

"A Vow And Its Performance."

Sermon Preached by The Rev. Canon Bolt,
At The Cathedral on Sunday.

"Acts xxi. 18—And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea; for he had a vow."

Not only because the construction of this passage permits it, but also because it has been thought unlikely that St. Paul would observe a Jewish rite, it has been held that it was Aquila and not St. Paul who made this vow. But it seems more probable from the circumstances that it was St. Paul who made the vow. We know too, that St. Paul had no objections to vows as such, and it is not difficult to imagine that a man of such a chequered career as the Apostle would take upon himself a vow, in gratitude for some singular benefit or deliverance.

There are not wanting instances in St. Paul's life of God's goodness to him in times of danger and difficulty, and it would be no denial of his Christian faith if he performed a vow which he made in acknowledgment of mercies received. Many a beneficent work, many a thank offering have been the result of a vow made in times of trouble and distress, when a life perhaps was at stake, and there is nothing superstitious and unchristian in a vow made in such circumstances.

Of such a vow, and its performance I desire to speak to-day.

Slightly over a hundred years ago, a man sailed from here with a different object in view from that which St. Paul had, when he sailed from Corinth. St. Paul's voyage was in quest of souls, this one had to do with commerce, but as the sequel proves, it was destined to be of a missionary character.

Having concluded his commercial operations of the previous six months, Samuel Codner, one of our merchants of the time, was returning to his Devonshire home, as was not unusual in those days. He had often before embarked on a similar voyage, but this one was to be different in character from all others. Ere he reached his destination, and practically within sight of home, the vessel encountered one of those storms, to which the

North Atlantic, as we know only too well in our Island story, is subject. Masts were swept away, the vessel thrown on her beam ends, and hope of reaching land was almost abandoned.

It was in such an extremity that Codner, now as ever, a God-fearing man, made the vow that if God spared his life he would devote his time, talents and possessions to the advancement of His Kingdom in the world.

Saved as by a miracle, he set about performing his vow. The manner in which he did it, is of undying interest to us, and was fraught with untold blessings to this country.

Up to this time little had been done in this Colony for the cause of education, and the ignorance in some parts of the country was deplorable. Codner had long seen the need of providing instruction for the children of his adopted country. He had himself trudged over the hills, in all weathers, to Petty Harbour, his chief seat of business, to read to the people the prayers of the Church, and tramp back again the same day.

It now seemed to him that in no better way could he perform his vow to advance His Master's Kingdom, than by taking steps to provide education for the country from which he had obtained his substance.

Accordingly a meeting was called in London on June 30th, 1823, when Codner having given his experience of the country, and his desire for its uplift, the "Society for Educating the poor of Newfoundland" was started. The object of the Society as stated, was "the establishment of schools in the Island, where special emphasis should be laid on Bible instruction, and the sending out from England of devout teachers, who would devote themselves entirely to the spiritual enlightenment of scholars and parents." Thus, from its inception, the aim of the Society has been to supply a moral education, while secular subjects are not neglected. The children in the Society's schools were to receive Bible teaching, every day of the week, while upon one or more days of the week, all who were of the Church of England received instruction in

the Church Catechism, the attendance of other children being left to the discretion of their parents.

Education has advanced greatly since Codner's day. Men's views have varied, changed within the last hundred years in regard to the theory and practice of Education, yet with all our advancement, it may be questioned whether our educational ideals are nobler or more enlightened, as they certainly are not more liberal, than those which animated Codner and his fellow workers. After half a century of dispute, as to the nature and amount of religious teaching to be given in the Day Schools of the Mother country, the latest English Education Bill, which is the most acceptable yet enacted, is practically based upon the principles which the founders of our Society adopted at its inception.

Backed by the support of the Prime Minister and other members of the English Government of the day, having amongst its Vice-Presidents J. Gladstone, the father of the great statesman of that name, and William Wilberforce, who did so much to abolish the "Slave Trade," and supported by a Committee including many prominent clergymen, the new Society lost no time in getting to work, and soon made substantial progress.

Codner himself travelled up and down Great Britain soliciting support for the new venture, and in the records of the time, names appear in the list of subscribers, of persons closely connected with Newfoundland trade, and of members of firms, which have survived to our own day.

The first ten years of the Society's efforts were crowned with remarkable successes. At the time the Society was started, Newfoundland had a population of 70,000, and there were less than twenty schools, many of which were open for a month or two of the year by teachers who took as payment for their services a week's board and lodging with each parent in turn. Through the agency of the new Society, Principal and Branch Schools were established. The people became enthusiastic on behalf of education. They displayed wonderful generosity in supporting the cause, and in most places, the schools were gradually becoming more or less self-supporting. The work spread rapidly. The fifth annual report shows seven day schools with an attendance of 546, six Sunday Schools and six adult schools. The tenth report gives a list of twenty-five schools with a corresponding number of Sunday and adult schools, and a total of 2371 on the roll. So great was the progress that in twenty years the Society's schools numbered forty-five with 3400 children enrolled, while during that period 12,000 children had passed through the schools, some of which children became in turn teachers in the smaller schools.

The secret of this success is largely to be found in the excellence of the teachers sent out from England. These teachers were men and women of devotion and well qualified to teach, who after school hours visited the homes of their scholars, and took a lively interest in their welfare. Some of these teachers were admitted to Holy Orders and did signal service in the Church.

But this country was not the only one in need of Education a century ago. The Committee of the "Newfoundland School Society," very early in its history, looked to the extension of its work to the mainland of British North America, and with that end in view the title of the Society was changed in 1829 to "The Newfoundland and British North American Society for Educating the Poor," but ten years had to elapse before their means would allow them to give practical effect to their aims.

I cannot now stop to describe the progress made in the neighbouring Dominion where in four years through the efforts of that untiring agent of the Society, Mark Willoughby, who had rendered valuable service in this Colony, seventy schools were in operation under his superintendence. Not the least of his achievements in that field was the securing of the services, in the interests of the Society, of one who had hitherto been employed by Codner at Petty Harbour, and who for years as agent of the Society in Canada continued and extended its work, that sturdy West countryman afterwards known far and wide as Archbishop Bond, Primate of all Canada.

Nor can I on the present occasion do more than mention the Union in

1851 of the Society with "The Colonial Church Society," which had been established in 1835 and the purpose of providing the ministrations of religion to the settlers in Western Australia, and enlarging its sphere of operations to Missionaries and Catechists to India, China, Africa, North America, the Bahamas and what is now Tasmania. Henceforth the Society was known as "The Colonial Church and School Society," until 1861 when in order to include the work which the Society had done since 1839, by supplying Chaplains to visitors and residents in Europe, and to our Soldiers in the Crimean War, the title was changed to "The Colonial and Continental Church Society," by which name it is known to-day, and which signifies its world-wide operations. Truly Willoughby's prayer has been answered, and "the little one has become a thousand."

Such in very brief outline is the history of the Society which started work in close proximity to this Cathedral, where a school is carried on to-day, and which this year completes a century of service.

We are too deeply indebted to this Society to be indifferent to such an event in its history as the completion of its hundred years of existence. The Society is too closely interwoven with our Colonial life to allow us to contemplate unmoved its centenary. We above all others should be anxious to have Codner's memory duly commemorated, and we should be eager to learn the lessons which his life's work teaches.

It is worth noting that Codner's adventure was made at a time similar to our own.

Following the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo, and the end of the war, came times of great depression in all branches of industry. Instead of the prosperity which it was hoped would follow peace, came hard times. Doles to the needy became necessary, followed by its attending evils. There was unrest in Ireland. The European situation gave great cause for anxiety. The Greeks were in revolt against the tyranny of the Turks. We are told, as we are told to-day, that what the nation wanted was tranquillity and to that end repressive measures were dropped, reforms instituted, and foreign trade promoted. Newfoundland shared then as now in the general depression. The years immediately preceding Codner's eventual voyage were years of destitution and privation in this country. From 1816 to 1819 St. John's had suffered thrice from fire. Losses were great, insolvencies followed, the credit of many was ruined. Add to which there was the feeling that justice was not impartially administered, and that laws bore unfairly on some classes, a feeling not confined, at the time, to this Colony.

It would thus seem to be a most unpropitious time for launching such a project as Codner had in view. At such a time an appeal might seem to be most inopportune and likely to receive little response. Judging by to-day, there must have been some, who deprecated such an appeal and foretold its failure.

And yet Codner was not deterred from making the venture, which was amply justified by the results.

Why did he make the effort? What gave him the courage to do so? Because he was a man with faith in God, faith in the future, because he saw his duty and did it. Because he knew that God judges a man's work by its faithfulness, not by its success. There was work ready to his hand, and it was not for him to decline it. He realized his stewardship. He felt that he owed something to the Country which had given him so much. He had made his vow—he would perform it.—His prayer had been answered, he must give proof of his thankfulness. His life had been spared, he would henceforth dedicate it to God's service in doing good to his fellowmen.

Well would it have been for this country if Codner's example had been more largely followed. Codner was a man with a vision, a man as we say before his time. He saw as others did not see, either then or subsequently, that the greatest asset this country could have, was a soundly educated people. It is vain to conjecture what would have been the position of this country to-day if those who had like opportunities of helping others had followed his lead. We can thank God, that an adopted son of the country had a vision far ahead of his day and generation. We are proud of being able to point to

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Signeur's Repairs Completed.

DOCK WILL PRESENT BUSY SCENE DURING WINTER MONTHS.

The mechanics and laborers engaged at the Dry Dock effecting repairs to the steamer Canadian Signeur completed the work yesterday. The Signeur has been on dock for a period of six weeks, and in that time the ship has undergone extensive repairs, and is now in A 1 condition. As soon as the Signeur is undocked the Prospero and Ranger will go on; the former to be surveyed, and the latter to have some minor repairs effected in preparation for the seal fishery. This work will only occupy a few days, when both ships come off, and be replaced by the Norwegian steamer Helder, which arrived here last week in a leaky condition. Repairs to S.S. Prospero, which ship will be redocked, may not be commenced until the repairs to S.S. Capto, now being towed to port by S.S. Sachem, are completed. It is hoped that the dock hands have several months' work in sight which is a big boon to the mechanics and others in this department.

Popular Lady Farewelled.

JOINS NURSING PROFESSION.

Miss Hildred O'Reilly, daughter of Mr. Joseph O'Reilly, Assessor, was given a farewell party by her friends at the Grenfell Hall last night. The affair which was attended by thirty couples, took the form of a dance, and an enjoyable evening was spent by all. Miss O'Reilly intends to enter the nursing profession, and leaves by S.S. Sachem, en route to Montreal, where she enters the Western Hospital Nursing Home. Her friends wish Miss O'Reilly every success in her new line of labor.

Fads and Fashions

Three-quarter coats of white tulle have high collars and buttons.

The Spring will bring frocks made of sponge cloth or cotton.

Almond green for daydresses and emerald for evening is fashionable.

Clovers designed sports feature collars and belts of silk brocade.

Plaided serge is being worn into skirts to be worn with jackets.

It is reported that Georgetown chosen for a great many frocks.

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The cloudy film

Your teeth are coated with a viscous film. It clings to teeth, gets between the teeth and stays. When not combated, it forms coats which are the basis of tartar. Film absorbs stains, making the teeth look dingy. Those cloudy teeth rob millions of much beauty.

Film also holds food substance which ferments and forms acid. It holds the acid in contact with the teeth to cause decay.

Germs breed in it, and they, with tartar, are the chief cause of pyorrhea. Thus most tooth troubles are now traced to film.

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Film has been the great tooth problem. Old methods did not end it. So well-brushed teeth discolored and decayed. Tooth troubles have been constantly increasing. Now dental science, after long research, has found two ways to fight film. Able authorities have proved their efficiency. Careful people the world over now see and feel the results. A new-type tooth paste has been created, made to meet modern requirements. The name is Pepsodent. These two film combatants are embodied in it for daily application.

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To countless homes, all the world over, this has brought a new era in teeth cleaning. The results will be life-lasting. Send the coupon. Note how clean the teeth feel after using Pepsodent. Mark the absence of the viscous film. See how teeth whiten as film-coats disappear. The results will surprise and convince you. Cut out the coupon now.

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