

the water extends to a distance in a series of concentric circles, so does the culture of home extend to all the strata of society in genial and plastic influences. There is the disposition to friendliness among men, the recognition of one another in the walks of life, and the good offices of neighbour to neighbour; there is a desire to injure the feelings of no one, but to do right to every one and to follow honesty as the best policy; there is a sense of propriety, honour and justice in the transactions of business; there is safety of person, security of property and mutual confidence, conditions necessary to enterprise, industry and success. It is similar in regard to households, the peculiar and private residences of men, which shut them out from the world by sacred enclosures. Families visit each other, attend the parties of each other and live on terms of friendship with one another. Members of one family may be bound to members of another family in close and intimate friendship, as in the case of Jonathan and David. Jonathan, who loved David, was the tried friend of David, and David, who loved Jonathan, was pierced to the inner heart with grief on the fall of Jonathan. "How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." Members of one family marry members of another family and form new homes, become new factors in the social system, and serve their own part therein with profit to themselves and to their fellow-citizens; whilst they are privileged to enjoy the sweets of wedded life, to unbosom to each other what they cannot even hint to their neighbours, and to speak of men and things in a manner which they cannot do outside of the domestic circle. Numerous indeed are the links that connect individuals with individuals, families with families, and communities with communities, whilst they are all indispensable to the public weal, to social happiness and progress in civilization. Moreover, there are coteries of philosophers for the advancement of pure knowledge, associations formed by philanthropic men to promote the material or the moral good of society, and assemblies of people in the churches Sabbath after Sabbath to hear the Word of Truth. There is still to be mentioned a friendship, which is the source of all genuine or un-mixed friendships among men. It is the friendship of man to God, our greatest and our best benefactor. "Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him." "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God." As Christians, we walk with God in the truth; we commune with God in our hearts, and we pour into the ear of God what we dare not whisper into the ear of man. This is the friendship which imparts strength, constancy and delicacy to the friendship of man to man in all relations, in all situations and in all circumstances.

#### CO-OPERATION IN FOREIGN MISSIONS.

PROCEEDINGS OF CONFERENCE HELD AT  
EDINBURGH, 6TH OCTOBER, 1886.

A conference of representatives of the mission boards or committees of the Presbyterian Churches of the United Kingdom, invited by the European Branch of the Foreign Mission Committee of the General Presbyterian Alliance, was held in College Buildings, Castle Terrace, Edinburgh, on Wednesday, October 6, 1886, at eleven a.m. The object of the conference was to ascertain the views of the various Churches on certain questions bearing on union and co-operation in Foreign Mission Work, remitted to the committee by the Council, held at Belfast in June, 1884.

There were present from the Church of Scotland—the Revs. J. M'Murtie, Convener, Dr. Herdman, James Williamson; from the Free Church—the Rev. Professor Lindsay, Convener, Principal Robertson, Calcutta, Dr. George Smith, Rev. A. C. Grieve, Bombay; from the United Presbyterian Church—the Revs. Dr. Thompson, Professor Calderwood, James Buchanan, Secretary, Mr. Duncan M'Laren; from the Original Secession Church—the Revs. W. B. Gardner, F. Hobart, J. Sturrock and C. White, Central India; from the Presbyterian Church of England—the Revs. W. S. Swenson, John Matheson and Mr. Hugh M. Matheson; from the Welsh Cal-

vinistic Methodist—the Rev. Josiah Thomas; from the Presbyterian Church of Ireland—the Revs. W. Heatty, Ahmedabad, James Carson, Manchuria, George Macfarland, Secretary, and from the Committee of the Alliance—the Revs. Dr. J. Murray Mitchell, Convener, Professor Blaikie, Secretary, Dr. Thomas Smith and Colonel Young.

On the motion of Dr. Murray Mitchell, Convener of the Alliance Committee, seconded by the Rev. Dr. Herdman, Mr. Hugh M. Matheson, of London, was called to the chair.

The meeting was opened with prayer by the Rev. John M'Murtie, and Professor Blaikie and Rev. James Buchanan acted as secretaries.

Letters expressing interest in the meeting were read from M. Baptiste Couve, Bordeaux, and Pastor Fritz Fliedner, Madrid.

There was also read a letter from the late Rev. W. Fleming Stevenson, D.D., written on the day preceding his lamented death, expressing his great interest in the conference, and his purpose of being present if health permitted. On the motion of Rev. W. S. Swenson, seconded by Dr. Murray Mitchell, a resolution expressive of sorrow for his early death, appreciation of the valuable services rendered by Dr. Stevenson and sympathy for his bereaved family and congregation was adopted.

Dr. Murray Mitchell then made a statement as to the purpose for which the conference had been called together, and mentioned the chief points to which the Belfast Council requested the committee to direct its attention.

After full and friendly conference on each of these points, the following resolutions were unanimously agreed to:

1. It is in the highest degree desirable that Mission Churches should be encouraged to become independent of the home Churches—i.e. self-supporting and self-governing—self government naturally following upon self support.
2. It is desirable that Churches organized under Presbyterian order, and holding the Reformed faith, should be placed under a Presbytery within territorial boundaries suitable for effective government; and that such Presbytery, wherever constituted, should, as far as practicable, include all the Presbyterian Churches within the bounds, by whatever branches of the European or American Churches originated.
3. In the incipient stages of the native Church, it is most desirable that the Foreign Missionaries should be associated with the Presbytery, either as advisers only, or as assessor members with votes.
4. It is undesirable that Presbyteries of native Churches should be represented in supreme courts at home, the development and full organization of independent native Churches being what is to be aimed at, whether these are founded by a single foreign Church or by two or more such Churches.

The conference agreed to record their high satisfaction and their gratitude to God for the opportunity afforded to the representatives of so many Churches for conferring together on important questions connected with the progress of the Gospel, and for the brotherly and Christian spirit which had marked all their deliberations.

It was also agreed to recommend that the Churches should observe the week beginning with the last Sabbath of November, as a season of special prayer for missions.

The conference agreed to transmit the above resolutions to the Alliance Committee, and it was stated by Dr. Murray Mitchell, as Convener, that that committee intended to forward these resolutions to the mission boards or committees of the various Churches, in the hope that they would submit them for consideration both to their foreign missionaries, and to the supreme courts of their respective Churches, and communicate the result to the committee, so as to enable them to prepare a full report for the meeting of Council, to be held in London in 1888.

The thanks of the Conference was tendered to Mr. Matheson for his conduct in the chair.

Rev. W. B. Gardner closed the meeting with prayer.

W. G. BLAIKIE, } Secretaries.  
JAMES BUCHANAN, }

If you want to interest your fellow Church members in Christian work tell them that THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN will be sent to them from now till 1st January for 15 cents.

#### JOINING THE CHURCH.

Ought I to make a public confession of faith and join the Church? This most important question is, no doubt, agitating the minds of many of the readers of these pages. The first person with whom most of you would discuss this question would be your own pastor. He would probably say to you: "Yes, my friend, you had better do so, provided that you have already joined Jesus Christ." If the Son of God be within your heart, then you are spiritually alive; you have experienced the new birth; you are prepared to live the Christian life because He liveth in you. If you only make membership in a church the main thing, if you unite yourself to nothing stronger than a company of frail, fallible fellow-creatures and expect them to tow you along by the power of their prayers and fellowship, then you have but a poor chance of success in this world, or of heaven in the next.

The first questions for you to settle are, Have you been born anew by the Holy Spirit? Have you by sincere faith united your heart to the omnipotent Saviour? If so, then your public acknowledgment of this fact by connecting yourself with a Christian Church is the completion of the process of joining the Lord Jesus. Heart-union first, then open confession. Christ demands both; and when both steps are taken, you have become one with Him. Your heart is by a mysterious but real process linked to His infinite heart of love. You join your weakness to Christ's strength, your ignorance to His wisdom, your unworthiness to His merits, your frailty to His watchful oversight, your poverty to His boundless resources of grace. *Your spiritual destiny is bound up with your Lord's.* Because He lives you shall live also, and you will be kept by the power of God through faith unto full salvation. A glorious conception is this, and if, by God's help, you are making this a reality, then go forward, the sooner, the better.

But perhaps you still may be troubled as to the evidences of this inward work of the Spirit, and may inquire what they are. "Just what is it to be a Christian?" and, "How ought I to feel?" and, "How ought I to be and to do?"—these may be the queries that are agitating your mind. My own habit as a pastor has been to put into the hands of all who propose to unite with the church a series of questions, of which the most vital and comprehensive are the following.

Have you seen yourself to be a sinner against God? Have you not only repented of past sins and sought forgiveness, but do you hate all manner of sin, and desire and pray to be delivered from the power of evil? Is your hope of acceptance with God founded upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and upon Him alone? Have you surrendered your heart to Christ, and are you willing to follow Him whithersoever He shall lead you? Is it your solemn purpose, in reliance on His grace, to cleave to Christ as your Saviour and guide to the end of life? In order to maintain your Christian life, do you make conscience of secret prayer and the reading of God's Word as your rule of duty?

You will observe that these interrogatories embrace the two core-ideas of Christianity, which are to hate sin and to love Christ, to turn from sin and to follow Christ. These are the scriptural signs of a genuine spiritual life in the soul. That life may be as yet very feeble; it may be only the weak pulse-beat of a baby; the "blade" of grace may yet be very small; but if the life is there, then seek to strengthen it by prompt and hearty confession of your Saviour. In the New Testament cases, a conversion to Christ commonly was followed by a prompt acknowledgment of Christ. Open your heart to God, ask Him to search you and to lead you; and if, after honest searching and self-testing, you are persuaded that Christ has begun to live within you, then take your stand for your Saviour. The Church was not intended to be a pasture-ground and a field of activity for mature Christians, but also a training school for the young, the inexperienced and the immature. The fold of Christ is a place in which not only the older sheep may wax fat and flourish, but the lambs may also be protected from hard winters. Do not come in with the idea of remaining always as a lamb—especially as a "coselet,"—but enter the Church of the great Shepherd to grow and expand your lungs and to become strong in the Lord. The phrase "a perfect man" (in the fourth chapter of Ephesians) really signifies a full-grown man; yet how can you ever reach that unless you begin?

To join the Church before you have joined the Lord Jesus is a mockery, and will be a source of untold misery also. May your conscience, enlightened by prayer, keep you from such a rash and ruinous step! But if your soul has joined the Saviour, then give Him your whole self, your whole influence, your time, your talents and entire life. Not much can you give Him at the best, but give Him all in a public and perpetual covenant. Join His Church for eternity.—*Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D.*