

The Industrial Guild.

The above is the abbreviated title of a brand new missionary organization effected by Rev. A. T. Robinson, M. A., of Middle Sackville, N. B. In the issue of Jan. 27th, there appears a very interesting article from Bro. Robinson's facile pen, in which he describes very fully the nature and object of this organization. As I read that article the thought came to me with great force, "God is in this movement. This is no still-born child. It is destined to grow, and become a mighty agency, perhaps the mightiest of all agencies in the evangelization of the world."

I wish I might say something that would disarm that prejudice which is naturally kindled when it is proposed to introduce a new wheel into our church machinery. We have often heard it said, when such a proposal is hinted at, that we have quite enough organization today, that what we need is the power that will lend effectiveness to the organizations already existing. There is much force in all this, but it should not be considered so forceful as to prejudice the merits of any new scheme that may present itself for consideration.

It may be deemed advisable, after due investigation, to discard some old, defunct, bit of machinery, and to substitute for it something that will really do the work we are trying to accomplish.

Without presuming to pass sentence of death upon any part of the machinery now in operation, I would like to state a few reasons why "The Industrial Guild of the Great Commission" is worthy of most careful consideration on the part of the Baptists of these Provinces.

1. We need new life infused into our missionary endeavor which the movement outlined by Bro. Robinson is likely to furnish. We are often reminded that this is an intensely missionary age. That the different branches of the church are reaching out through committees and boards and organizations of various kinds to the uttermost parts of the earth. And yet after we have exhausted our vocabulary in congratulating the church on her missionary zeal, we are reminded that there are today only about one hundred and thirty-five millions of Protestant Christians in the world, while there are more than fourteen hundred millions who have either a corrupt form of Christianity, or who in the overwhelming majority of cases have never heard of Jesus Christ and the plan of redemption. Such a condition after nearly nineteen hundred years of opportunity, argues one or the other of both of two things. Either (1) the church has not really grasped and grappled with this great problem of the evangelization of the world; or (2) she has faced the task with an altogether inadequate equipment. Doubtless both of these conditions go far toward accounting for the church's slow and unsteady step toward the goal of world-wide conquest.

As Maritime Baptists we have certainly not grappled with the problem in devoting our attention to two million Telugus in India. These form but a small fraction of one percent of "the world" of which our Lord spoke in the great commission. Have the remaining hundreds of millions no claim upon our intelligent sympathy and effort? As I think upon this question I am almost forced to conclude that we have made the evangelization of the heathen world a side issue, not our main business. What is the remedy? Let me suggest two, (1), we must get back or rather forward to Jesus Christ's view point, when we have done this we shall make the discipling of all nations the goal of all our activities. It seems to me that the Industrial Guild, by linking the Foreign Missionary problem with the cultivation of the soil, would insure a great forward movement in missions. There is a tendency to confine religion within the bounds of the Sabbath and the house of God.

The distinction between "sacred" and "secular" is being unduly emphasized. The revival which is needed to-day is that which will bring religion into the everyday works of life, linking it with the most commonplace duties. "The Guild," as brother Robinson outlines it, cannot fail to have an educative influence in this direction. The farmer who under this organization, sets apart a plot of ground which he cultivates and sows and reaps for the undivided purposes of sending the gospel to the heathen, cannot fail to have a larger outlook and a better heart at the close of the first season than he had at its beginning. And by a very natural process of growth he is brought in course of time to practical recognition of his stewardship of his whole farm. Who can estimate the value of this to our churches at home, and to the Kingdom of God throughout the world! The "Guild" is destined to do much in this direction, thus meeting one of the greatest needs of the hour.

(2.) A second great need will be met in the more liberal support which missions will be sure to receive. This great enterprise does not receive the financial support that its importance demands. There are comparatively few who exercise self-denial in order to send the gospel to the benighted. The writer has in mind the case of one who spends each year on an average thirty dollars for hats, and who gives to missions the sum of one dollar a year paid at four quarterly instalments. Are such cases very rare? I fear not. I believe that if Brother Robinson's suggestion were acted upon by our churches, our contributions to Home and Foreign Missions would, in a very few years be five fold greater than they are to day, and the spiritual

life of the membership of our churches would be proportionately enriched.

2. Perhaps there is nothing that more strongly commends "the Guild" to the favorable consideration of our Baptist churches in these Provinces and have its educative influence upon the lives of the young. This is the source from which must come recruits for the Lord's army in the years that lie just before. How are they being fitted for the large demands that will be made upon them? Are their minds being turned early toward the Kingdom of God and its sublime realities? Is the spirit of benevolence being fashioned within them? These things are not brought about by chance.

To the Christians of this generation is given the privilege of moulding, in large measure, the life forces that shall be regnant in the generation to come. The educative value of the Industrial Guild in the lives of the boys and girls of today must be very great. And in addition to the immediate financial gain that must come to our churches in this way, there is this weightier consideration, that there is being trained a generation in whose early lives were instilled the principle of true benevolence, with all that this implies.

And how lastly the workableness of Brother Robinson's scheme commends it to the favorable consideration of the churches. The vast majority of our churches are in rural communities. In the Association in which I labor, out of seventy churches there are not more than two or three where "the Guild" could not be organized with splendid effect.

Let us hear from the churches on this matter. To our oft-repeated prayer, "Thy Kingdom come," do we not find an answer in Brother Robinson's new organization? Read once again the article in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR of Jan. 27th, under the heading, "The Industrial Guild of the Great Commission."

M. A. MACLEAN.

Truro, N. S., Feb. 10th, 1904.

Toronto Notes.

The work of the Baptist churches of Toronto, is being done with vigor, efficiency and encouragement. Of special interest, no doubt, to the readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR will be the success attending the labors of the Rev. W. W. Weeks, D. D., the Rev. John D. Freeman, M. A., and the Rev. C. W. King, these and their families being known in the Maritime Provinces.

At Walmer Road church, Dr. Weeks preaches to great and growing congregations. This church, though one of the younger churches of the city is so well located, and from the beginning of its history has been so wisely and strongly led that it has now a larger membership, I believe, than any other Baptist church in Canada. Dr. Weeks, besides possessing unusual homiletical and oratorical gifts, is full of abounding enthusiasm and is surrounded by a great company of earnest and aggressive Christian workers. The present mayor of Toronto—one of the best mayor's the city has ever had—is a deacon of Dr. Weeks' church.

It is not necessary to tell the readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR that the Rev. John D. Freeman is preaching sermons of rare intellectual quality and spiritual insight to the Bloor Street congregations. The intellectual penetration and originality and the habit of studiousness revealed by his sermons from week to week, are a constant delight to the large element of the thoughtful and educated in this church. But his intellectual industry and force are not greater than his earnestness and pastoral fidelity. His energy goes out on all sides, and every department of the church feels it and is moulded and strengthened by his hand.

The Rev. C. W. King is abundant in labors in a field for which he has eminent qualifications. The neighborhood about the Parliament Street church is occupied chiefly by the poor. A vast amount of pastoral work and calm persistence in wise measures are essential to efficiency. Mr. King believes in the doctrine of salvation, knows how to do personal work, and is constantly on the watch for souls. God has shown his pleasure with the fidelity of his servant, and has given him the privilege of leading many to Christ. Financial help for the Baptists of the city under the endorsement of the Church Extension Board, has lately put the church into a more comfortable relation to its work.

The Rev. W. H. Porter, M. A., will be remembered by the older readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR, and also the Rev. I. E. Bill, both of them devout, choice souls. Though neither is able to carry now the large burden of a pastorate, each is doing faithful and fruitful work in the Christian ministry. Mr. Porter is the assistant pastor of the Walmer Road church and Mr. Bill is the Hospital Visitor appointed by the Baptist Ministerial Association. Mr. Porter and Mr. Bill are greatly respected and beloved for their fidelity to the Scriptures, their gentleness of spirit and their zeal for Jesus Christ.

The Rev. H. Francis Perry, D. D., the successor to the beloved Thomas at Jarvis street, is preaching to congregations that fill the great church in every part. He is a man of boundless energy and of evangelical spirit, and fruitage is appearing already as a result of his vigorous labors. The Rev. Dr. A. T. Sowerby, who succeeded Dr. S. S. Bates at College street, is finding encouragement in his work. He has

proved himself a church builder as well as a gatherer of great congregations, and what he did in Walmer and London he is doing in Toronto. The Rev. Alexander White has been welcomed recently to the First Avenue church in succession to the Rev. P. C. Parker. His congregation includes many poor people, but there are a few men of means and Christian zeal in the church, who strongly uphold their pastor's hands. This church is well located for future growth.

A number of the churches others than those referred to above are showing growth. Every year marks real and substantial progress in our denomination in this city. This is due partly to the ability, character and evangelical zeal of our ministers and partly to the presence in our churches of a great body of earnest, aggressive, capable, spiritual laymen.

Blessing has come to many churches in and near Toronto this year as a result of the labors of the McMaster Evangelistic Band, a body of fifty young men composed of theological and Arts students, who when invited to do so, conduct evangelistic services on Sunday in the churches. Many hundreds have professed conversion during the last four months in meetings conducted by them. At Aurora, a town about twenty five miles north of Toronto, where a McMaster student is acting pastor, a mighty revival followed their testimony, such a revival as had never been known before in that town. Invitations for the Band's help have poured in upon the leader far beyond the number that could be accepted.

As I write the shadow of a great grief rests upon the professors and students of McMaster University. In his room just across the street from the University has our beloved Professor, Welton waiting for death. He was laid aside by weakness the first of December. For several weeks he hoped confidently to return to his work after the holidays, though others were less hopeful. It is not long ago that the conviction came home to him that his strength and life were ebbing away. Now in completeness of submission, sometimes with eagerness of longing, he waits for the last hour.

O. C. S. WALLACE.

Ontario Letter.

REV. P. K. DAYTON.

We are just emerging from a severe winter. The oldest inhabitants declare they cannot remember its equal, and the Director of the Provincial Observatory, whose word should be authoritative in such matters, declares that the average temperature has been the lowest on record by 12 degrees, in seventy-four years.

The snow fall also has been unusual. In one of the North western counties of Ontario, the total fall has been 107 inches, and in all regions it has been excessive so that the roads have been impassable. The railways have suffered greatly. The Grand Trunk alone has paid \$300,000 in wages to snow shovellers, and has lost thousands more through accidents, delays, and shrinkage of business.

The demoralizing of traffic has affected church work both in town and country. In many rural churches the services have failed for weeks at a time, in others, but one service a Sunday could be held; in all, the attendance has been meagre. Evangelistic meetings, which usually flourish in the winter, could not be held in many places, and the regular work has been virtually paralysed. This has told seriously upon mission offerings. More than one secretary on tour, has spent his time in a snow drift instead of a meeting-house, and has returned belated to his starting point without keeping his appointments. The financial secretary of the Presbyterians, writes to the papers that while they are planning to open 47 new fields in the North West, their ordinary income has fallen \$100,000 below the average, in consequence of the disturbance of the winter's programme.

EVANGELISM

has not been altogether neglected. Rev. T. T. Shields, a Hamilton pastor, has been doing excellently in several fields. The McMaster University Evangelistic Band, composed of 50 students, has wrought nobly in and about Toronto. A similar Band in Woodstock College has done equally well in Western Ontario. An evangelistic tour will be made by some of these young men during the summer vacation.

OBITER.

Jarvis St., Toronto, has settled down to good times, with the new pastor, Dr. Perry, late of Chicago.

James St., Hamilton, has celebrated the sixtieth anniversary. The speakers were Dr. J. W. A. Stewart, of Rochester, and Dr. William Stewart, Toronto, former pastors; and Dr. W. W. Weeks, Toronto. A substantial reduction of the debt was one feature of the celebration.

Dr. S. S. Bates, Field Secretary of the Toronto Baptist S. S. Association, goes to Jerusalem. It is said that the Foreign Mission Board, of which he has been President for twenty years, will send him to visit the Canadian Baptist Missions in India.

College St., Toronto, is feeling the inspiration of Dr. A. T. Sowerby's presence, in enlarged congregations and general awakening.

The Provincial B. Y. P. U. Convention will be held in Hamilton on Good Friday, March 31st.

Dr. Thomas, late of Jarvis St., is in constant demand for anniversary sermons and lectures. Without the responsibility of a pastorate, he is entering a large field of labor. Orillia, Ont.