

SPECIAL
ARTICLES

Our Contributors

BOOK
REVIEWS

A MESSAGE FROM THE MODERATOR OF THE SYNOD OF TORONTO AND KINGSTON.

Dearly Beloved Brethren: As Moderator of the Synod of Toronto and Kingston, I feel constrained to address to you a few words of earnest entreaty concerning the work entrusted to us as ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the greatest work given to men to do, because so much depends upon it for time and for eternity. It affects in the deepest way the present conditions of men as well as their eternal destiny. And our opportunity of accomplishing it is ever escaping out of our hands, so that we must redeem the time as it flies.

And just now when we are laying plans for another Winter's campaign it is well that we should take counsel with God by keeping clearly before our minds that he enjoins upon us. Our commission never changes: "Go ye into all the World, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

And that's a commission to be considered deeply, to be prayed over earnestly, to be understood perfectly, and to be carried into effect thoroughly so that we can say like Paul, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the Wisdom of God." "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the World is crucified unto me, and I unto the World."

That flashes its light on all interests within the bounds of human life. It leaves nothing unsummed. It quickens all it touches. It is the power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. Whatever other subject may engage our attention, this must always be the chief. This is the weapon by which the minister of Christ conquers. This blast brings down the walls of Jericho. This sounds the sure note of victory. There is no source of power like the gospel of the grace of God. That finds out men, reveals them to themselves and restores them to God. Let every pulpit ring with the good news of great joy to all people.

In preaching our dependance must not be on our skill, or learning, or logic, or persuasive grace, but on the Holy Spirit of God. We must use every gift with which we have been endowed, but trust only in the Spirit of God who makes the word effectual unto Salvation. Let us honor the Holy Spirit in all our work. That old direction needs to be reiterated to us: "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endowed with power from on high." Do we not too often go forth without this endowment? And that accounts for our fruitless toil. We take nothing. He that winneth

Souls is wise. We ought never to go unaccompanied—the Power of the Highest ought to attend us. How significant was that action of our Lord, when he said to his disciples, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." In this lies our strength, do not let us shrink from availing ourselves of it.

We must be men of prayer. Let us cultivate a spirit of believing, earnest prayer in ourselves and in our people. We hear much today of prayer being a lost art, and that is because our luxurious conditions make us indifferent to prayer. Our family altars do not smoke with this sweet incense; Our weekly church prayer meetings languish, and in many cases are ready to die; and our individual members are not outstanding as mighty in prayer. Still there is a saving remnant.

And when we listen to prayers as they are offered we are impressed by their want of the recognition of God's character which lies at the base of all prayer, and also their want of reverence and awe, and humility and confession of sin and earnest and prolonged pleading for mercy. How little adoration enters into them! Prayer has largely degenerated into brief business talks with God as an equal. And so has become not prayer at all. Our standards inform us what prayer is, and we shall be greatly advantaged if we return to the old paths. If we think as our fathers did, on the Holiness and Majesty, and Righteousness, and Mercy, and Love, and Grace of God—we shall pray like them, and experience an enlargement and an enrichment that shall gird us with a wondrous force, and an impressiveness that will endure. Oh that the praying passion would possess us as it did the people of India and Wales! How it illuminated them as to their sin and need. How sweetly it carried them to Christ, and made them one, through the pardon and peace and power they received.

Our work among the homes of the people must not be neglected. Our time is a busy time, and very few spare hours are given to the culture of the inner life. Reading and meditation and prayer and fellowship in heavenly things should have time given to them. We must insist on the members of the church taking time to be holy. What hinders? They can find time for social pleasure, or intellectual improvement, or worldly advancement—And why not for religious exercises, and the unbuilding of a Christian character. It is ours to lead them into paths where Christian virtue flourishes and fills the hearts of her votaries with delight and contentment. It is ours to care for the sick, the stranger, the poor, the troubled, the children, the aged—All so that through us they may feel the hand of Christ upon them; and looking up see his face.

May we all follow in the footsteps of him, who came with this single purpose to accomplish—to seek and to save that which was lost. And may we never lose sight of the fact that we were "not redeemed with corruptible things. Like silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." "In him we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." That fact realized by us gives us confidence, and invests our words with conviction, and goes far to secure the conquest of souls.

I am yours in much respect.

James A. R. Dickson.

Galt, Sept. 7.08

CALL FOR PRAYER.

The increasing place of missions in the thought of Church is one of the most significant and hopeful signs in the religious and social life of to-day. That which was most important in the thought of the Master and constituted the subject of His great commission to His Church should not hold a second place in the thought of Christian men.

The Laymen's Missionary Movement is an expression and evidence of this greatly increasing interest and the men who have felt the inspiration of this Movement are anxious that others should receive like help and inspiration. To this end the Canadian Council of the Movement, in co-operation with the Executive officers of the Mission Boards of the different churches in Canada, realizing the importance of the laymen's aspect of the work, is planning a laymen's Missionary Campaign from Sept. 13th to Nov. 1st, next, educational and inspirational in its object, continental in its extent, and broadly interdenominational in its organization and fellowship.

It has already been decided to arrange for meetings at the following important centres.—Halifax, Sydney, New Glasgow, St. John, Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, Hamilton, London, Sarnia, Stratford, Winnipeg, Brandon, Regina, Moose Jaw, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, and Victoria. To these central meetings representatives from each congregation of every denomination in the surrounding district will be invited. The movement is expected to touch every congregation in the land. Arrangements for the meetings in each centre will be under the charge of a local committee. The programme will include conferences on the most important phases of mission work both at home and abroad. A Laymen's missionary dinner and other meetings of a character to interest and inspire every class in the community. The speakers at each centre will include Mr. J. Campbell White of New York, General Secretary of the Laymen's Missionary Movement, and other missionary experts, a number of our leading Canadian laymen of the different denominations who will journey East and West to attend these meetings, our missionary secretaries and returned missionaries, leaders in their respective churches.

Everywhere the proposal to hold conferences is welcomed and other places are urging to be included in this campaign. It will not be possible to comply with all requests but the Council will do its utmost to respond to these calls.

This campaign is the most remarkable ever planned in this country in the interests of missions.

The work is not man's work but God's. The success of the campaign depends on the presence and guidance of the Divine Spirit not only in the meetings but in all the planning; in choosing places for meetings, speakers, and subjects for discussions, and in securing the interest and attendance of the men whom God can use in this great work.

The Canadian Council therefore appeals to all Christians both ministers and laymen, to make these meetings,—the laymen's Missionary Movement,—and the mission work of our Canadian churches, the special subject of both public and private prayer until the close of the meetings. "In everything by prayer and supplication with Thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." "The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much." Brethren pray for us "That our labor be not in vain in the Lord."