

# Provincial Wesleyan.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 1908.

## "Can we have a Camp Meeting?"

To this inquiry, which has come to us from several of our Ministers in Nova Scotia, a ready answer may be given. The season for such a gathering is not limited, and will soon be past; but if preparatory arrangements are in progress, there may yet be ample time before autumn weather overtakes us, for carrying such a purpose into effect. We presume there already been some action, to some extent, on the part of Ministers and people in convenient proximity; and that the way seems open for carrying out the project—a location, in all respects convenient and favourable, having been selected, and an undertaking arrived at for securing the cooperation necessary, from Ministers and Circuits, so as with efficiency to conduct such a Camp Meeting as may, with the divine blessing, result in prosperity to the Church of God, and, perhaps, on a much wider scale than could be anticipated by ordinary efforts. We do not at present stop to answer any objections that may be urged against such a measure. We prefer submitting for the favourable consideration of our readers; and the opinions of others who have attended such exercises in the neighbouring States or elsewhere; and who have carefully marked the gratifying fruits. It must never be forgotten that no means, of whatever kind, can be employed that will secure permanent advantage to the cause of Christ, apart from the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit. But of this, none are more deeply sensible than those of our brethren who favour extraordinary efforts for the revival of the work of God.

We commend to those specially interested in this important question, the following communication from an esteemed brother minister:—

### "WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PROMOTE THE WORK OF GOD AMONGST US?"

Undoubtedly this is the most important question that comes before the councils of our Church, from that of the divine will, attending to the Conference in its deliberations assembled. When this question is under consideration many of our Fathers and Brethren speak of the power of the Gospel to save, and of the omnipotence of prayer to subdue the hearts of men, when used in the exercise of faith in Him who alone can give the increase.

While cheered in some measure by these old truths, still we cannot hide from ourselves the fact, over which all who love Zion mourn, that the cause of God does not advance in proportion to the increase of her agents, and her influence in society.

As a Church we are increasing the number of our pulpits and filling them with educated men; and it would be but reasonable to look for a proportional increase in our membership. But instead of realizing our anticipations in this respect, we do little more than cover the loss occasioned by removal and death, so that the increase of our agency does not meet our present want. The great Head of the Church has never left us in doubt as to what we need, now and always, to give success to all our efforts in His cause.

The Church may be fully symbolized by Ezekiel's valley of dry bones; the bones are numerous but very dry. We need the rushing mighty wind of Pentecost—a spiritual affluence which will produce a glow of holiness, and need the life-giving Spirit breathed into our prayers, our sermons, our Temple-worship. We need to draw so near the Master as to catch that still small voice which is the resurrection trumpet to the soul, then will we drop all mere formalities; resting not in the letter, but in the Spirit, we shall use our rites and ceremonies as wings to mount up. The will of our Father, which we profess to obey, is our Father's will, and our Father's will is to have mercy, rich and the intense love to heaven.

This rich and heavenly baptism fell upon the Apostles while they were assembled together praying. Would it not in some degree be following the example of these holy men, for God's ministers and people to set apart some time, and place for a united effort, in seeking the necessary preparation for the promotion of the work of God in our Churches?

And where can a more fitting place be found for this service, than the leafy grove—God's own Temple? ALPHEA.

We append, as bearing on this subject, some paragraphs from the last issue of *Wesley's Herald* upon the end or design of camp meetings:—

### THE END OF CAMP MEETINGS.

Not their demise—they will die only when the old heroic fire of Methodism dies out. But what is their object? Not relaxation, not social enjoyment, not educational development, but work under a baptism of fire. The fathers massed the people in these annual gatherings because their burning souls could not be satisfied with attainment. They believed in the power of grand sermons to spiritualize the church out of her beaten routine to spiritual ecstasies, where apostolic visions and voices should thrill her with the grandeur of her mission, and with something of the "eternal weight of glory" press her to break the ranks of the demerit of the world. They saw that, in religion as in nature, there are times for a tumult of the elements—the calm and sunshine must give way to the thunder and lightning. But what is the object? It is not always modulated to the scale, the atmosphere must be purified; what if the lightning strikes a dwelling? But what is the object? It is not always modulated to the scale, the atmosphere must be purified; what if the lightning strikes a dwelling? But what is the object? It is not always modulated to the scale, the atmosphere must be purified; what if the lightning strikes a dwelling?

The great heart of the projected camp meetings were not afraid of extravagance. They could have had the vast concentration of popular sympathies, trusts, labours, struggles, victories, clear of all fanaticism—the mounting flame without the cross-current of wind—they would have rejoiced in it; but they had heard the voice of God in the flame, and stood with unshaken feet and gave glory to Him.

No powerful movement, religious, social or civil, can be made without ecstasies. The ocean foam and surges because of heaven-sent depths. To tone down the camp meetings to the ordinary plane of religious thought, feeling and work, is to annihilate it. It was born of a holy spirituality to be a law unto itself, and compel respect by its inherent solemn energy. Its work is conquest—the charge-bayonet move of Immanuel's army. It is a purpose to know its own tactics, to be master of the situation and accept only the unconditional surrender. Elsewhere the church must work the great law of growth in her progress. It is the duty of childhood, feeding the lamb, and allowing none to stray from the fold. But so long as staid, wary sinners continue, there must be some of the Pauline conversions—feel herself equal under God to evoking a power which shall shake them like the Philippians, and constrain them to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Emboldened by this success, Moses ventured still further. Indeed, he had been drawing nearer and nearer through the whole of this interview. A holy familiarity had been going on till it reaches a climax that overwhelms us with astonishment. The man of God now takes such a position as no mortal man ever took before, as he exclaimed, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory." O what a request to come to a poor worm of the earth! We expect to see him repelled with indignation. We look for the thunderbolt to leap forth for his destruction, or to smite him from the base of the mountain a ghastly corpse. But so; instead of

A timely preachment on a good subject, from an "Old Linerist," is this talk on CAMP MEETINGS.

The season of Camp Meetings is at hand, and it may not be unacceptable to hear a word about them from one who has attended from one to five nearly every year since 1820. These meetings have probably been the means of bringing more living members into the church than any other instrumentality; and the question of giving them up should not for one moment be entertained. The utility of these meetings consists principally in two things—the length of time spent and the large number of praying men and women uniting in the services and labours of the occasion. The Sabbath devoted to the effort for the salvation of souls, and more is accomplished in this one day than in the other six, because the day is devoted exclusively to this one work. So when we go to camp meeting, leaving the world and its cares behind, and spend an entire week in prayer and Christian work for the conversion of sinners, we rise higher in spiritual attainments just in proportion to the time thus spent. No one will question that the longer the number of praying ones uniting their faith and labor in a meeting, the greater will be the amount of good accomplished. Our camp meetings would unquestionably accomplish much more if they followed in the footsteps of a half century ago in two or three particulars.—Then a majority of each and all the churches should be present. With a very few exceptions all went the first day and staid until the last. They took all the young converts and all unconverted as possible with them.

In 1820 I attended my first camp meeting, having experienced religion and joined the church in Middletown, Conn., the preceding April. They took the young converts, and five hundred unconverted with them, and in the next few days twenty young men were received as probationers, being a part of the fruits of the meeting. In 1821 the churches returned just ready to faint and fall out by the way, and that wonderful Camp Meeting saved him from backsliding. The unconverted all returned rejoicing in the pardoning Saviour. In 1822 I attended four camp meetings, in South Carolina, Long Island, Connecticut, and in Massachusetts. The Charleston churches took a large number of unconverted with them, and in the next few days twenty young men were received as probationers, being a part of the fruits of the meeting. In 1823 the churches returned just ready to faint and fall out by the way, and that wonderful Camp Meeting saved him from backsliding. The unconverted all returned rejoicing in the pardoning Saviour. In 1824 I attended four camp meetings, in South Carolina, Long Island, Connecticut, and in Massachusetts. The Charleston churches took a large number of unconverted with them, and in the next few days twenty young men were received as probationers, being a part of the fruits of the meeting.

My reader, what would you think of such an interview with your Maker, of such a face-to-face converse with the Lord of the universe? If you were informed that you might have such an interview this very night would you gladly accept the offer? If you knew God through Christ, would you not want to know God through Christ? If you knew God through Christ, would you not want to know God through Christ? If you knew God through Christ, would you not want to know God through Christ?

Unconverted reader, I ask you to come to God through Jesus. Do not hesitate, for while you do so the great guilt will soon be fixed between you and heaven. Your character is now forming, and you soon will be stereotyped forever. Indefinite soon becomes definite. You decide for hell while you think that you are only waiting about heaven.

With a subtler sense endowed. Let them come in on strong array, that with their irresistible moral momentum may bear down the opposition of the future. We need not expect a plain path cleared of all enemies and all obstructions. It would make us careless and weak to pass along such a way. We may likely count upon this, that Providence will always give us enough to do below to discipline and test us, to keep us sober, vigilant and active if we achieve it. And if we watch and pray, keep our eyes open, our hands bare, and put our trust in Him, we can perform all the labor lays on us to do, and receive the corresponding reward. But if we murmur and falter under our burdens, and flee before our enemies, He will find others to do His work and fight His battles, and we ourselves will suffer damage and loss. On then, manfully, to what is before us! On with a Christian's courage and trust in God!

We shall best overcome our difficulties by understanding clearly what they are. Let us measure them with a cool eye, and come up to them with intrepidity. Some armies are defeated because they despise their enemies, think they have but little to do, and therefore do not half fight. Others are defeated because they are all fear and trepidation before the imagined greatness of their enemies; they cannot control themselves, cannot collect their energies, and therefore cannot half fight. We must avoid both these extremes. We must get a clear idea of what we have to do and then go on and do it. Our difficulties are such as are not to be despised. To the soldier of charity, and the solicited, occupy a delicate position, and christian courtesy will relieve its painfulness to a large extent. "To be a partner with Jesus Christ in the magnificent enterprise of overcoming evil with good," ought to be the motto of every man who has the least of Christian charity in his heart. Then this motive prompts them their liberality will abound, and to the full measure of their ability they will give. Every one permitted to become a partner in the great enterprise of spreading the gospel, and "when the dividend is made, some of us will wish we had invested more liberally in the ministry of salvation." Giving should be a regular act of a person's life. We must adopt the primitive plan of having something to give every week to be presented on the Lord's day. While we attend to other claims, such as building or repairing churches, or raising missionary money, it should not be done by withdrawing the preacher's claim. The devices which are adopted to get money are thus dealt with:

"As to all the intolerable devices to which good women are driven to get money out of men for the support of the gospel—fairs, fests, picnics, excursions, lotteries and all other plans which indelicate female sympathy keeps up on churches and semi-respectable converts clerical brethren, they are simply the mortifying advertisement of the domination of the flesh over the spirit, both in church and vestible. They are the sorrowful testimony wrong from our wives and daughters, to our dishonour as God's stewards of His sacred trust. What a spectacle is this! A pious Christian brother deprecating the plate of unnecessary food that a tired woman's paltry profit on it may be paid as his contribution to God and humanity! A dollar is paid for the dish, and fifty cents of the dollar, the preparer's earnings, go to the treasury. The man being permitted to give what he can spare, taxes himself a dollar and eats as much as he can buy with it, for the cost of collection! This is the 'whisky ring.' Was ever a great cause mocked with such drippings and raspings; such infinitesimal extractions from the good eater's dirt barrel!"

We will give the conclusions to which its reasonings (which in the above we have sketched) has brought the *Methodist*. Many can consider them severe. Perhaps they are. Are they not? We cannot afford to pay a preacher. Many farmers or mechanics cannot spare five or ten dollars a year for the cause that saves them and their families from being beasts and beast food in this world, and damned spirits in the next. There was some grim satisfaction in seeing the government put a great screw on them. It must have been a great surprise to them to find out how much better off they were than they thought. Squeezing brought an astonishing amount of concealed gold. Hundreds were found for the national waste and ruin fund where ten cents could not be procured for the service of peace and goodness and human kindness. We wonder if God does not manage to get his titles back for his land in Judea, by sending the tenants to Babylon for seventy years. He sometimes collects dues for him. Perhaps in God's system of balancing accounts the army of war, and red

welcome in every worshipping household. A few extracts will enable our readers to judge for themselves.

REST.  
"Where is the rest we long to gain,  
The rest beyond deceiving?  
Our life-long chase of shadows vain  
Has wrought but one heart's betraying.  
Our hearts are sadly mute from sound,  
And haug on strangers' willows;  
Our dove no shelling home hath found,  
But wears out the billows."

"In restless pain we heave and toss,  
Like phytolites of the ocean,  
And mourn, with sharpest pang of loss,  
Dead objects of devotion.  
We fight light where'er it gleams,  
Though marsh and mist encumber;  
We reign, anointed kings—in dreams,  
But wake forer from slumber."

"We grasp at grains of shifing dust,  
But in the grasp they perish;  
We put in men's applause our trust—  
And when the praise is over,  
Remorse—a ghastly shadow—blights  
Each wreath we weave for pleasure;  
But, restless still, we scale the heights,  
Or search the mines for treasure."

"To Him, long strayed, we venture back,  
As captives in prison-bars;  
God pledges peace upon the track,  
And endless welcome yonder.  
E'en now each grateful spirit hears  
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UNCONSCIOUS PRAYER.  
"The countless stars which light the dark,  
Tribes that with silent hymns are avast,  
The whole of nature, with the lark  
Warbles of summer, and of heaven."  
Each pulse of light, each wave of sound,  
Each forward shroud, each wise design,  
All swell to the world's utmost bound,  
Praise to the forming Hand Divine."

"Yet is it all unconscious praise,  
Struck from their lips, not from their hearts;  
As when the sunbeams strike the sea,  
A flash in a monarch's diadem."

"Strong laws material forces bind,  
The reverence of one baby-mind  
Is nobler than a million stars."  
RELINQUISH GOD.  
"Who will doubt that a wifely mother  
With a child's judgment, as most men are,  
Through the gives some answer other  
Than her fretful child's desire?  
Strongest love is farthest sighted,  
Dearest beyond the dawn,  
By a richer radiance lighted,  
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"More than all our poor petitions  
Of our Saviour loves to grant,  
But on heavenlier conditions  
Than our prayers want.  
We lament our strange denials;  
Idle words of fruitless prayer;  
Beads in the golden vessel,  
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"Teach our wayward souls reliance  
That thy will is always best,  
Though by stern and strange appliances  
Thou dost bring us to our rest.  
By thy grace we all inherit  
Power to bear the cross and shame;  
Firm endurance; martyr spirit;  
Singly sanctity and the flame."

Ministerial Support.  
The rule which should govern us in giving to support the gospel is thus stated by the *Episcopal Methodist* in its number of July 4th:—"God expects us to give to the support of the gospel as our duty. Taxation must needs be unequal. The tenth of a man's income will bear hard on those who receive barely what will support their families, and be far too small a proportion for a man whose income amounts to fifty thousand per annum. In giving, each one should decide according to the Lord's law; and others should not collect their energies, and therefore cannot half fight. We must avoid both these extremes. We must get a clear idea of what we have to do and then go on and do it. Our difficulties are such as are not to be despised. To the soldier of charity, and the solicited, occupy a delicate position, and christian courtesy will relieve its painfulness to a large extent. "To be a partner with Jesus Christ in the magnificent enterprise of overcoming evil with good," ought to be the motto of every man who has the least of Christian charity in his heart. Then this motive prompts them their liberality will abound, and to the full measure of their ability they will give. Every one permitted to become a partner in the great enterprise of spreading the gospel, and "when the dividend is made, some of us will wish we had invested more liberally in the ministry of salvation." Giving should be a regular act of a person's life. We must adopt the primitive plan of having something to give every week to be presented on the Lord's day. While we attend to other claims, such as building or repairing churches, or raising missionary money, it should not be done by withdrawing the preacher's claim. The devices which are adopted to get money are thus dealt with:

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Thou dost bring us to our rest.  
By thy grace we all inherit  
Power to bear the cross and shame;  
Firm endurance; martyr spirit;  
Singly sanctity and the flame."

Ministerial Support.  
The rule which should govern us in giving to support the gospel is thus stated by the *Episcopal Methodist* in its number of July 4th:—"God expects us to give to the support of the gospel as our duty. Taxation must needs be unequal. The tenth of a man's income will bear hard on those who receive barely what will support their families, and be far too small a proportion for a man whose income amounts to fifty thousand per annum. In giving, each one should decide according to the Lord's law; and others should not collect their energies, and therefore cannot half fight. We must avoid both these extremes. We must get a clear idea of what we have to do and then go on and do it. Our difficulties are such as are not to be despised. To the soldier of charity, and the solicited, occupy a delicate position, and christian courtesy will relieve its painfulness to a large extent. "To be a partner with Jesus Christ in the magnificent enterprise of overcoming evil with good," ought to be the motto of every man who has the least of Christian charity in his heart. Then this motive prompts them their liberality will abound, and to the full measure of their ability they will give. Every one permitted to become a partner in the great enterprise of spreading the gospel, and "when the dividend is made, some of us will wish we had invested more liberally in the ministry of salvation." Giving should be a regular act of a person's life. We must adopt the primitive plan of having something to give every week to be presented on the Lord's day. While we attend to other claims, such as building or repairing churches, or raising missionary money, it should not be done by withdrawing the preacher's claim. The devices which are adopted to get money are thus dealt with:

"As to all the intolerable devices to which good women are driven to get money out of men for the support of the gospel—fairs, fests, picnics, excursions, lotteries and all other plans which indelicate female sympathy keeps up on churches and semi-respectable converts clerical brethren, they are simply the mortifying advertisement of the domination of the flesh over the spirit, both in church and vestible. They are the sorrowful testimony wrong from our wives and daughters, to our dishonour as God's stewards of His sacred trust. What a spectacle is this! A pious Christian brother deprecating the plate of unnecessary food that a tired woman's paltry profit on it may be paid as his contribution to God and humanity! A dollar is paid for the dish, and fifty cents of the dollar, the preparer's earnings, go to the treasury. The man being permitted to give what he can spare, taxes himself a dollar and eats as much as he can buy with it, for the cost of collection! This is the 'whisky ring.' Was ever a great cause mocked with such drippings and raspings; such infinitesimal extractions from the good eater's dirt barrel!"

We will give the conclusions to which its reasonings (which in the above we have sketched) has brought the *Methodist*. Many can consider them severe. Perhaps they are. Are they not? We cannot afford to pay a preacher. Many farmers or mechanics cannot spare five or ten dollars a year for the cause that saves them and their families from being beasts and beast food in this world, and damned spirits in the next. There was some grim satisfaction in seeing the government put a great screw on them. It must have been a great surprise to them to find out how much better off they were than they thought. Squeezing brought an astonishing amount of concealed gold. Hundreds were found for the national waste and ruin fund where ten cents could not be procured for the service of peace and goodness and human kindness. We wonder if God does not manage to get his titles back for his land in Judea, by sending the tenants to Babylon for seventy years. He sometimes collects dues for him. Perhaps in God's system of balancing accounts the army of war, and red

welcome in every worshipping household. A few extracts will enable our readers to judge for themselves.

REST.  
"Where is the rest we long to gain,  
The rest beyond deceiving?  
Our life-long chase of shadows vain  
Has wrought but one heart's betraying.  
Our hearts are sadly mute from sound,  
And haug on strangers' willows;  
Our dove no shelling home hath found,  
But wears out the billows."

"In restless pain we heave and toss,  
Like phytolites of the ocean,  
And mourn, with sharpest pang of loss,  
Dead objects of devotion.  
We fight light where'er it gleams,  
Though marsh and mist encumber;  
We reign, anointed kings—in dreams,  
But wake forer from slumber."

"We grasp at grains of shifing dust,  
But in the grasp they perish;  
We put in men's applause our trust—  
And when the praise is over,  
Remorse—a ghastly shadow—blights  
Each wreath we weave for pleasure;  
But, restless still, we scale the heights,  
Or search the mines for treasure."

"To Him, long strayed, we venture back,  
As captives in prison-bars;  
God pledges peace upon the track,  
And endless welcome yonder.  
E'en now each grateful spirit hears  
The voice of Him who calls us;  
Return! your eyes shall cease from tears,  
Your feet be safe from falling."

UNCONSCIOUS PRAYER.  
"The countless stars which light the dark,  
Tribes that with silent hymns are avast,  
The whole of nature, with the lark  
Warbles of summer, and of heaven."  
Each pulse of light, each wave of sound,  
Each forward shroud, each wise design,  
All swell to the world's utmost bound,  
Praise to the forming Hand Divine."

"Yet is it all unconscious praise,  
Struck from their lips, not from their hearts;  
As when the sunbeams strike the sea,  
A flash in a monarch's diadem."

"Strong laws material forces bind,  
The reverence of one baby-mind  
Is nobler than a million stars."  
RELINQUISH GOD.  
"Who will doubt that a wifely mother  
With a child's judgment, as most men are,  
Through the gives some answer other  
Than her fretful child's desire?  
Strongest love is farthest sighted,  
Dearest beyond the dawn,  
By a richer radiance lighted,  
With a subtler sense endowed."

"More than all our poor petitions  
Of our Saviour loves to grant,  
But on heavenlier conditions  
Than our prayers want.  
We lament our strange denials;  
Idle words of fruitless prayer;  
Beads in the golden vessel,  
Christ has made them fragrant there."

"Teach our wayward souls reliance  
That thy will is always best,  
Though by stern and strange appliances  
Thou dost bring us to our rest.  
By thy grace we all inherit  
Power to bear the cross and shame;  
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