

Pastor and People.

HE LEADS US ON.

He leads us on
By paths we do not know;
Upward He leads us, though our steps be slow,
Though oft we faint and falter by the way,
Though storms of darkness oft obscure the day
Yet, when the clouds are gone,
We know He leads us on.

He leads us on
Through all the quiet years;
Past all our dreamland hopes and doubts and fears
He guides our steps. Through all the tangled maze
Of sin, or sorrow and o'erclouded days,
We know His will is done,
And still He leads us on.

And He at last,
After the weary strife,
After the restless fever we call life,
After the dreariness and aching pain
The wayward struggles, which have proved in vain—
After our toils are past—
Will give us rest at last.

FOR THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY IN CHRISTIAN WORK.

BY REV. A. H. SCOTT, M.A., OWEN SOUND.

Christian work is a great work. It is the agency of Almighty God for the accomplishment of divine ends. It has been marked by marvellous accomplishments in days gone by. It is being marked by more marvellous accomplishments in these latter days, and it is going on to more marvellous accomplishments still. Christian work is a large, a general expression. The large is made up of a number of the small. The general includes a number of the particular. The ocean that God made is the aggregate of drops. The sand heap is the aggregate of the grains of sand. The yellow harvest field is the aggregate of stalks in that field. The body that we carry about with us is the aggregate of members belonging to it. And Christian work is the aggregate endeavours of a host of individual disciples of Jesus, with their Master's blessing upon their endeavours. The individual endeavour, thus put forth, is honoured of God, and responsibility for such endeavour is emphasized by God.

Individual responsibility in Christian work is an important part of Biblical instruction. Our Saviour speaks of giving "to every man his work." Significance, in this connection, attaches to these words. "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." Important is the injunction, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." No one is born in our stead. No one can do the work appointed for us to do. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." For what? For the way he has spent the time and talents committed to him as an individual. Then there are the examples in Scripture, notably in the New Testament. When Peter came to know the Lord, he set to work for the Lord. When Paul was changed by grace, individual responsibility found expression in the question, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? And chiefly there is our Saviour's example. From country place to village, from village to town, from town to city, He went about doing good. If asked why the energy, why the enthusiasm in endeavour, why the constant aim for others' good, personal responsibility in the God-Man would answer: "About My Father's business."

Individual responsibility in Christian work is emphasized when it is remembered that the first promptings of a heart changed by grace are to do something in Christian work. If the woman at Jacob's well is brought to believe through the Messiah's magnificent declaration, "I that speak unto you am He," away she goes to the men in the distance with personal responsibility, crying, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did." If the blind man in John ix., through the healing touch of Jesus, is enabled to say, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see," responsibility felt for engaging in Christian work leads him to say to his twitting questioners, "Will ye also be His disciples?" If Philip responds to the invitation of Christ when He said, "Come, follow Me" individual responsibility started him out on Nathanael's path that he also might be a sharer in Messiah's blessings.

The mother holds in her arms her sick child. The father nurses on his knee his injured boy. Sympathy, love, responsibility prompt to the use of those remedies which open the way to health and strength. Son or daughter is sick with sin. One's own is not yet Christ's own. Love and responsibility arouse to tell of Christ, the only way of salvation. Your neighbour's house is on fire, and he is asleep within; individual responsibility prompts you to tell him of the danger and to rescue him if you can. Your neighbour's soul is yet unsaved; responsibility to God and man leads you, if a Christian, to tell him of Jesus, the

mighty to save. Your own soul is glad; personal responsibility urges on you to say to your wayward brother: "Hear what the Lord hath done for me." Jesus has brought you from death unto life; responsibility suggests that your story might cheer your Christian brother, so you are led with the Psalmist to say: "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul." If we know the love of God, then His love to us and ours to Him tell of responsibility toward Him and His; so from the pulpit, by the way, in the home and elsewhere we tell "the old, old story of Jesus and His love."

Individual responsibility in Christian work has a fresh meaning when the advantages of that work are considered. The spirit of the idler is the spirit that pleases the Evil One. The spirit of the Christian worker is the spirit that pleases the Holy One. When the Christian ceases to work, he ceases to pray and to grow in grace. Work in some form or other is the requirement of the servants of God. Elijah, when his occupation was gone, sat down under the juniper tree and rebelliously requested that he might die. The restorative was work. Advantage came when he arose at the bidding of God, and, yielding to responsibility, went to Damascus and anointed Hazael to be king over Syria, Jehu over Israel, and Elisha to be prophet in his stead.

The working Christian is the happy Christian. The working Church is the prosperous Church. And the key-note of success in any work is the feeling of responsibility in the doing of it. Work for Christ among ourselves or others is what prospers ourselves, and helps those to whom our kindly endeavours are extended. Work! What meaning the word contains! It suggests a door that opens out upon contentedness, cheer, prosperity. It suggests a door closed against loss, ill-will, sin. Offensive smells arise from the standing pools. From this place, too, proceed, the noise of the croaking frog. The Church that is not alive by the Spirit of God has an ill savour for the world, and a complaining voice that grates upon the ear of God. The singing river brings blessings to the land, and the working men and women, feeling their responsibilities toward Him who loved them and gave Himself for them gladden the world and please the Saviour.

Individual responsibility in Christian work has a crowning significance when, looking ahead, we behold possibilities. What can I do? says a professing Christian. Instead of growing cold by the inquiry, let warmth come by the Scriptural reply; "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Christian work! What possibilities does it hold in its hand! All great enterprises have had their small beginnings. The great river at its source may be stepped over. The great building has its beginning in the first brick or stone. The whistling engine, running at a mile per minute, left the station very slowly. Our great Canadian enterprise that links ocean to ocean had a humble commencement. The coral insect is tiny, and its first atom laid is a small affair. But atom after atom, laid hour after hour, makes first the strong foundation at the ocean's bed. The jagged reef soon lifts its head above the waters. By this rock the waters are divided, and on this reef the ships are wrecked. Hither the seeds are carried, and upon it the forests grow. To this new soil man comes and man multiplies. Here the world's occupations are conducted, and here is a held for the heralds of the cross to tell to dying man the way of life through a risen Christ. And on this land, which began with the insect's atom, is prepared a portion of the redeemed for heaven.

Behold the Christian Church to-day, with its millions who know and love the Lord! What was it at first? And how has it grown? Note. John the Baptist became a follower of Jesus at the latter's baptism. John told of Jesus, then believed Andrew and the other John. Andrew found Peter, who numbered the fourth. Jesus called Philip, and Philip brought Nathanael. In that half-dozen is the beginning of the Christian Church. And so on, by preaching like Peter, by personal solicitation and endeavour like Andrew and Philip, the original six have multiplied into millions.

Looking to the writer as their pastor is a congregation now with a membership of something over 400. If each member this year were the means of bringing one soul to the Saviour, and this new number bringing each a new one to Jesus the next year, and this growth continuing, about the time the writer would reach his fiftieth birthday the whole world would be converted to Christ. Would God that were our jubilee! What amazing possibilities give the crowning significance to the subject before us! We may well thank and be encouraged. The Lord "is rich unto all that call upon Him." In doing our work we find God's already done. If, here and elsewhere, individual responsibility in Christian work merged into prayerful and spiritual endeavour, soon would be here the day for which we pray and for which we long.

KEEP this ever-busy, every-tempted ever-active heart of thine with ceaseless care and with prayer, and in heaven you will find that the pure in heart shall see God.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN WOODSTOCK.

In the year 1834 the few Presbyterians who had settled in Woodstock held a meeting for the purpose of organizing a congregation, and the procuring of Gospel ordinances, in connection with the Church of their fathers. About three years elapsed before the object aimed at could be said to have been, in any good degree, attained. In the meantime they availed themselves of the privilege of worshipping with their fellow Christians of other branches of the Church, as opportunity offered. Meetings were held in private houses, and subsequently in what was known as Goodwin's schoolhouse, which stood on the site now occupied by the International Hotel, on the corner of Dundas and Bay Streets. The leading spirit in the meetings referred to was the late Mr. David White, who for so many years afterward, rendered valuable service and exerted great influence as an honoured elder of the Church.

In 1837 Sir Francis Bond Head, then Governor, granted a site, on Graham Street, for a church. On the 13th of March, of that year, a meeting was held, of which a record has been preserved.

Those present were Robert Henry, chairman; George Henry, William Shearer, David White, John Bain, Alexander Green, John Greig, James Wilson, James Barclay, Sam McKay, James Johnston, Donald McPherson, James Murray, James Patterson, James Sherran, William Madden, John Buchanan, William Forbes. These, together with William C. McLetai, John Douglas and George Strauchon, who came to the place some time afterward, may be truly said to be the fathers of the Presbyterian Church in Woodstock.

Formal organization was not effected till the fall of 1838, when the Rev. Alexander Gale, of Hamilton, was sent here by Presbytery for that purpose. But, as early as 1835, the late Rev. Mr. Murray, of Blenheim, commenced an occasional Sabbath service in Woodstock; and, about 1836, the late Rev. Donald McKenzie, of Embro, commenced to conduct a Sabbath service once a month, and kept it up till the time of the induction of the late Rev. Daniel Allan into the pastorate of Woodstock and Stratford, which took place shortly after the organizing of the congregation by Mr. Gale above referred to.

Mr. Allan continued in the pastoral charge of Woodstock and Stratford, about two years, preaching two Sabbaths in succession in each place alternately. In 1840 he resigned Woodstock, and devoted his whole time to Stratford. In 1842, though the congregation had not yet secured a successor to Mr. Allan in the pastorate, they built what was known as St. Andrew's Church, on Graham Street. Two years afterward came the memorable Disruption, and the congregation, with few exceptions, adhering to the principles of the Free Church, were again without a church building, as the property passed to those who remained in connection with the Established Church of Scotland. The Free Church party in Woodstock again had recourse to Goodwin's schoolhouse, where, for a considerable time they met for public worship. Subsequently, they obtained the use of the old Wesleyan chapel, which stood on Graham Street, and a Mr. David McKenzie, who taught school in the place, served in the double capacity of teacher and preacher. St. Andrew's congregation soon obtained a minister, the Rev. Mr. Sim; but the Free Church party were without a pastor from the time of the Disruption in 1845, or indeed, more strictly speaking, from the time of Mr. Allan's resignation in 1840 till the ordination and induction of the Rev. W. S. Ball in 1848. In the following year Knox Church was built, and in the same year steps were taken toward the formation of a second congregation, many who had in the meantime settled in the place desiring service in the Gaelic language. In 1850 the Presbytery of London organized the congregation of Chalmers Church, and in 1852 Chalmers Church was built.

We have already referred to the Rev. Mr. Murray, of Blenheim, as having commenced to conduct occasional services for the Presbyterians of Woodstock as early as 1835. Mr. Murray was connected with the United Presbyterian Church, and those in Woodstock adhering to that branch of Presbyterianism formed in the course of some years the congregation of Erskine Church, which with Erskine Church, Ingersoll, became one pastoral charge, under the pastorate of the Rev. Archibald Cross, about the year 1848.

We have thus traced the origin of four Presbyterian Churches in Woodstock. Days of union and consolidation were happily drawing near. In December, 1869, the congregation of Erskine Church united with Knox Church, and a few years afterward the members of St. Andrew's Church distributed themselves in the sister congregations, some going to Knox Church and some to Chalmers Church, as convenience or personal preference might dictate. In these two congregations the Presbyterianism of Woodstock has finally become consolidated, to the great advantage of all concerned, and to the greater strength and influence for good of that branch of the Church in the place, and as the appropriate result of the union of Presbyterianism throughout the Dominion.—*Sentinel-Review.*