

WESTPORT, N. S.

We have been holding meetings through the week of prayer. Our interest is increasing and we hope will continue. Thanking God for past blessings we look for greater results. We spent a very happy Christmas season. I was the recipient of a very handsome Christmas gift from my Sunday school class and friends. Another very handsome gift was presented to Mrs. Cooke, from the church members with best wishes.

The people are very kind to us indeed. May God in his infinite mercy bless them is our sincere prayer.

Many other tokens of good will and brotherly kindness speak volumes that need no explanation.

H. E. COOKE.

TIVERTON, N. S.

We have our bell ringing at last to call the people together at our appointments for worship, work and praise to the God of all grace. This has cost a good deal of work and not a few dollars, as we had to build a tower, or belfrey, to our house before we could use a bell. We began the work in faith, believing it was needed and have succeeded beyond our expectations. Those who have not seen the house at Tiverton since we began this work will find its features much changed for the better both outside and in when they pay us the next visit, and we owe almost nothing except thankfulness to the Great Giver of every good and perfect gift.

H. A. DEVOE.

MILTON, N. S.

We had union meetings here during the week of prayer. On Monday evening at the Christian church. Tuesday evening at the Baptist church. Wednesday at the Congregational church. Thursday evening at the Christian church. Friday we were stormed out. The meetings were well attended. Ten took an active part the first evening, twelve the second, twelve the third and fourteen the fourth, making twenty-one different ones who helped make the meetings. The subjects for the four meetings were, Humiliation and Thanksgiving. The Church Universal. Nations and their Rulers. Foreign and Home Missions. We had interesting and we trust profitable meetings. Bro. Giffin, the Baptist preacher, and the writer were the only preachers, as the Congregationalists are without a preacher now. Bro. Giffin is quite a young man, but a diligent student, an intelligent preacher, and an earnest worker. His brethren are showing their appreciation of his labours by a donation sociable, at the present writing.

One of the hopeful signs of Milton is the spirit of Christian union that seems to be growing in the minds and hearts of the people here. We are all coming to see how anti-scriptural and anti-christian this whole business of sectarianism is. We are feeling much like the noted Dr. P. S. Henson (Baptist) who said before the Christian Endeavour Convention at Montreal: "I must be frank, Bro. Clark, and say that I do not believe in denominationalism a bit. I won't say which way we will get over it, but we have got to get over it. . . . There is none of your Dolly Vardon business in Heaven and there ought not to be on earth. . . . We have got to come together. The forces of evil are massing and so must we. We must get into line and learn to keep step. We must form a Macedonian phalanx. We must have out of sight the little things about which we have been contending."

These are strong words from a strong man. How true that to overcome the powers of sin we must stop our contending for doctrines that are of no importance and unite our forces against the evils that are destroying our peace.

Let me make an appointment before I close this letter, and please don't forget it.

In September, 1896, our annual meeting will be held in Milton, if no one objects. I will give you the directions how to come. Leaving the boat at Annapolis you take the train to Middleton, change cars there and come to the Gardens, and then change again and come to Milton! Don't you believe this unless you think it is true. But it is nevertheless true. The company, and it is the strongest company that ever built a railroad in these provinces, and both the Local and Dominion Governments have signed the contract and sealed the bonds for the completion of a railroad in 1895. Both governments having granted the subsidy. Now doubt it if you can. H. M.

LORD'S COVE, N. B.

Though I have nothing new or startling to report from here, yet I think there should be a report from some representative in each of our churches every month in THE CHRISTIAN.

I spent Christmas week visiting my home and mother, and the two weeks following with the brethren in St. John,—taking Bro. Stewart's place while he carried the message into the regions beyond.

Returning about January 10th I found sickness in nearly every home, la grippe having laid siege to the whole community. Am pleased, however, to report nearly all are recovering. One of residents succumbed last week to an attack of pneumonia, and on Lord's day afternoon we laid him to rest in the cemetery. Two or three others appear to be lingering just on the border side.

Our meetings since my return have been very well attended. I think the attendance last Lord's day, both afternoon and evening, was the best since our annual meeting was here in September. The report of work done in Keswick this month ought to give fresh impetus to our home mission work, especially to our contributions then; too, many other fields in our own provinces are sending out the Macedonian call "come over and help us."

R. E. STREVEN.

NORTH SOMERVILLE, MASS.

Since my last letter several have been added to the church by letter, and some who had lately acknowledged their faith in the Lord Jesus received the right hand of fellowship. The work here is still very encouraging and on every hand we can see that the Lord is blessing our efforts; although from a human point of view we might say that we labour under difficulties.

Our hearts are made glad to see the young men coming forward to acknowledge their Lord and Master. Several fine young men have made the good confession and identified themselves with the Disciples at North Somerville.

Our meetings are well attended. At a special business meeting held at the beginning of the New Year, to discuss plans for the advancement of the Master's cause in this place, it was decided to add two deacons to the board of officers to help along the work; four persons were nominated, and a week later Bro. J. L. Brittain and Bro. Ronald Currie, both former residents of St. John, were elected to serve as deacons in the North Somerville church.

We are sorry to note that the business depression, or what is known as a "hard winter," is upon us, and affects North Somerville as well as other parts of the country. NORTH SOMERVILLE, MASS.

CHRISTMAS-TIDE.

Extracts from a sermon delivered at Westport Christian Church, by H. E. Cooke, Christmas Eve.

Another year has rolled into Eternity since we spent the last "Christmas Tide." It has gone with all its cares, its sorrows, its joys, its blessings, its losses, its gains. Its opportunities and privileges are gone forever. We cannot recall the past year and live it over again.

Though we may promise to spend the time to better advantage it matters not.

The world with all its mental and physical power cannot arrest the wheels of time. They linger not to accommodate the millions of earth. It is as a

mighty current rushing swiftly on, and though the eternal destiny of myriads of souls hang upon the extension of a single moment, yet the pendulum of time ceases not.

We who enjoyed this happy season one year ago know assuredly we are one year nearer the close of life. In this the saint and sinner are on equality. The saint is not one whit ahead of the sinner; but in regard to the future there is a vast difference. Though this be a season of joy and gladness, yet we are brought face to face with two of the most vital questions of the day, LIFE and DEATH. Life is as swift as the shuttle through the loom, and death walks beside us in Life's brightest pathway. We should hail this season of the year with joy, because it is a time of giving and receiving. A time when our best gifts are bestowed, and our best wishes are tendered. A time when friends hold fellowship with friends, and recollections of bygone days become a topic of interest; when the young mind is made to revel in sweet anticipation, and the aged in reflection and deep meditation. But, while we talk of the presentation of gifts our minds go back over the centuries past, to that eventful night when God bestowed upon the world the gift of "Eternal Life;" when the "Son of God" stepped from the threshold of "Eternal Glory" to the threshold of earthly humiliation; when the "Son of God" bid farewell (for a season) to the courts of Heaven, and amid the ranks of angels descended—the gift of God to a ruined and sin cursed earth. While the curtains of night were closely wrapped about the memorable and ancient "City of Bethlehem," and while the sons of earth were quietly sleeping, the stillness of the night was broken by the sweet song of the angelic host. And as the eastern shepherds listen to those heavenly strains they mistake not the words ("for unto you is born in the City of David a Saviour in which Christ the Lord.")

Thus God's Christmas gift was bestowed, and a lowly manger in Bethlehem was the birth and reception place of the "King of Glory." Contrast if you will the birthplace of the "Son of God" more than eighteen centuries ago, with the many happy homes resounding with mirth and gladness that participate in the Christmastide of 1893. Contrast those happy homes with the manger home of the Saviour. No kingly palace home, or royal court did God approach in which to bestow his gift. No downy pillow on which to pillow that loving head. No mottoes of greeting decked the walls of that lowly birth place of the world's Redeemer. Though no earthly pomp or grandeur marked the birth place of Heaven's King; though no earthly honors distinguished that eventful hour, yet the angelic hosts of heaven are in waiting. Though no earthly choir was present to chant the Christmas coral, yet the ethereal choristers are in attendance: And as they strike their angelic fingers across their golden harps, the arches of the skies resound with the sweet "hosanna to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will to men." From the battlements of the "Celestial City," to the manger home at "Bethlehem," the vaulted heavens resound; and suddenly the star peers forth from the eastern horizon, and with its effulgent beauty augments the intensity of that midnight scene. Though earth lie unapprised of the gift of Heaven, and therefore made no demonstration at his arrival, yet this was the honor paid to him who came to redeem the world. Why should we not lift our hearts to God and with the Apostle Paul exclaim, "thanks be to God" for his unspeakable gift." The advent of Jesus Christ into the world was not only to battle with sin, and measure swords with death, but to bestow peace and good will, to "break down the middle wall of partition," and cause new light and life to breathe o'er the earth. We are indebted to Him for the peace and joy that come to us at this season of the year. It is his name that graces and brightens the Christmastide. We are not attempting to prove that the twenty-fifth of December is actually the birthday of our Lord and Saviour. But we know that he was born in a manger at Bethlehem over eighteen centuries ago. How dear to the Christian are the records of that sacred birth. How strong are the historic moorings of faith that bind us to these living truths: Christmas of 1893 is passing, we are entering upon the threshold of 1894. What the changes will be before the return of the season we know not. But he who came into this dark world to brighten it with his presence, and renovate it with his Truth, to guide it by his Spirit, and control it by his Law, and win it by his Love; the same has said to every traveller in life's pathway, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you Rest."—From Free Press, Weymouth.