

Messenger and Visitor

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FORGIVENESS AND LOVE.

There is much in the teaching of Jesus and in his attitude toward the people of his time, as set forth in the Gospel narratives, which goes to show that the religion of the morality which was a mere matter of respectability had very little value in his eyes. He saw men fasting, saying prayers and giving alms, whose grand purpose in what they did was that they might be seen of men. He saw men scrupulously paying tithes of their garden herbs, whose lives bore evidence that they had little or no real regard for the principles of mercy and righteousness. He saw the most careful avoidance of any occasion of ceremonial defilement on the part of men whose hearts were full of uncharity. And these things profoundly disturbed and offended him. One sincere cry for mercy from the heart of a despised publican counted in his eyes for more than all the Pharisee's parade of self-righteousness. One sob from the heart of a penitent sinner was more to him than all the respectable religionists of those who thought they had no sins to be forgiven.

The way in which our Lord regarded these two classes, the despised penitent and the respectable impenitent appears very clearly in a passage in the seventh chapter of Luke's Gospel. The Pharisee, Simon, whose invitation to dine with him Jesus had accepted, was, it would seem, one of the best of his class. He was not so filled with spiritual pride and bigotry that he could see no good in the prophet of Nazareth. He evidently entertained a certain respect and appreciation for this remarkable man, he had felt that he ought to show some interest in him and his work, and accordingly had invited Jesus to share his hospitality. But Simon had not opened his heart generously to Jesus. The Pharisee in him was still alive and strong, his attitude was critical rather than receptive, he wanted to watch and study this man whom the people called a prophet, but he was not ready to commit himself to any acceptance of his teaching. Accordingly the welcome which the Master received when he came to Simon's house was notably lacking in the cordiality and the deference customarily shown to an honored guest. Then afterwards, as they were reclining at table, something occurred that rudely shocked Simon's sense of propriety and caused him to regret even the scant measure of courtesy which he had extended to the man of Nazareth. A woman whom the Pharisee recognized as a sinner of the city stole into the room and, passing behind the couch on which Jesus was reclining, bowed at his feet and wept over them, wetting them with her tears, wiping them with her hair and anointing them with costly ointment. If the spirit of penitential love had been filling Simon's heart he would have shown more discernment in reference to the character and motives of the woman, he would have understood that the passion which was finding expression in her sobbing caresses and in her costly gift was no sinful or unworthy one. But the Pharisee's heart was blind and, like all loveless hearts, it stumbled in judgment. This woman is a notorious sinner, said Simon to himself, and it is evident that my guest is no prophet, else he would have discerned her true character and rejected her touch.

Then the Lord had somewhat to say to Simon, and for a little while at least, we may believe, this eminently respectable Pharisee listened with both his ears and forgot to be critical. It is to be hoped that

Simon was not so dull of apprehension or so hard of heart as not to understand and profit by what he heard as Jesus proceeded in few and simple words to point out the contrasting attitudes toward himself of Simon and the woman and to indicate the causes and the results of those different attitudes. And certainly it is to be hoped that in our own minds and hearts there may not be found so much of the Pharisaic spirit that we shall not be able to receive the great lesson which the Master's words unfold.

First, then, there is the lesson already hinted at, that the loveless eye is blind to the best that is in men and women and a loveless judgment is likely to be unjust. Jesus could see much more and better things in the sinful woman than could Simon. And he could see possibilities in Simon as an after fruit of repentance which no Pharisee's eye could see and no Pharisee's heart conceive. Again, Love is the fruit of forgiveness. The woman felt that she had been forgiven much, therefore she loved much, Simon had little or no sense of forgiveness, accordingly he felt for the Saviour of the world no stronger affection than a cold respect—not unmixed with suspicion.

Once more, it is love that Jesus seeks. It is unspeakably more to him than the most scrupulous correctness of conduct, the utmost respectability and the carefullest observance of religious rites. It is the evidence of faith and the fruit of forgiveness. Less Pharisaism and more love that is the need of the world today. A love that, moved by an assured sense of forgiveness through the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, breaks through all barriers to cast itself and its treasures at the feet of its Lord—that is more precious in his eyes than all else that the world can give.

Editorial Notes.

—Rev. E. H. Jones, who was when a young man, a resident of St. John and a member of the Germain Street Baptist Church, is now on a visit to the city. For eighteen years past Mr. Jones has been a missionary in Japan, and has become pretty thoroughly acquainted with the people of the Sunrise Kingdom, and very deeply interested in their welfare. Mr. Jones is enjoying an extended furlough, part of which has been spent among the Japanese of the Pacific Coast, with a view to their benefit. Mr. Jones entertains a high respect and a large hope for the Japanese. Like all other missionaries, so far as we have heard, his sympathies are strongly with them in the present war. Mr. Jones expects at the expiration of his furlough to return and spend the rest of his life in Japan.

—The annual meeting of the French Baptist Association of the Province of Quebec was held last week in the church of the "Oratoire," Montreal. The churches and mission fields were represented by their pastors and delegates. A ladies' meeting under the auspices of the missionary circles connected with the churches was held, Mrs. A. L. Therrien, presiding. Valuable papers on various phases of the work were read by Mrs. W. S. Bullock, of Roxton Pond; Mrs. A. E. Masse, Mrs. L. A. Therrien, Miss Piche, of Grande Ligne, and by Mrs. N. Gregoire of Maskinonge. Reports from the churches and mission fields revealed a healthy growth of work carried on by them and indicated encouraging prospects for the workers. The meetings were of a very interesting and profitable character. The Association is to meet next year at Marieville, where one of its oldest churches is situated.

—The Christian Endeavorers of America held their Convention this year in Baltimore, and it is said at some of the meetings nearly twenty thousand persons were present. Dr. F. E. Clark, the originator of the movement, was prevented by ill health from being present. It is proposed to establish a memorial fund in honor of Dr. Clark. The suggestion is that the fund be known as the Quarter Century Memorial Fund and that it be made up of contributions to average twenty-five cents (one cent for each year of the life of the society, reckoning from next year) from each member of the organization. As the membership is estimated to be in the neighborhood of eight millions, a fund of \$2,000,000 would thus be realized. It is suggested that the best plan for the investment of such a fund would be the erection of a building, part of which would be rented for the purpose of supplying income and part used as international Christian Endeavor headquarters.

—"We need a new word for a new thing," says the Christian Register of Boston. "Civilization has served its purpose. We want a better word for a better form of progress. The city has furnished the pattern of civilization. The citizen has been the principal promoter of that progress which has been so greatly exalted, and which in our time has been so often pronounced a failure. Civilization has not failed. It

has done its work and done it well, but now we need something better. We do not now make life in the city our ideal. The more civilized society becomes the less it answers to the new and better demands for culture, comfort, simplicity, and humane methods of social organization. Civilization attends to rules of business, the enforcement of the law, to rules of order and the regulation of the strife which goes on between man and man in the perennial battle of life. Civilization is based upon the rules of the game. Give us a new word for that new influence which comes with the attempt to make goodness and the Golden Rule the bonds of union and the welfare of all men the object of universal action."

Report of the N. B. Southern Association.

The twenty-sixth annual session of the N. B. Southern Association opened on Tuesday evening, July 4th, in the Lower Wickham Church, McDonald's Point. The feature of the first session was a sermon by the Rev. F. S. Bamford, the newly installed pastor of the Carleton Baptist Church. Mr. Bamford is apparently a man who brings a well-lived life, and a well-trained intellect to the interpretations of the events of the past and the present. His ability as a public speaker combined with his other qualifications makes his utterances of exceeding interest. He took for his subject the life and character of the Hebrew prophet Isaiah. After a reference to the influence of the parent upon the child the speaker presented Isaiah as a reformer working with the insight and idealism of a poet, to better the conditions of his own time. Today demanded just such men.

The Association convened again on Wednesday morning at ten o'clock. The chair was taken by the retiring moderator, the Rev. C. W. Townsend, who conducted the opening devotional exercises. The election of officers then ensued and resulted as follows: Moderator, Rev. Dr. W. E. McIntyre; Secretary, Rev. F. S. Bamford; Treasurer, Dea. B. B. Wright; Committee of Arrangements, Revs. E. K. Ganong, C. W. Townsend, W. C. Goucher, A. B. Cohoe and Brother Albert McDonald. A welcome was formally extended to the Rev. F. S. Bamford, of Carleton and the Rev. David Hutchinson of Main street, St. John. A resolution was then introduced by Dr. Gates expressing the sorrow of the Association on the death of the Rev. Howard H. Roach. Words of appreciation for the worth of Mr. Roach were spoken by a number present. The Rev. W. C. Goucher gave an appreciative sketch of the late Deacon Hughes of the St. Stephen Church.

In view of the proposed union of the Baptists and Free Baptists the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

"Resolved that this Association heartily approve of the Basis of Union as adopted by the Baptist Convention of the Maritime Provinces in the month of August, 1904, and by the Free Baptist General Conference of New Brunswick, in the month of September, 1904, and further resolved that the moderator and the court of the Association are hereby directed, authorized and empowered to sign a petition to the General Assembly of the province, praying that a Bill entitled "An act respecting the union of the Baptists and Free Baptists" may pass and become law. The remainder of the session was spent in reading the letters from the individual churches."

The afternoon session was opened with devotional services led by the Rev. H. D. Worden. This was followed with a sermon by the Rev. David Hutchinson. He took for his text Paul's benediction in II Thess. 3:16. In his sermon he spoke of the worth to the individual and the church of the presence of God. After treating the manifestation of the presence of God as the history of the Hebrew nation and in the development of the Christian Church he emphasized the need of such a presence today. He combated the present tendency to discount the existence of a personal devil and contended that his existence created the great demand for the presence of God. He counseled his hearers to take each his God with him that the process of development might be completed in them.

The Educational report was presented by the Rev. W. C. Goucher. He reviewed the work in the educational institutions of the denomination. In moving the adoption of the report Dr. Gates referred to the removal of Dr. Keirstead from the Acadia's staff. He felt keenly the loss to the Maritime Baptists, but hoped that the fact that Dr. Keirstead had joined the staff of McMaster University, Toronto would lead the ministerial students of Acadia to continue their work in a Canadian school, instead of crossing to the institutions of the United States.

The Wednesday evening session was opened with devotional exercises led by the Rev. J. H. Hughes. The first speaker of the evening was the Rev. Dr. Chute, of Acadia College. His subject was "Acadia Changed and yet the Same." He referred to the change that had taken place in material equipment and in the increase in the number of professors from two to twelve. He also spoke of the significant change in the attitude toward athletics and social functions. In the early days no place could be given these influences, which are now being recognized as possessing true educational value. He assured his hearers that a check would be applied when ex-

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