

ONTARIO EVANGELIST.

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"Go speak to the people ALL the words of this Life."

VOL. 2.

ERIN AND EVERTON, ONTARIO, FEBRUARY, 1888.

No. 10

POETRY.

"WE ALL DO FADE AS A LEAF."

Our life, how frail it is!
Changeful and brief,
Spring, summer, fly—then we
Fade as a leaf.

Why should a thought like this
Minister grief,
If we our end fulfil
E'en as a leaf?

Then brightening at the close,
Hoping relief
From sorrow, sin, and care,
Fade as a leaf?

Brief winter; fadefless spring;
Blissful belief!
This is our joy that we
Fade as a leaf.

Of all our aims in life
This then be chief—
Ripe, hopeful, bright, that we
Fade as a leaf.

—Newman Hall.

ORIGINAL.

CHINA LETTER.

No doubt you rejoice with us that we have had such a noble addition to our forces in China. I think that now our mission work must progress rapidly. The influence of four such excellent men and women leaving friends and relatives and the blessings of civilization to serve the Master among the heathen will stir up the people, and if the spirit of Christ is truly in us we shall not lack for men and means to carry on this grand work. I rejoice not because everything is to my liking in the way of temporalities, but because I am engaged in a living work, one that will certainly succeed, and, if I am faithful, will grant me an entrance into eternal life.

Alas! too many farmers and business men keep laying up for "moths and rust" and neglect the only sure store house. Farm must be added to farm and the bank account must be increased, but the voice of conscience is hushed and the mission treasury is empty or scant of funds.

I have gone to spend my first night in the building I have rented for a hospital, and rejoicing at heart over the prospects before us, I write to you. My building consists of twenty-four rooms, is two storied and situated in the centre of the busiest part of the city. If good preaching is done here the light must go forth over a great radius. Chinese houses are nearly all built on the same principle: three roomed if one story—which they usually are, and six roomed if of two stories. In building, a frame is first put up and a roof of tiles laid on, then walls are built for back and gables and the whole front is closed by wooden doors latticed and covered with white paper at the upper part to let in light. In front of the house is a court.

My building consists of three such two-storied buildings with two smaller houses tacked on at the side. A few rods away is the large examination hall where about ten thousand students from the whole province are examined for the second literary degree. It is not one hall but a great number of long passages on one side of which are cells about two feet wide, four feet deep, and six feet high with one board for a desk and another for a seat both stretching across the cell and resting on ledges of the brick work. Along the passages during examinations, I believe, watchmen are stationed to control the students, there are also several small towers for watchmen, as well as rooms for the examination of papers.

If we can manage to keep our house we must do a great work. At present the officials do not like us to be in this situation and are trying to move us to another house.

I believe earnestly in more prayer for our work. Brothers Saw, Hearndon and myself prayed often for more laborers, and contrary to the expectation of many two men have come to China instead of one. We keep on praying and I would request the prayers of all the readers of the ONTARIO EVANGELIST for our success and for more laborers for this land. God can more than meet all our fondest hopes. We desire and pray for ten more able young men for China. Could

not Canada send an able young preacher or physician, and give enough money to the Board to support him? Missionaries should be the best educated of all Christian workers.

W. E. MACKL.

Nankin, Oct. 29th, 1887.

TO THE CHRISTIAN PROFESSOR.

"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you."

Having of late been in a place where "prayer meeting" was held, and, evidently, where sensationalism ran up to the highest degree, it caused my meditation to construct the following questions and answers:

1st. You have your sins forgiven you, haven't you? Ans.—Yes.

2nd. How do you know? Ans.—From the testimony of God's word.

3rd. How do you know that that testimony relates to you? Ans.—Because I have complied with what God requires of man in order to have his sins remitted.

4th. How do you feel in believing that your sins are remitted? Ans.—Happy.

5th. Is that happy feeling an evidence of sins pardoned? Ans.—Not in the least, though happiness is a result of sins forgiven,—a happy feeling is only an emotion—flows from anything, seemingly satisfactory to our comprehension.

6th. Have you any tangible evidence within you of the remission of your sins? Ans.—No, it is by faith.

7th. What then means the saying, "The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God?" Ans.—It means when we know in ourselves that we want to do God's will, then in the compliance with His word it will impart the testimony of His spirit that we are doing those things that are pleasing in His sight, and in so doing "are the children of God."—And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified together.

A. B.

SELECTIONS.

THE SUPPORT OF PREACHERS.

We have before us a series of questions, propounded by Bro. Bratcher, of Arkansas, which have been practical questions, in every church which started with a membership poorly instructed in the way of the Lord. They would all be more easily settled but for the fact that certain preachers and newspaper writers are continually giving wrong answers to them, and thereby keeping up contention. We copy them in the order in which they are written, and shall answer them according to the Scriptures.

1. "How could Paul consistently say that they who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel, when he says, 'I labored with my own hands to do you service, that I might not be chargeable to any of you?'"

The answer to this question is given by Paul himself, and in language that cannot be easily misunderstood. Twice he reminds the Thessalonians that, during his first visit to their city, he had worked night and day, that he might not be a burden to any of them (I. Thes. i: 9; II. Thes. iii: 8); and the second time he gives this additional reason: "Not because we have not the right, but to make ourselves an example unto you, that ye should imitate us" (II. Thes. iii: 9). Here he claims the right of being supported by them without manual labor, but states that his reason for not asserting the right was that he wished to set them an example of self-dependence and industry—a lesson which they very much needed, as appears from the very next remark: "For, even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that, if any will not work, let him not eat; for we hear of some that walk among you disorderly, that work not at all, but are busybodies" (ib. 10, 11).

Paul afterwards pursued the same course during his first labors in Ephesus, and for the same reason. He says to the bishops of that church: "Ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered to my necessities, and to them that were with me. In all things I gave you an example, how that, so laboring, ye ought to support

the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, it is more blessed to give than to receive." Paul knew very well the inclination to idleness which characterized the Greeks of his day, and he saw the need of an example among the disciples, guided from this source, that he would not have thought of in a community of Jews, who were noted for industry.

In dealing with the disciples of Corinth, he was doubtless in part influenced by the same consideration, but he had another and peculiar reason for taking nothing from them. This reason is given in the same paragraph, in which he announces it is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus that they who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel. It may be well to trace his whole line of reasoning on the subject, and to note some inferences as we pass along. The passage is I. Cor. ix: 6-19.

In the course of a defence against the charge that he was not an apostle he demands: "Or I only and Barnabas, have we not a right to forbear working?" This implies that the other apostles, unlike himself and Barnabas, avoided manual labor; that they had a right to do so; and that he and Barnabas had the same right. He demands further: "What soldier ever serves at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not the fruit thereof? or who is shepherd of a flock and eateth not of the milk thereof? All of which means that it is obvious from all analogous cases, that the soldier of Christ, the laborer in Christ's vineyard, the shepherd of God's flock, is to be supported by those to whose service he is devoted. He next quotes the law of Moses on the subject. He cites from Deuteronomy xxv: 4, the precept, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the grain"; and says that it was written for men and not for oxen.

Then coming directly to the point he says: "If we sowed to you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things? If others partake of this right over you, do not we yet more?" This last question implies that other preachers had received compensation from the Corinthians, and had received it as a right which the Corinthians had not called in question, a right which Paul acknowledges as respects these others, and claims as respects himself.

After thus arguing to establish his right to compensation, the apostle next touches upon the reason why, in the case of the Corinthians, he had not claimed the benefit of it. He says: "Nevertheless, we did not use this right; but we bear all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ." The reason now given is not, as in the case of the Thessalonians and the Ephesians, because he would not be a burden to any of the brethren, though possibly that was also a consideration; but it is because claiming what he had a right to claim would be a hindrance to the gospel. The particular way in which it would be a hindrance is held back for the time, and before stating it he puts in some additional proofs of his right, elaborating this point even to redundancy. He demands: "Know ye not they who minister about sacred things [the priests and Levites] eat of the things of the temple, and they who wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar?" This was the law of Moses. Not a single offering was brought to the altar of which the priests did not have a part. Of the whole-burnt offering they had the hide; of the peace-offering they had the hide, the right ham and the breast; of the sin-offering they had all except the leaf fat and the caul; and of the meat-offering they had all except a handful of each that was thrown upon the altar. As a parallel to this, he adds: "Even so did the Lord Jesus ordain that they who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel." This was ordained by Jesus when he gave the first commission to the twelve, declaring that the laborer is worthy of his food, and that, therefore, they were not to be at the expense of providing gold, silver, food, or clothing for their own use while they were engaged in preaching. (Matt. x: 9, 10.)

Having thus, with that redundancy of argument which is characteristic of Paul, established his right, he again touches the subject of his own course in regard to this right: "But I have used none of these things; and I write not these things that it may be so done in my case: for it were good for me rather to die, than that any

man should make my glorying void." This shows involved in his special reason for practically renouncing his right while theoretically asserting it, a "glorying" which he valued more highly than his life. This "glorying" he proceeds to duly define under the name of a "reward," but without showing clearly why he calls it a "glorying." He says: "For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for woe is to me if I preach not the gospel. For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward: but if not of my own will, I have a stewardship intrusted to me." By this he seems to mean, that whether he preached willingly or unwillingly his stewardship required him at any rate to preach, and that he had nothing to boast of, no reward, for the mere thing of preaching; yet he would have it if he preached willingly. Next he shows what he means by this "reward." "What then is my reward? That, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel without charge, so as not to use to the full my right in the gospel: for though I was free from all men, I brought myself under bondage to all that I might gain the more." Here at last comes out his ultimate reason, that we "might gain the more"—more than he would by demanding his right. But this is only the negative form of the reason given previously, "that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel." It leaves the special reason why this consideration had force in Corinth rather than elsewhere still in the dark; and in the dark he intentionally leaves it, so far as the first epistle is concerned, reserving a clear statement of it for the second epistle. It is left in the dark, I mean, to us; to the Corinthians it may not have been; for they may have known very well how his claiming support at their hands would have hindered the gospel, and how his declining to do so had gained the more.

We now turn to the second epistle (xi: 7-13), where the apostle takes up the subject again just where he left it in the first epistle: "Or did I commit a sin in abasing myself that ye might be exalted [connect with this I. Cor. ix: 19], because I preached to you the gospel of God for nought? I robbed other churches, taking wages of them that I might minister unto you; and when I was present with you and was in want, I was not a burden on any man; for the brethren, when they came from Macedonia [these were Timothy and Silas; Acts xvii: 15; xviii: 5], supplied the measure of my want; and in everything I kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself. As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this glorying in the regions of Achaia." Here he reaches the glorying mentioned in the first epistle, and he shows, by limiting it geographically to Achaia, of which province Corinth was the chief city, that it had a local reference. But now he keeps it no longer in the dark. He proceeds: "Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth. But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them that desire an occasion; that wherein they glory they may be found even as we." Here he sets forth two purposes of his course, one of which is good for the past, and the other for the future. As to the past, it had been to cut off occasion from them that desired an occasion, that is, an occasion for arousing suspicion as to his disinterestedness in preaching the gospel. A suspicion of this kind would have been the hindrance to the gospel of which he spoke in the first epistle: the absence of it enabled him to "gain the more." He had known from the beginning that there were persons in Corinth who desired such an "occasion" against him, and which, if used, would be a hindrance which, at all hazards, he determined to preclude. As to the present and future, there were some men then in the church who gloried in some kind of superiority over himself, and his other purpose was to show that they were as he was, that is, not his superiors. Then, to show how infinitely they were his inferiors, he adds: "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ." Paul's glorying, then, that was so dear to him, was the glory of self-sacrifice in declining a support which he had a right to claim, and by this means circumventing the enemies of the truth, shutting off a hindrance which they would have thrown in the way of the gospel, gaining more souls for Christ, and holding a position of disinterestedness which enabled him to successfully assail the false pretenses of men who claimed to be his superiors. He would rather die than to lose this great advantage which he wielded for the truth.

We now see the correct answer to Bro. Bratcher's question. The Lord Jesus has ordained that they who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel, but Paul understood this ordinance as only establishing their right thus to live, not their duty. It binds those for whom the preaching is done, but it leaves the preacher free.—*Apostolic Guide.*