

The Christian.

ST. JOHN, N. B., JANUARY, 1892.

EDITORIAL.

THE NEW YEAR

Again in the good providence of God we are permitted to wish the readers of THE CHRISTIAN A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year.

This season is well fitted to awaken emotions of gratitude and purest joy. We can again unite with a great multitude of the heavenly host in praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will towards men." Year by year, as Anno Domini recedes into the distant past, it is gathering rather than losing its soul inspiring interest. The name of our Lord is so wonderful that all the business of enlightened nations is done in it. Both friend and foe acknowledge that the entire literature of civilization is so pervaded with the name of our Lord that neither letter, note, paper, nor book is worth anything without Anno Domini. And that after the most determined labors of infidelity to abolish A. D. all men by word and act testify that our Lord was born 1892 years ago. Who is so blind as not to see in this a prelude to that day decreed by God when every knee shall bow to Him and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father? Let men be glad to remember that He whom God hath made both Lord and Christ is our brother and Saviour.

The past year has been laden with many blessings. It has been a year of peace and temporal prosperity. The earth has brought forth plentifully, rewarding the farmer's labor and supplying the wants of man and beast, and the trade of the country has been fair.

The religious outlook is encouraging. There seems to be a growing anxiety for the union of all who love the Lord, and the public advocates of sectarian divisions are becoming beautifully less. Every year it seems to be regarded as less sacriligious to try human creeds by the word of God, and men are encouraged much more than in the past to "prove all things and hold fast that which is good." For these hopeful signs of the times we thank God and take courage. Whatever instrumentality we may have, had, or are having in these things is a small matter compared with His working who does all things after the counsel of His own will. We should, however, earnestly pray and strive to be on the side of Christ and not against Him, and at the same time rejoice in the prosperity of His cause by whomsoever He carries on His work.

The labors of our brethren during the past year, we are happy to say, have not been in vain in the Lord. Quite a number in the different provinces have been added to the Lord. The brethren see and feel the need of more efficient and earnest labor. They are continually enquiring for more preachers to sound out the word of life, and are anxious to engage the members, especially the young, in active service for the Lord. There is a manifest zeal in building meeting-houses, repairing others and lifting the debts from those which have been built by weak churches.

Pious young men, of talent and promise, are coming into the field, and others are striving for such education as shall aid them to be efficient preachers of the Gospel. There are some of the favorable signs of the times and many others might be mentioned, among them the great success of our preachers in the United States.

Our disappointments, although neither few nor far between, are not intended by the Master to crush or overcome us, but rather to increase our confidence in Him and to strengthen and fit us for

more effective work. Paul gloriol in tribulation, also, because of its golden fruits. From it sprang patience, experience, hope, a hope that maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit. These blessed fruits are not realized with ut tribulation and disappointment. If dissatisfied with our very imperfect labors for the Master in past years, let us remember the feelings of our great high Priest and come boldly to a throne of grace that we may obtain mercy (for the past) and find grace to help in time of need. (Heb. iv. 16).

Brothron, shall we consider the past and earnestly seek favor for the future? Nothing seems plainer than the willingness of God "to give grace and glory and to withhold no good thing from those who walk uprightly." This may be our last year for labor, and when we consider how much and how important that work is, which, by the grace of God, we can accomplish for the salvation of our race, will we not be more earnest than we have ever been? The time of the end is drawing near when "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and over. (Dan. v. 12).

SEVENTH DAY ADVENT CATECHISM.

"The above would correctly designate a book called 'Bible Readings for the Home Circle,' published at Battle Creek, Michigan. Do you want it? If not keep your wits about you when the agent calls to get your order for Bible Readings. Scores are captivated who never suspect its real contents.

"Adventism is being sown broadcast under the cloak of Bible Readings for the Home Circle. Do not expect the agent to say a word about Adventism. He will not do it. He would not sell one copy where he now sells twenty-five if he were to give a true statement as to its contents and aims."

The above is from *The Christian Standard* of Cincinnati. Agents are selling it on Prince Edward Island and it may be in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Hundreds have been deceived in buying a book which is anti-Christian in its tendency. Besides advocating soul-sleeping and the annihilation of the wicked, it teaches that Christ has no kingdom on earth and that the observance of the first day of the week is rebellion against God. We know of nothing more opposed to Christ than the attempt to deny His reign and to abolish the observance of His rising day.

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, etc., etc. (Heb. i. 1-5). We know that God spoke to the Jewish fathers by Moses and commanded them to keep the seventh day holy, but we know of no command of God to the Gentiles by Moses or any one else to keep the seventh day.

After that Jesus had nailed the Jewish ceremonies to His cross, He neither in person nor by His apostles in command or example taught the observance of the seventh day. But both Jesus and His apostles have, by clear example, taught the observance of the first day of the week, and it has ever since been the commemorative day of Christianity.

D. C.

THE EDUCATIONAL FUND.

RECEIPTS.

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| Concert at Westport, | \$2 85 |
| Mrs. Alex. Hamilton, New Perth, P. E. I. | 1 00 |
| Miss M. Freeman, Milton, N. S. | 1 00 |
| Mrs. F. Blackadar, St. John, N. B. | 2 00 |
| H. W. Stewart, St. John, N. B. | 2 00 |

Total \$8 85

H. W. STEWART, Treasurer.

St. John, N. B.

Original Contributions.

OBEDIENCE.

We find in the life of Christ perfect obedience to His Father's will both in what He did and suffered. Our obedience is in conforming our hearts and actions to the will of God. It is through obedience to His will we receive life and salvation. We need to distinguish between the author or agent and medium of life. While it is true that God is the giver of life, it is just as true that through our obedience to Him is how He gives it. It may be asked why God demands any action on man's part in order to salvation. This may be answered by asking the question, how God could say "well done" to him who had done nothing. To make man happy he must be conscious of doing good. If God alone does all the work then He alone should receive all the reward, as all are rewarded "according to their works." We learn, however, that "we are workers together with God." To work with God is to obey Him, to do as He directs us or commands us.

This lesson of receiving life in obedience to God's laws is taught us in nature's laws. The fruit of all vegetable life is seen only in obedience to His laws. The good seed must be sown in good soil to produce good fruit.

We are taught that the seed is the truth or the Word of God. The soil is the heart and the fruit is the life or character. To obey God is to receive His word into good hearts and to bring forth fruit or a life that will correspond with the seed sown. Right here we find the true design of obedience to the Word of God, not simply to give us a right to Heaven but the nature of Heaven. A mistake here is fatal. We may receive or obey the Word and not receive salvation, as we may receive medicine and not secure health. The truth, like the lighted match is no good to us unless it will light our own lamp. Our obedience to the law of God is of no avail unless it produces the life and nature of Him who is "the way, the truth and the life."

The benefit received from the reception of food and the obedience to the laws of nature is not simply in some special reward we are to receive because of a good physical constitution, but in the constitution itself. The true function of God's Word, which is the bread of life, is seen in this very idea of giving good health to the soul, the reconstruction and development of true manhood. To obey God or the laws of God is to so receive the truth that it will transform us and give us a high and noble standard of manhood. In receiving food man needs a good stomach. We find it often the case that it is much more difficult to get the stomach than to get the food. There are many in life whom we call rich, who have plenty of everything that is good for the stomach, but have a very poor stomach and are therefore nothing but walking skeletons. How true this is in relation to the soul, to those who have much of God's spiritual food but whose spiritual stomachs are in such a condition that they are mere religious skeletons. Here is the idea and design of salvation to man, — a good healthy rounded manhood. Here is the power that is to move the world, — the transformation of character. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is that good and acceptable perfect will of God." Whatever power the truth of God is to have in the reformation of the world must be through the life and character of the church; or Christian life. "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord." God's manifold wisdom is now made known through the church. With this view of the truth we can see the force of Paul's commendation to his Ephesian brethren, "I commit you to God and the Word of His grace which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among the sanctified.

H. M.