

## Pastor and People.

### WE'LL MEET AGAIN IN HEAVEN!

Oh, what a precious thought is here:  
We'll meet again in heaven!  
'Twill lighten many a heavy blow,  
And help to dry the tears that flow,  
God's Word to understand, and know—  
We'll meet again in heaven!

Oh, what a thought to give us cheer:  
We'll meet again in heaven,  
With those we lov'd on earth so dear,  
Whose form and voice at times seem hear,—  
Let faith and love cast out all fear,  
We'll meet again in heaven!

Oh, parents, hear this Gospel true:  
You'll meet again in heaven,  
Your children that have gone before  
Shall welcome you to that bright shore  
Where sin and suffering are no more,—  
No tears are there in heaven!

Oh, friends bereaved, sweet comfort take:  
You'll meet again in heaven,  
With those whom God hath call'd away  
To realms of never-ending day,  
Their bodies only sink to clay,  
Their souls ascend to heaven!

Oh, what a meeting-place 'twill be  
Around the throne in heaven!  
From doubts and fears and sin set free,  
Our lov'd and lost we there shall see,  
And happiness our portion be  
With those we love in heaven!

Toronto, Canada.

JOHN IMRIE.

### GOLDEN GRAIN BIBLE READING.

REV. J. A. R. DICKSON, B.D., PH.D., GALL, ONT.

The Position of the Believer in this World.

Key texts, 1 John iv. 17; 1 Peter ii. 21.

1. In his Individual Relations.

As touching many duties, 1 Thess. v. 16 22.

Nonconformity, Romans xii. 2.

Strength, 2 Tim. ii. 1-4.

Not to be entangled, 1 Cor. vii. 29 31.

2. In his Social Relations.

In mingling with men, Romans xii. 14-21.

Going to a feast, Luke vii. 36 50; v. 29

Giving a feast, Luke xiv. 12 14.

Ordinary intercourse, Luke x. 38 42

Family life, Luke ii. 51; Eph. vi. 1-9

Doing good to all, Gal. vi. 10.

3. In his Political Relations.

Lights, Matt. v. 14 16; Phil. ii. 15; John v. 35

Salt, Matt. v. 13; Gen. xix. 26; Romans xii. 28, Deut.

x. 15.

Epistles, 2 Cor. iii. 2, 3; 1 Cor. ix. 2

Prayer, 1 Tim. ii. 1-6.

Government, Rom. xiii. 1-8.

Separation from evil, Rom. xiii. 8-14; 2 Cor. vi. 14 18

### REPORT ON SYSTEMATIC BENEFICENCE— PRESBYTERY OF WHITBY.

The following is the substance of the report on Systematic Beneficence prepared by Rev. R. D. Fraser, M.A., Bowmanville, and adopted by the Presbytery of Whitby at the meeting of January 19. It is now published by request of Presbytery.

These seven questions were sent out in November, to be answered by Sessions and Boards of Managers in joint-meeting:—

1. What means have been employed during the year to bring before the congregation—(a) The teachings of Scripture in regard to Christian stewardship. (b) The work accomplished through the various Schemes of the Church and the claims of the Schemes on the liberality of your people?

2. Has the setting apart of a definite proportion of income as an offering to God been adopted, to your knowledge, by any in your congregation?

3. (a) Is the weekly offering for congregational funds employed?

(b) How long has it been in operation?

(c) What is your experience of it as compared with methods previously in use?

(d) What difficulties have you found in working it, and how have these been overcome?

4. (a) How frequently is opportunity given to the congregation to contribute to the Missionary and other Schemes of the Church?

(b) Are the contributions made by envelope or through collectors?

(c) Would you consider the method recommended by the Presbytery to be practicable in your congregation, viz.:—

"A monthly envelope or monthly collectors for the Schemes, with a canvass at the beginning of the year by the elders or others for promises of the amounts to be given?"

(d) Are contributors given the privilege of specifying to which Scheme or Schemes they desire their contribution to be allotted?

5. (a) What is being done to interest the young in the Missionary and other Schemes of the Church?

(b) What method of giving is followed in your Sabbath school?

6. (a) Is a printed report of congregational affairs issued at the end of the year?

(b) What matters are embraced therein?

(c) Have you found such report of value?

7. Kindly favour the Presbytery with any suggestions derived from your experience which would likely be of service to the Presbytery

in its endeavour to promote improved methods of giving to the Lord's cause in the various congregations within its bounds.

Reports were received from all the congregations except a portion of one at present vacant. The answers sent in contain a body of valuable information.

1. The pulpit seems chiefly to be relied on to bring before congregations the question of Christian stewardship and the work and claims of the Schemes. This is as it should be. A pulpit silent about money is false to the teachings of Christ, who speaks plainly as to the use and abuse of money. A ministry non-missionary is unevangelical. In two instances a special sermon on Stewardships was preached. In three other cases a Sabbath service was given to the Schemes. In another congregation attention was drawn from time to time to those Schemes most in need. The prayer meeting, Sabbath school, Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour and Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, have been used to disseminate information. The latter organization has, in this Presbytery, as elsewhere, wrought untold good. It is a grand example of a noble idea embodied in a thoroughly effective organization. The people of one charge have been "strongly advised to take and read the Church Records and the weekly Church papers. No family should be without one or other or all of these. There is little doubt, as the well-known Chaplain McCabe recently said, that it would pay to stop all the rest of the Church machinery long enough to get a copy of a Church paper into every household. All kinds of Church work becomes easier where there is ample information; and, whilst the people look to the pulpit for inspiration and leading, they prefer to get the details through the press.

2. "Has the setting apart of a definite proportion of income as an offering to God been adopted, to your knowledge, by any in your congregation?" Six say, "Not aware of any." Others, "only one known;" "a few;" "several." At the meeting of elders and managers called to consider the questions in one congregation four persons present were giving a tenth. Such definite storing lies at the root of the whole matter. The practical difficulties can be overcome. When one has determined to reserve a certain proportion for the Lord, as he reserves a certain sum to pay his taxes, he will usually be able to fix upon what that sum ought to be; and when such proportionate giving becomes as general as church-going, or as prayer, the Lord's treasury will overflow.

3. Turning to the replies as to methods of giving, the weekly offering is now in use in twelve of the twenty separate congregations in the Presbytery. It has been employed for periods varying from three to seventeen years, and emphatic testimony is everywhere given to its superiority over former methods. The only difficulty in working it which is specified is that of arrearages—a puzzle under any system. In one instance it has come into disrepute chiefly through contributors being "billed at the end of the quarter for sums already paid." From the replies it is judged that the success or failure of the plan is generally a matter of book-keeping. If the record of receipts is kept with care, and quarterly acknowledgment is made of the amounts received as well as of those due, the plan wins its way rapidly. Two congregations explain in detail how this is done with entire success.

4. For the Missionary and other Schemes three congregations contribute by monthly envelopes; two, through collectors, monthly; two, collectors, quarterly; two, collectors, half-yearly; five, collectors, annually; one, an annual plate collection; two, by envelope, annually, with subsequent canvass of those who fail to respond by envelope; two others, seven times a year by envelope. The method suggested by the Presbytery, viz.: "A monthly envelope, or monthly collectors, for the Schemes, with a canvass at the beginning of the year for promises of the amounts to be given," is generally approved of, although, as has just been mentioned, not by any means generally adopted. There is room for improvement in method in most of the congregations as regards giving to the Schemes. In one instance the monthly envelope was a failure, and the congregation is going back to quarterly collectors. There was, however, no previous canvass. It would appear plain that the "envelope" system, whether weekly or monthly, will not succeed of itself. It requires, to be successful, (1) a pretty general willingness to give it a fair trial; (2) a thorough previous canvass by capable and liberal men; (3) a business-like method of keeping record of the amounts handed in; (4) a proper acknowledgment of these amounts at stated intervals; (5) perseverance in the method until the highway of habit shall have become worn smooth by use. It need scarcely be added that the best method, without the constraining love of Christ in the heart, is less effectual than a poor method where that love abounds; but it is none the less true that love finds freer scope through a good method, and that a good method becomes in its turn a valuable means of grace.

5. The chief means of interesting the young in the Missionary and other Schemes of the Church would appear to be the missionary lessons of the Sabbath school course and the giving of the whole, or a part of, the collections of the Sabbath school to Missions. Two schools contribute to the support of pupils at Pte-aux-Trembles. In four, there are Mission Bands, and in one of these two Bands, the Boys' Band giving special attention to Home Missions. In another congregation the young people give missionary readings and recitations once a month. The *Children's Record* is spoken of in several as useful. The method of giving followed is mostly a weekly collection, either general or by classes.

It is quite evident that far too little attention is paid to the training of the young to an intelligent interest in the great enterprises of the Church and in systematic giving. A general custom, where the weekly envelope is used, is for the head of the house to put the envelope on the plate, the rest of the family being thus shut out from giving except by proxy. The young should have a share in this act of worship, either by separate envelope or loose "change," and special attention should be paid in the Sabbath schools and Mission Bands to good methods of giving. If the golden opportunity of youth is allowed to pass by it is hard to engraft the habit later.

6. In nine charges out of the thirteen there is printed a report of congregational affairs, in some cases merely a financial statement, in others embracing a full and detailed account of the whole work of the congregation. In one report the names of contributors are set forth, in another the numbers of their envelopes. Unanimous testimony is given to the value of such printed reports, and some congregations which have not hitherto issued one intend doing so this year.

7. Great modesty has been displayed in the way of offering suggestions as to improvement of methods. Only three have been made: (1) "It would be desirable to have congregational reports printed in the *Record*." This, it may be stated, is now done to a considerable extent in THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN and the *Presbyterian Review*. The space in the *Record* is exceedingly limited; and even the weeklies have not room to spare for many reports. (2) "Moneys for the Schemes should be remitted to the agent of the Church at frequent intervals throughout the year. Monthly giving would be thereby encouraged." The suggestion is valuable. It is already the custom in some congregations, and the agent of the Church would doubtless wish it general. Interest would be saved. (3) "A weekly system of giving to missions would be of advantage." This, the committee agree, is the ideal system. It dates back to Paul's time. It would be grand—an offering from every worshipper on each Lord's Day for all the work of the Church. But patient training is required up to the plan, in order that its success should be assured. Its successful operation would mean a new era of elasticity in congregational finances, and of expansion in the funds for the great Schemes of the Church.

The following recommendations, based on the summary of answers and the present requirements of the Presbytery were unanimously adopted:—

(1) That the attention of the congregations be again drawn to the "Standard" adopted by the Presbytery as desirable of attainment in every congregation, viz.:—

"(a) Each individual to set apart a definite proportion of his income for religious work.

"(b) The weekly offering for congregational funds.

"(c) A monthly envelope or monthly collectors for the Schemes, with a canvass at the beginning of the year by the elders or others for promises of the amounts to be given.

"(d) Each congregation to contribute to all the Schemes—no blanks."

(2) That the Committee on Systematic Beneficence be authorized to arrange for the sending of a deputation to confer with congregations and office-bearers in regard to the adoption of better methods than those in use wherever such visits may be desired.

(3) That Sessions give earnest attention to the question of the development of a missionary spirit in the young and of the practice by them of systematic storing and giving for the Lord's cause.

(4) That the attention of the General Assembly's Committee on Systematic Beneficence be earnestly drawn, as it hereby is, to the importance of the distribution of suitable literature on this subject throughout the Church, and to the desirability of asking the Assembly for such a sum of money as may be necessary for this purpose.

### THE YOUNG FOR CHRIST.

The promise, "They that seek Me early shall find Me," is constantly receiving fulfilment. Youth is the favoured time for conversion. Statistics demonstrate this. One of the most striking arrays of figures in attestation of this fact that we have seen for a long while is that presented during one of Mr. Mills' revival meetings recently in Chicago. At one of the services there were sixteen hundred persons present. Of this number fourteen hundred declared that they were converted before the age of twenty; one hundred and eighty before that of thirty, and only one person after he was fifty years old. Each pastor's experience confirms this general showing. The large proportion of accessions to the Church are of those between the ages of twelve and twenty-five. Here is fresh incentive to work for the young. Parents should not be satisfied when their children pass the years of eighteen or twenty and are not in the Christian fold. They should give God no rest until He gathers them in. And pastors and Sabbath school teachers should be impelled to all the greater diligence to impress those within their reach in the Church and community during the moulding period of life, when mind and heart are most susceptible to truth and grace. Nor should the young allow the best reason for their salvation to pass by unimproved. "Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation."—*Presbyterian (Philadelphia)*.

"It leads them all," is the general reply of druggists when asked about the merit or sales of Hood's Sarsaparilla.