

THE CHRISTIAN.

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

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BRO. H. A. DEVOE, of Tiverton, is visiting his parents in Boston.

THE June Quarterly meeting will be held with the church at Westport, N. S. See notices in another column.

BRO. R. E. STEVENS, of Cornwallis, passed through our city on his way to Lord's Cove where he will labor for the church during his vacation.

A VERY good programme has been prepared by our brethren in P. E. Island for their annual meeting. The brethren in Montague will gladly welcome and entertain all who attend.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—Those of our subscribers who are in arrears will please take notice that we now need funds. We ask them to send at once in order that we may meet our expenses promptly.

REMEMBER that the first Lord's day in June is the day set apart for a collection for General Home Mission Work. All should assist in spreading the good news of salvation. Send all remittances to J. H. Hardin, V. M. C. A. Building, Cincinnati, Ohio.

BRO. D. CRAWFORD is in Halifax preaching for the church. We learn that the brethren are greatly pleased with Bro. Crawford's visit, and as we go to press we have the good news that his labors are being successful. Two have been added to the church and very interesting meetings are being held.

INSTEAD of the usual editorial we give in this CHRISTIAN what C. E. Morgan says in *The Missionary Intelligencer* of William Carey. In the last hundred years the spread of the gospel in the world, as Jesus commanded in the last commission, leads the thoughtful to exclaim, "What has God wrought?" and gives cheerful encouragement to labor and self-denial in a cause so glorious.

SAD NEWS.—We have just received word that our Bro. J. A. Gates has passed over the river. A card from his son William received a few days ago brought us word that our brother was nigh unto death. We feel that we have lost one of our most faithful workers. We sympathize deeply with the afflicted wife and family, but we know that the consolations of the glorious gospel will sustain them in their sad bereavement. A more extended notice will be given in our next issue.

When Sir Walter Scott was dying he asked his son-in-law to read to him. When the latter inquired what book he should read, Sir Walter, with evident surprise, looked up and said, "What book? There is but one book—the Bible."

All other books, even though they be the productions of master minds, seem as nothing when, in the dying hour, they are compared with the Bible. There are many stars, and they throw a welcome light across the darkness of the night; but there is only one sun, and at his coming they disappear. The world is rich in devotional literature. Some of the books have the marks of age upon them, but they are aromatic with the sweetness of heaven, and their fragrance has been breathed into many a soul. Such books as Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Taylor's *Holy Living and Holy Dying*, The *Imitation of Christ* by A. Kempis, and Keble's *Christian Year*, have strengthened thousands of fainting hearts. But the hymn book has in it brighter fields, made beautiful by many a flower painted in the hues of heaven. Here and there you may find a stanza which, like a weed, should not be there! There may be the poison of a false doctrine or other error. But, as a whole, there is no book, excepting the Bible, that has the same power to lift our souls to God, none that pictures to us the glories of heaven in more brilliant colors, none pervaded by a deeper spirit of humble trusting love, none that gives more appropriately the languages of an adoring soul, of a grateful mind and of a prayerful heart. The time we spend in breathing the atmosphere of the hymn book is not lost. By it the life bearing streams of our Christian life are purified and quickened as they course through our spiritual nature. Gather the ripened grain with all diligence from the broad field of God's holy book. Once in a while pluck a flower, if it be but a tiny one from your hymn book, but in so doing always see that it has drawn its matter from the soil of truth and has been colored by the Sun of Righteousness.

David wanted to build an altar and offer sacrifice unto God. He sought to buy the threshing floor from Araunah that he might there erect the altar. The owner not only offered him the place, but desired to make him a gift of oxen for the burnt sacrifice. Then David said, "I will not offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing." There is nobility in the reply. David did not think that his religious duties were light things to be thrown off as easily as possible. He knew that to find the most satisfaction in the service and worship of God, it was necessary for him to make some sacrifice; that if religion is worth anything, it is worth everything. To day the aim of many people is to get to heaven with the smallest possible amount of self-denial. If they could get there without it costing them anything they would be more than pleased. When God gave heaven's most unspeakable gift to earth the wise men from the east brought to the Divine child their treasures of gold, frankincense and myrrh the richest the land could afford and presented them to Jesus. Mary of Bethany, whose heart was expanded by a gratitude that must find expression in some act of self-sacrifice, did not hesitate to take the alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, very precious, and, breaking the box in her loving anxiety, pour the ointment upon the Saviour's head. And when the foe had apparently triumphed and the mangled form of the world's Redeemer had been placed in Joseph's tomb to

pend the Sabbath in undisturbed repose, the rising sun of the first day of the week saw Mary of Magdala, with the other women, hastening to the sepulchre with their sweet spices that they might show that their gratitude and love were not conquered by death. Jesus has the first claim upon our best possessions. He deserves the cream of all we have. He wants our faculties, not when they have been blunted, but rather when they are most acute. He asks, not for the few last sands by which time marks our closing moments, but rather the sands measuring the years of our youth and maturity. He will be satisfied—not with the drainings of the cup that He for us has filled to overflowing, but rather with its most precious contents. How many there are who satisfy every call that self makes upon them and then give Christ what is left—and if nothing is left, give Him nothing. They bring a diseased or deformed lamb for a sacrifice, when He desires a perfect one, even the best in the flock.

There is a great difference between the lion that roars in the forest and makes the hills reverberate and the shepherd dog that quietly watches his master's flocks. The most powerful lion that ever shook his shaggy mane has less of life when once death has shot the arrow through his heart than has the smallest dog that lives; and a living dog is better than a dead lion. The cheapest, plainest watch made is of more use to a person who wants to know how fast the moments are flying than the most costly, full-jewelled movement that fills the heaviest gold case could be, if the main spring is broken. The horticulturist places more value upon the small branches of an apple tree, if through them the life-giving sap is flowing, showing its presence in leaves and blossoms and fruit, than he does upon the large, strong, and it may be symmetrical branch that shows no sign of life, and, consequently, none of fruit. So, also, Christ finds infinitely more pleasure in contemplating the life of the person who abides in Him as the branch abides in the vine, than He does in a man of the most transcendent abilities, but who, having no connection with the source of divine life, is like the withered branch to be cut off and burned. Could not some churches be likened into cemeteries? Lo! the dead are there. If perchance you were to enter in, not like Mary seeking the dead, but seeking the living, you might hear the words the angel addressed to her, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" The story of the Ancient Mariner is a most weird improbable conception. Dead men were guiding the ship, and dead men were pulling at the ropes. In these latter days may we not find dead men in some pulpits and dead men in many pews? Exposed to the world's biting winds, the currents of their souls have been congealed. It is one thing for dying men to preach to dying men. It is an entirely different thing for dead men to preach to dead men. The dead preacher and the dead church are both passing into the dark valley of oblivion, and so they should unless, like the widow's son, they can be raised to life and made a blessing to the needy world. When you hear of a living church with a dead preacher, pity it. When you hear of a living preacher with a dead church, pity him. And from your pity let the prayer arise that the church may quicken life in the preacher, and that the preacher may kindle life in the church. Christ came that we might have life and have it more abundantly. It was not the life of a withered flower drooping its head in weakness that Jesus came to give, but the life of the wide-spreading palm planted by the waters and spreading out her roots by the river, that shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green, that shall not be careful in the years of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.