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CO-OPERATION.

The object of this article is not for the purpose of showing that our plan of spreading the gospel is scriptural and yours unscriptural, but for the purpose of impressing upon the reader's mind that it is our duty, as Disciples of Jesus, to do more than we have done heretofore for the advancement of His cause. Enough time, certainly, has been spent, yes, wasted in childish controversy. The fields long since have been white ready to harvest, but the sickle has been hanging on the wall while would-be "bosses" have been discussing the proper way to use it.

The house is on fire; the inmates are asleep; we have the power to rescue them, but stand idly by discussing the plans of rescue while they perish in the flames. The great plea of which we boast has not suffered from any plan except it has from that one which has no work in its program.

Some very zealous (?) men among us, who want to be leaders, think it to be their bounden duty to do nothing else religiously but to defend the ship of Zion. They would keep it forever in the dry dock for fear it might get wet or in some way get injured with the fickle winds or boisterous waves. Would it not be wise to launch it upon the deep, and to spend our time, not in port living after the "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life," but in the ship upon the broad ocean doing our utmost in saving perishing mariners?

God has seen fit to prosper His cause in proportion to the amount of labor wisely bestowed, and as the salvation of men from sin is the desire of our hearts, we should be willing to operate any plan which would result in the largest amount of wisely bestowed labor. When we say any plan, we mean any plan not contrary to Christian principles. The cause of our Master has suffered much in our hands, not because we have been working upon an unscriptural plan, but because we have worked very little by any plan.

And while upon this part of the subject we would say that the opposition to plans is a device of the Devil to prevent the Lord's servants from laboring in the vineyard. Satan found his way into the holy precincts of the early church in time of spiritual inactivity, and succeeded not only in corrupting it, but in locking up the word of life for ages in the dead languages. Our enemy is not particular about the plan, if he can only succeed in preventing sinners from hearing the way of salvation. Even yet, when the servants of God, with their hearts full of love to Christ, and burning with a desire for the salvation of sinners, become anxious to sanctify their means for the spread of the gospel, the Adversary can find some one pious enough to play the saint in the interest of the Devil, and thereby, if possible, thwart the purposes of God's children and hinder the spread of the truth.

The interest of the cause calls not so much for defence as it does for work, but to achieve the best results we must pay some heed as to where we work. It may be said, however, that the "field is the world," therefore we might as well work in one place as another. It is true that the "field is the world," but that does not justify us to enter it as the farmer's servant entered the plot with the team and plow; and who commenced and prosecuted the work according to no definite plan, each furrow having no corresponding relation to any other in width, depth or direction, with the idea that it was all right because the whole plot must be plowed. With the New Testament before us, we say it matters very much where we work. But what has all this to do with Co-operation? Much in one way at least.

We ought, the Apostles' example being our guide, to make an attempt to establish churches in the towns and cities. To do this requires more money than individual churches can raise. We look upon the co-operation plan as the only one by which this most desirable work can be done. It may be urged in opposition to our

plea for city work that in some of our cities a cause has been represented for over half a century, and that they, instead of being able to help others, are sadly in need of missionary aid. That there have been Disciples in the cities referred to for over half a century we admit, at that the cause has been properly represented and denied. The gospel will prove itself the power of God in the salvation of sinners in the cities as it did in the cities of Jerusalem, Philippi and Antioch, if it is as faithfully and as constantly proclaimed.

We should not be altogether discouraged by its failures, but should be taught by them the necessity of employing competent laborers—godly, intelligent and educated men—for the responsible work of establishing churches in the primitive order in the centres. Education, however, costs money and intellectual, and educated men command it. We are the last people in Christendom who should believe that uneducated men could accomplish much in an intelligent community by a single effort once a week.

How is this money to be raised? We need not expect it from any one individual, or from a single church. The co-operation of every Disciple and of every church is required to enable us to make much headway.

We care nothing, however about the plan. We are willing to bury it without the hope of resurrection, if something better is introduced. It seems somewhat inconsistent, though, for people whose constant plea is for the union of all believers, to refuse to work together or co-operate in the furtherance of the gospel. But we would not object if any brother, finding the church of which he was a member unwilling to assist in missionary work, should do so himself, and if there were individual Disciples enough who were rich enough and willing enough to commence and carry on work in all our towns and cities we would rejoice; or if any church was able to carry on a mission independent of all others we would rejoice in that also, but individual Disciples do not undertake the work, neither do single churches. It is then becoming of us to show the advantage of union by putting our means together to accomplish that which could not be accomplished in any other way. We are glad to know that nine-tenths of our brethren are a unit upon this question, but for the sake of the cause of our Saviour we would like to see greater unanimity. T. L. F.

SOME SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

We read in the secular papers that Dr. Talmage on a recent Sunday morning baptized some by immersion, having on a previous occasion baptized others by sprinkling. It is generally known, we presume, that there is a baptistery in the Brooklyn Tabernacle. Everybody knows that Dr. Talmage is a Presbyterian. How strange it is to find him doing what even prominent divines of his own church have strenuously labored to prove unscriptural! Certainly when the time comes that Dr. Talmage's practice is general among Presbyterians, the time will be nearer, when immersion will be no longer a barrier to Christian union.

The following item presents a view of the case which, if generally adopted, would soon undermine infant baptism and sprinkling altogether. One would like to know whether the parish minister when he returned home urged his brethren to partake of the same blessing with himself: it must surely be a pity from his standpoint that so few of his brethren have enjoyed that blessing. Here is the item:—

A Scottish parish minister writes: "When I was in London recently I got baptized at Mr. Spurgeon's. Though I belong to the Church of Scotland, I think a Christian should take every blessing that he can get."—Presbyterian Review.

As illustrating the fact that infant baptism is falling into disuse, read the following:—

By the official report of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the United States, for 1886, I find that Mississippi Conference baptized 3,017 adults and 1,000 children, the Missouri Conference, 1,043 adults and 323 children, the Northern New York Conference, 1,035 adults and 369 children, the Northern Indiana Conference, 2,388 adults and 478 children, Southern Kansas Conference, 1,075 adults and 290 children, the Wyoming Conference, 1,760 adults and 485 children, and the two Maine Conferences, 1,288 adults and 151 children. Within the two Maine Conferences there were 165 churches in which no children were baptized during the year. What do these facts teach?—S. in Canadian Baptist.

This is the way the Christian Standard states the case:—

Bro. Henry Cocks, the Baptist minister from England, and more recently from Canada, whom we mentioned some time ago as finding himself more in accord with the Disciples than with the Baptists in this country, we are glad to say, is

located with the church at Pompey, N. Y. We are much pleased with his spirit, and we trust that his labors in Pompey will be abundantly blessed.

And this is how the Canadian Baptist has it:

Rev. H. Cocks, of Almonte, has accepted a call to the pastorate of the Baptist church in Pompey, N. Y.

The Baptist is wrong this time, and the Standard is right. Moreover there is no Baptist church in Pompey, N. Y., nor has there been for years.

This circumstance reminds us that we are frequently asked by brethren and others, what is the difference between the Baptists and the Disciples? Indeed the question was once put by a Baptist minister, who said he really did not see the difference. And in fact there seems to be a general vagueness in the public mind in regard to the matter. Sometimes where both Baptists and Disciples are established in the same place, the Disciples are spoken of as the "other" Baptists, or the "Disciple-Baptists." It is easy to see the reason of the confusion. People observe that both practice immersion; they conclude that all who do so are Baptists, and without further investigation cannot see any cause for the two bodies being separate. Evidently Bro. Cocks saw the difference; and it was undoubtedly sufficient to justify him in severing his connection with the Baptists.

It is difficult to state the differences without seeming to misrepresent the Baptists, because, so far as we can learn, the name "Baptist" does not stand for any definite quantity even here in Canada. If we are rightly informed, the Baptists are far from being a homogeneous people—there being among them considerable diversity of faith and practice. For example, we are told, that some of the Baptist churches have no creed other than the New Testament one; while the others have adopted what is known as the "Baptist Church Manual." Here is a very clear and wide distinction among Baptists themselves. And it will be seen that if, in some places it were declared that the Baptists have a creed of human manufacture, the statement would be considered untrue, while in other places it would be received as a literal fact. And here it may be said that the Disciples agree on this point, with those Baptists who repudiate a human creed, and differ from those who do not. Then again it is said that some Baptists say, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," while others say, "He that believeth and is saved shall be baptized." Some Baptists, too, are "close" communionists, others "open" communionists; some of them gladly breaking bread with Disciples, and cordially inviting Disciples to break bread with them, while others will do neither. Then again there is diversity among them in regard to the frequency of attending to the Lord's Supper; an increasing number of them practising the weekly observance, while the great majority still follow their old habit of monthly communion. These illustrations will show that before a person could safely undertake to describe a Baptist, he would need to know the particular position of the person on some important points; and at the same time they will indicate the difficulty of distinguishing between Baptists and Disciples.

The writer believes the following to be a correct answer to the question proposed:—Between the Disciples and some Baptists there is no difference except in regard to the name; while between the Disciples and other Baptists there is just as much difference as there is between some Baptists and other Baptists, if we do not consider the distinction in name. And it may be added, if this view be correct, that that which forms the bond of union among Baptists, and which differentiates them from other professing Christians, is not unity of faith on all points, nor uniformity of practice in every particular, but the name, "BAPTIST." If this seems to any one an extravagant statement, he is respectfully requested to be kind enough to shew wherein it is incorrect, and to state what it is that holds Baptists together, and separates them from others professing to be Christians. In the meantime we shall consider the fact of an intelligent Baptist minister feeling compelled to associate himself with the Disciples as an encouraging "sign of the times." G. M.

FOREIGN MISSION NOTES.

THE MARCH COLLECTION.

It was stated in the last EVANGELIST that the first Lord's Day in March had been suggested as a good time to take up a special collection on behalf of Foreign Missions. We sometimes notice squibs in some papers which seem to want to give the impression that the executive committee sends forth edicts commanding the churches to do thus and so. It is hardly necessary

to say that they do not, and never did, do anything of the kind. They merely make suggestions to the brethren, and urge upon them the doing of their own duty in the case. It is very clear that if no one would take the responsibility of working up these enterprises, and of continually reminding us of what we ought to do, very little would be done. So far as our brethren are concerned, there is no unnecessary machinery, no attempt to lord it over the churches, but rather an earnest effort to manage the work in the best possible way, and to expend the money committed to their hands carefully and conscientiously. We can, therefore, with great freedom continue to call the attention of the readers of the EVANGELIST to this work; indeed we should consider ourselves as remiss in our duty did we refrain from doing so.

And this is the way the matter stands; do we consider foreign missionary work to be a part of our Christian duty? If so, are we doing anything to support it? If we are doing something, are we doing all that we can? We respectfully request our brethren to look these questions squarely in the face, and answer them like Christians.

If it is not thought best to take up a collection the first Lord's Day in March, it can be done on a more suitable occasion; and if it is not determined to take up a collection at all, there is nothing to hinder individuals who have a mind to give from sending their contributions directly to A. McLellan, Box 750, Cincinnati, Ohio.

The following sums are reported to have been sent from Ontario for Foreign Missions since our last number was published:—

Church, Lobo.....\$ 2 00
J. Fyfe and wife, Acton..... 20 00
W. J. Cameron, Aylmer West.. 2 00
\$24 00
G. M.

NOTES.

Any subscriber failing to receive his paper should notify us by Post Card. We try not to make any mistakes; if, however, any are made we should like to have an opportunity of rectifying them.

A pressure of matter that would not keep prevented us from inserting last month Bro. Sheppard's article on *The Seen and the Unseen*.

Now, brethren, that the elections are over, let us "give" renewed "diligence to make our calling and election sure."

Bro. Lediard's notes came too late for insertion in this number.

This time it is Bro. M. Gunn, of Lobo. See marriage notices. The EVANGELIST offers congratulations.

From a letter in the *Christian Evangelist* we learn that through the labors of Prof. W. F. Black, the great Evangelist of the West, nearly 2,000 have been added to the church within three years. Bro. Black is described as "a man of magnetic power, an orator of simple eloquence and beauty of language, full of poetry and grand imagination, he is popular before an audience; but it is not thus that he gains the multitude. The people listen to his discourses day by day, and from week to week, and strong men ground their faith upon his teaching of the word of God. He is pre-eminently a teacher, plain and forcible, pleasant and powerful, because of the knowledge he has stored away during years of study."

The very interesting article on *Chinese Customs*, which is found on the last page, was sent to us by Dr. Macklin. We take the liberty of quoting here from the private letter accompanying the clipping:—"I can make myself understood when I tell very simply the story of the Cross, and it is a great pleasure for me to do so. I have a meeting every Sunday afternoon, and I sell Bibles and talk very often during the week. Pray for us that the efforts we may make to extend the kingdom of our Saviour may be abundantly blessed. We should have several able preachers, and one or two more physicians before we can consider our force strong in China. Physicians must be devoted, God-fearing men, resolved to devote their whole life to the work. Could not Canada take the responsibility of supporting a man in the field, and send out another physician? It is glorious work; and if we are faithful the Lord will bless us."

We have not the slightest doubt but we here in Ontario are well able to support one missionary in China, and that too without interfering with any important work at home, and if we can, then we should.