

Christian Endeavor.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN OUR LIVES.

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July 7th—Mark xii. 28-33.

Ab, indeed, the ten commandments in our lives! So we have not got beyond these precepts yet. Still there are some who think they have. There is a class of materialistic philosophers who reject the idea that law is of divine origin, and who practically leave every man to frame his own moral standard. There is also another class who profess to be thoroughly evangelical, and who yet hold that "they have nothing to do with the moral precepts of Moses except in so far as they agree with the common law of nature, and are confirmed by Christ." They say that the ten commandments were a rule of life laid down for the guidance of the Jews, and that Christians need not concern themselves about them now. They assert that the moral law with all its obligations passed away when Christ died on Calvary—that the law was buried in the grave of Christ. With great gusto they sing:

"Free from the law, Oh happy condition."

They declare that they are now living under a dispensation of grace, not one of law; that they would not belittle grace by respecting the Decalogue. The only law they feel constrained to observe is the law of Gospel light and liberty. A few in that school go even further and declare that as they magnify grace they enjoy the liberty to sin.

We have only to turn to the sayings of Christ Himself and His great Apostle Paul to see that the Decalogue is still binding. In the sermon on the mount, Christ did not abolish the law, but He gave a clearer, fuller exposition of it than any one had ever given before. No one can read His famous deliverance on that occasion without feeling that the precepts promulgated at Sinai are still to be observed. Paul, too, in speaking of the law, says "It is holy and just and good" (Rom. vii. 12-14; Rom. iii. 31).

What is the sum of the ten commandments? "To love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, with all our mind; and our neighbor as ourselves."

When we consider the commandments themselves, we see they are nearly all in the negative form, the common formula being, "Thou shalt not." At first sight it may seem strange that love should constitute the sum, or marrow, of commandments which form a series of prohibitions, but so it is. The great principle of love runs all through, and, as Fairbairn says, "Apart from this principle of love, the law had been a body without a soul; a call to obedience without the slightest chance of a response." The law is to be interpreted on the principle that when an evil is forbidden, the opposite good is to be understood as enjoined, or when a duty is commanded, every thing contrary to it is virtually forbidden.

It is quite true that we are not able to keep these commandments in their entirety, nevertheless it should be our aim to fulfill them. Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter through the gates into the city" (Rev. xxii. 14.) As we keep the commandments, we keep our own soul and preserve ourselves from mortification. "Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect unto all thy commandments" (Ps. cxix. 6.)

William Matthews, LL.D. The oracles of criticism are just as fallible as other oracles, and never make more egregious and ridiculous blunders than when they are most confident and dogmatic in their decisions. Even when the verdict in a writer's favor is almost universal, there are idiosyncrasies of taste that prevent it from becoming unanimous.

perience before saying much. He hoped it would not be, and he did not see that it could be unfavorable, to the progress of Christianity.

With full heart and quivering voice, he thanked the Assembly and the great audience for all the kindness which had been shown him by the Church, by all among whom he had gone throughout the country everywhere, which had been shown to his wife and family who were present, and to his student; and now he bade them a long, long, long farewell.

Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Ledingham, young men under appointment, the first to China, and the latter to India, were presented to the audience, and so, with prayer by Dr. Grant, and the benediction a great meeting, much and long to be remembered, was brought to a close.

Mr. Hamilton Cassels presented the report of the committee to which had been referred the report of the Foreign Mission Committee. It embraced a large number of particulars all of which were promptly accepted, and at the close the report was adopted as a whole. Sympathy was expressed with those missionaries, who, during the year, had suffered from sickness and death or other trials, such as our Chinese and Formosa missions have during the year been exposed to, and gratitude to God for His protection extended to our missionaries and to the converts. Satisfaction was expressed at the prosperity of our work in the New Hebrides, and the founding of a school or college for the training there of a native ministry; assent was given to the transfer of Dr. Webster to a medical professorship in the American College at Bierut, the transfer of our work at Haifa to the Free Church of Scotland, and the application of a portion of the funds in the hands of the Church for Jewish mission work, to the founding of a certain number of scholarships for the education of boys at Bierut College.

The increase of the work among the Chinese in British Columbia, new arrangements made for its prosecution, and the willing help in it of the churches there were noted, and passed upon, as also in Montreal under Dr. Thompson and his helpers. The extension of the work in India and China were approved of, and regret expressed at the enforced withdrawal, on account of his wife's health, of the Rev. J. H. MacVicar, from the Honan mission. The movement among the young men and women in the Church, in the direction of its mission work was noted, and gratitude expressed for it, as also at the continued success and labours of the W.F.M.S., and finally the estimates for the year were approved of, whereby the Church undertakes to raise for this branch of our work in the eastern and western sections, and including the W.F.M.S., of \$143,000, during the coming year. At this point Rev. Dr. Caven gave notice of a motion he would bring up to the Assembly on the Manitoba Education question. It was agreed to print it, and amendments to it which might be moved, and Tuesday fixed as the day for taking it up.

FIFTH DAY.

During the course of business, the Rev. Dr. Sedgewick called the Assembly's attention to the fact that the Presbytery of Whitby had appointed a ruling elder as its Moderator. The question was as to whether it was competent for the Presbytery to do this. He did not wish to be understood as expressing an opinion on one side or the other, but he maintained that both the written and unwritten law of the Church was in favor now of such positions being held by ministers only. The Presbytery, he thought, should not have proceeded in such a manner in effecting so far-reaching a change; it should have overruled the General Assembly upon the subject in a regular way. It would be a dangerous precedent if that were allowed to pass. The question dropped for the moment, Dr. Sedgewick promising to draw up a notice of motion on the subject.

The question of appointing a standing committee of the Church to take oversight of and guide the formation and work of Young People's Societies was brought up by overture. The Church is naturally reluctant to add to its standing committees, and the fact that this one was appointed with so little opposition is a very clear indication that the time was ripe for it. The Rev. Dr. Dickson, and the Rev. R. D. Fraser, of Bowmanville, supported the overtures by forcible arguments. The latter stated that there are 910 societies, 17 in British Columbia, 82 in Manitoba, 300 in the Maritime Provinces, 466 in Ontario and 45 in Quebec, while many new societies have been started since the compilation of these statistics. The membership he placed at over 27,000, and their missionary

contributions at \$5,038 for Ontario, \$2,000 for New Brunswick, and \$3,000 for Manitoba. Such a committee, Mr. Fraser maintained, would tend to keep the young people in sympathy with the life and schemes of the Church; there was a danger lest there should spring up in the societies an undenominational, interdenominational or extradenominational feeling. The young people received a great deal of guidance from outside, but very little from the Assembly. The establishment of such a committee would remove the idea that the societies are independent of the Church, and show that they are not out of the direct authority of the Church, would mould the sentiment of the young people and would bring them into harmony with the genius of Presbyterianism. The Rev. J. K. Smith, of Port Hope, warmly supported, and after some gentle warning being given the prayer of the overture was granted.

The report of the *Record*, given in by the Rev. Dr. Warden, showed a circulation of nearly 50,000, and a balance on hand of \$1,540.00. The following are the recommendations of the committee:

1. As the *Presbyterian Record* is the organ of our Church, established by the Assembly for the spread of information regarding Home and Foreign Work, ministers, sessions and managers are urged to see that so far as is practicable a copy of the *Record* is placed in every Presbyterian family.

2. As the *Children's Record* is the only paper published by our Church for the young, and the only paper for the young with information regarding our Mission work, the Assembly urges upon ministers, sessions, and Sabbath School teachers the necessity of introducing it into all our Sabbath Schools.

3. That missionaries be asked to furnish to the *Record* and the *Children's Record*, from month to month, as they may be able, items of news regarding their work among the heathen, that the interest in Missions may be deepened by being thus brought into living contact with the Mission Field.

The report on Statistics and the Finance of the Church, prepared as it has been for years, at an immense cost of time, labor and care, and with astonishing accuracy by the Rev. Dr. Torrance, was presented by him. It was of an especially gratifying kind, and called he said for special thanksgiving on the part of the Church.

The following is a summary of this most valuable report:—

SUMMARY—STATISTICS.

In the number of Churches and Stations, 2,339, there was an increase in 1894, over those in 1893, of 115; in sittings, with which these are provided, 517,517, of 19,666; in families, 93-635, of 1,997; single persons, 21,131, of 3,426; and communicants on the roll, 179,579, of 4,667. The additions on profession, 12,922, give an increase of 3,155; while 32 fewer were added on certificate, total number of these 7,350; 39 fewer were removed by death, 2,520, and 1,628 fewer by certificate, 6,300. Without certificate, 3,102 were removed, and 111 by discipline. From the few answers to the question that were given 201,196 are reported as being under pastoral oversight but this is decidedly far short of the full number 11,029 infants, increase of 936, and 1,368 adults, an increase of 472, were baptized. The eldership has increased from 6,185 to 6,470, that is by 285; other office-bearers by 354, raising them to 10,026; there were in attendance at the week-day prayer meeting 62,283, an increase of 4,755; at Sabbath school and Bible class 144,639, an increase of 2,657; with 17,443, an increase of 776, engaged in Sabbath school work. There were 345 missionary associations in congregations, being 7 more than the previous year; 673, increase 14, Woman's Foreign Missionary, and 7, a decrease of 2, Woman's or Young People's Home Missionary Societies. There is difficulty, however, in reaching the correct figures, in consequence of the numerous organizations, under so many different names, of young people and children, in our congregations. Neither can perfect accuracy be assured in the number of manse and rented houses provided for ministers returned, but apparently there is a decrease of 2 in the former, 618, while the latter remain at the same, 49. The manse built reckon up to 28, 1 fewer than for the previous year, and the churches to 50, likewise 1 fewer.

SUMMARY—FINANCES.

Stipend received from all sources, \$898,248, gives an increase of \$8,747, and paid by congregation alone, \$828,785, leaving \$69,463 derived from other sources, but giving an increase of \$16,200. It is gratifying to your Committee to state this, but it is with an opposite feeling they mention that arrears have risen by \$2,183, the amount being \$17,798. On looking over the Presbyteries, there are only 4 in the Synod of the Maritime Provinces that do not report any arrears, and the aggregate of these is \$2,554. The Presbyteries with none are Prince Edward Island, Lunenburg and Shelburne, Miramichi and Newfoundland. In the Synod of Montreal and Ottawa the arrears amount to \$1,314, only 1 Presbytery, Brockville, having or reporting

none. Every Presbytery in the Synod of Toronto and Kingston report arrears, with the exception of Algoma and Guelph, and the sum of these is \$3,243. In the Synod of Hamilton and London 5 Presbyteries have arrears, aggregating \$806; those having none being London, Chatham, Stratford and Huron. In the Synod of Manitoba and the North-West Territories, there are \$6,839 of arrears, every Presbytery reporting them; 1, Brandon, \$1,148; another, Winnipeg, \$1,511; another, Glenboro, \$1,096, and so on down to the lowest, Superior, \$40. In the Synod of British Columbia, the Presbytery of Victoria returns no arrears; those in the other three sum up to \$2,860, Calgary having \$1,143.

Payment on Churches or Manses during the year amounted to \$418,350, an increase of \$34,590; on other incidental and congregational purposes, \$375,139, an increase of \$33,511. The total payment for strictly congregational objects, \$1,719,988, an increase of \$76,116. Your Committee have not succeeded in procuring adequate or accurate returns of the sums received for strictly congregational purposes, but collecting the answers in, they aggregate \$1,007,071, at all events \$700,000 less than they should be. Neither have they got answers in full to the questions designed to procure the amount of money borrowed, whether on mortgage or other security, only \$171,296 being returned.

Payments to the College Funds (ordinary), \$24,242, were \$2,767 above those in 1893; and to the Special Fund, \$17,685, or \$1,577 more.

In the contributions to the Home Mission Fund, \$63,703, there was a decrease of \$620; to the Augmentation Fund, \$31,407, an increase of \$462; to French Evangelization, \$25,239, a decrease of \$2,131; to Foreign Mission Fund, by Congregations alone, \$59,688, an increase of \$332; and by Woman's Foreign Missionary Societies, \$48,770, increase \$1,656.

In the payments to the following Schemes there are decreases as noted: Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, \$663, the total being \$9,607; do. Endowment Fund \$6,005, or \$2,641 less; Widows' and Orphans' Fund, \$5,654, or \$237 less; and to Assembly Expense Fund, \$3,906, or \$155 less.

Those in favor of prosecuting a mission to the Jews, contributed \$1,044, and those responding to the appeal of last Assembly in the interests of Coligny College, \$4,541.

The total payments to the Schemes of the Church, including the two objects just mentioned, were \$301,025, an increase of \$5,761, but if the contributions to the Jewish Mission and Coligny College, which appear now for the first time, are deducted, the real increase will be only \$176.

The payments to the Schemes of the Church by Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes were \$24,585, a falling off of \$1,124; and to the Home Mission Fund by Woman's or Young People's Home Missionary Societies were \$5,894, being an increase of \$687.

There were paid to Synod and Presbytery Funds \$8,623, being \$257 more than in the preceding year, and to all other religious and benevolent purposes, \$97,351, or \$11,447 less.

For all purposes the entire amount paid was \$2,126,987, or \$70,687 more than for the same in 1893.

An overture with a view to promote greater uniformity in the order and also to enrich the worship of the Church from the Synod of Hamilton and London was presented and its prayers urged by the Rev. Dr. Laing, of Dundas. Dr. Laing spoke forcibly on behalf of the overture, pointing out the great diversity in form at present obtaining in the practice of the Church.

At the time of the Reformation, he pointed out, every Reformed Church had a scheme of service, and this was not given up in the Presbyterian Church until the seventeenth century. Something of the kind was needed adapted to the times in which we are living. In some cases even, Dr. Laing said, he would approve of prayers being read, and great benefit would result from the adoption of a regular scheme of public worship, to be optional in its use, and in no wise obligatory upon any.

Rev. Dr. Thompson, of Sarnia, seconded this motion, maintaining that, while as preachers Presbyterians need fear no competition, yet it is not so with regard to what may properly be called the public worship of the Church. The second prayer was often the sermon retold in oblique form. There were also cases in which, Dr. Thompson held, read prayers would be an advantage.

No opposition was offered, and the motion was passed, so that a scheme of public worship will be drawn up.

The subject of a new Hymnal for the Church has occupied much attention for the past two or three years, and the report of the committee on this subject was looked forward to with much interest, and all the more because of the effort being made by the parent and sister churches in Britain, along with our own and other colonial Presbyterian Churches, to draw up a common hymnal for the use of all. The Rev. Dr. Gregg presented the report and his statements were supplemented very fully by accounts given by Rev. D. J. Macdonnell and the Rev. Mr. MacMillan of Mimico, especially the latter, of their visit to Scotland in con-

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