a long chapter, and make a long speech, and then tell the brethren the meeting is in their hands, and they must improve the time, when the fact is they haven't much time left to improve. Jerry McAuley would say, when a brother was making a long speech, "Cut it off, brother, both ends, and give us the middle, that is always the best." The leader, by all means, ought to be brief in his remarks. Speak out, brethren, and give us your observations and premeditations on this most interesting work. We all need light on this matter. H. MURRAY.

A poor man in Fife, before eating, asked a blessing in these weighty words, which were found, after the Duchess of Gordon's death, written on a slip of paper in her hand:—"Lord, give me grace to feel my need of grace; and give me grace to ask for grace; and give me grace to receive grace; and O Lord, when grace is given, give me grace to use it. Amen."