

He (the Holy Ghost) will convince the world of sin.—John xvi. 8.

[For OUR MISSION UNION.]

Conviction of Sin.*

By REV. J. A. R. DICKSON.



HE first blessing God gives to the soul of man, of which it is conscious, is the conviction of its sinfulness. Many blessings go before this, of which we know nothing until we have been taught of the Holy Spirit; then, they stand forth like mountains from which the mist has lifted. When Paul saw his error on the way to Damascus, by the revelation of Christ to him, he saw only that; but afterward, when he had been

in the school of Christ for a time, he saw much lying behind that, which God had done for him in grace and mercy, see Gal. 1: 15-17; Col. 1: 12-14; Eph. 1: 4-7. When we are convicted of sin, ready to cry out with the Philippian jailer: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" we are to accept this as an evidence that God has a purpose of mercy toward us. This is the way God begins to bless us, by shewing us our sins, by discovering to us our peril, by opening our eyes to our guilt and condemnation. This is the way he prepares us to receive Christ. Unless we realize that we are sinners, we do not prize a Saviour. Unless we see ourselves as lost, we shall never seek to be saved. Unless the truth comes home to us that we are cursed by the law, we shall never try to escape it. Unless we know that we have done wickedly, we shall never repent of it. The uneasy sense of sin, filling the soul with wretchedness and misery is the result of the quickening of our nature Godward, it is the first evidence of our becoming "*alive to God.*" It is the fruit of the Spirit's work. The means employed may be various—a verse of Scripture, a line of a hymn, a father's prayer, a mother's warning, in afflictive providence—God can use any means for awakening us to concern about our souls, for the bringing of us to see that we are enemies to God, and truth, and righteousness. It matters little what means may have been used, the all important thing is, that we have a consciousness of our sins, that "our sins testify against us" Isa. 59: 12, at the bar of conscience, and that we are crying out "Woe is me, for I am undone." Isa. 6: 5.

We must beware, and not trifle with this experience. It is the band of love by which God draws us to Christ. It is of value to us as it causes us to come to Jesus. It enables us to understand that merciful and gracious word, "Come unto me, all ye *that labor and are heavy laden*, and I WILL GIVE YOU REST" Matt. 11: 28. It is not an end to rest in, it is only a means to an end, and that end is Christ. Let us be careful not to rest in our conviction of sin, let us rather be taught by its bitter ex-

perience to go to the sin-bearer to whom John pointed, and said; "Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1: 29. Our sin is discovered to us, that we may seek to be cleansed from it. Its pain is awakened in our consciences, that we may escape to Him who alone can free us from its agony in the future, as well as its misery now. Who is He? He is "JESUS, for He shall SAVE His people from their SINS."



CANADA.

MR. A. H. BRACE, Missionary of the Toronto Mission Union, has been holding a week's evangelistic mission at one of the stations of the Union, on Chestnut street, with good results.

F. SCHIVEREA of Brooklyn, is holding a series of services for Young Men in connection with the Toronto Y. M. C. A. week of prayer. The attendance has been fairly good, and the interest which at the outset was slight, has gradually increased until the workers are encouraged.

REV. A. GAY, has been conducting Evangelistic services at Mt. Zion Church, St. Matthew's Ward, Toronto, with much success. At the close he proceeded to Alton and North Erin to labor for two weeks.

MR. W. P. CROMBIE writes us, under date of Nov. 8th. as follows:—Dear Bro. in Christ,—I write you for the express purpose of asking you and the readers of the MISSION UNION to make me a subject of special prayer. I am going to Denver, Colorado. I am going in the hopes of being restored to physical health by the bracing climate of that region, and also in the hopes of winning souls for Jesus Christ, and doing good to the saints. Please ask your readers to pray that my hopes may be fully realized, and that my life and testimony there may be for God's glory, and the good of souls.

UNITED STATES.

L. P. ROWLAND, is laboring at Middleville, Mich., from which place he writes:—"I am now in the midst of a good and blessed work."

HARRY F. SAYLES has just closed a four weeks mission at Janesville, Ohio, and has entered upon ten days services at Dexter. Many souls have been led to Christ.

* This is the first of a series of articles kindly contributed by one who is well known as a successful preacher and writer.