The Critic's Corner.

Arrangements have been made for the undersigned to occupy small space in each issue of the CANADIAN EVANGELIST, in criticisms upon important and difficult passages of the Word of God, and he will be pleased to receive any suggestions or queries in regard to such from any of its readers; with the understanding, however, that only such questions as relate to what is practical and useful will receive attention, and that subjects of mere speculation or idle curiosity will be discarded. E. SHEPPARD, Walkerton P. O., Bruce Co.

Does the word "water," in John 3rd chap., 5th verse refer to baptism?
L. B., Wiarton.

Some critics say no, as it attaches too much importance to that institution, excluding from the Kingdom of Heaven all unbaptized persons. "Let us rather understand," say they, "that the word 'water' is used figuratively to signify the cleansing influence of the Spirit of God." This exegesis is out of the question, making the declaration of Christ tautological.

On the other hand, the Episcopalians not only accept the meaning to be baptism, but regard it as essential even to the salvation of infants.

Dean Alford, a moderate churchman too, in his notes on the Greek text, says on Titus iii., 5:—"The font representing the external portion of the sacrament of Baptism and pledging the internal. Thus, complete (see John iii., 5) baptism *is* the new birth."

His reference to Titus, as confirming the meaning of "water" in John iii., 5, is certainly relevant, though its application to infants is absurd.

Another view of this important Scripture is, that the "water" represents a birth into the Church of Christ by baptism, and the "Spirit" the power of the Holy Spirit, by which the believer is begotten from the grave at the resurrection for his entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of God.

As the resurrection is ascribed to the direct power of God, and to the Son of God, and not to the agency of the Holy Spirit, it is, among other reasons, a sufficient ground for the rejection of this theory. In making this statement, the writer has not forgotten the language of Rom. viii., 11, which he judges has reference to the quickening of the believer's body *during this life* by the Spirit, that all its members may be used "as instruments of righteousness unto God."

Nicodemus came to Christ, no doubt, expecting that all the instruction and all the blessings to be communicated by "a teacher come from God" would pertain to him because he was *born* of Abraham. Our Saviour seeks to remove his mistake by the assurance that in order to enter the Kingdom of God he must be born again, or rather "born from above." Nicodemus, having in view only the natural birth, fails to understand Christ. In explanation he is assured that unless a man is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God; that what is "born of the flesh is flesh"; the literal conception of the "Master of Israel." That what "is born of Spirit is Spirit"; the allegorical teaching of Christ.

Hence, the import of the words we are considering, confirmed and explained by other Scriptures, seems to be, that the Holy Spirit, through the agency of the Word of God, begets us to a new or spiritual life, and that our obedience in baptism is a birth into the Church of Christ, where we, as "new born babes," may be nourished by all the means of grace, and grow thereby "*unto Salvation*" (see 1st Pet., ii., 2, N.V.), and finally enter into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. E. S.

NOTE.—It may be interesting to the reader to know that in the Sinaitic, the oldest Greek text, we here, at the close of the 8th verse of 3rd chap. John, read "So is *every one* that is born *of water* and the Spirit." E. S.

It is a common fault never to be satisfied with our fortune, nor dissatisfied with our understanding.—*Rochefoucauld.*

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Woman's Work.

The Annual Meeting of the O.C.W.B.M.

The third Annual Meeting of the C.W.B.M. for Ontario was held in Owen Sound, commencing June 6th and closing June 9th. Sisters from all parts of the Province were present, there being sixty-four delegates and visitors, and twenty-six points represented. In point of numbers and missionary zeal this was the best Convention the C.W.B.M. has yet held.

In THE CANADIAN EVANGELIST of June 16th will be found the Address of Welcome from Owen Sound Auxiliary to the sisters in convention. Letters of Christian greeting were received from Auxiliary in Kansas City and the Recording Secretary of the American Board. A slight alteration had to be made in the programme owing to delay in trains. The open meeting of Friday, to which all the brethren and all Christian friends of the town were invited, was postponed until Monday afternoon.

The Corresponding Secretary's report as well as the Superintendent's report for "Children's Mission Bands" were encouraging. These reports have been published in full in THE CANADIAN EVANGELIST.

The Treasurer reported that all the Auxiliaries had fulfilled their pledges, and many of them have exceeded by quite a number of dollars.

In response to the appeals made through THE CANADIAN EVANGELIST for aid to build a church in Minnedosa, $187.48 has been contributed. During the Convention $110 was raised for this fund. There is $60 required yet to complete the payment on the church building. In another column will be found the Financial Statement.

It is urged that all the Auxiliaries of the C.W.B.M. meet as early in the month as possible.

The second Lord's Day in December has been set apart for a C.W.B.M collection in all the churches.

Mrs. S. M. Brown, assisted by Miss Jessie R. Agnew, were appointed to edit "Woman's Work" column in THE CANADIAN EVANGELIST. All communications to be sent to Mrs. S. M. Brown, Wiarton.

Miss Jessie R. Agnew, Mrs. Gaff and Mrs. C. C. Pomeroy, were appointed a Standing Committee on Obituaries. All obituary notices to be sent to Miss Jessie R. Agnew, 372 Shaw Street, Toronto.

All money collected by "Children's Mission Bands" to be sent to Miss Jennie Fleming, Kilsyth.

It was found that nearly all the Auxiliaries are using the *Missionary Tidings*. Those desirous of getting the paper or renewing subscriptions can do so by applying to Miss Annie Leary, 400 Manning Avenue, Toronto.

The Board of Management, together with the Committee appointed at last Annual Meeting to consider the matter of a Constitution and union of work with American C.W.B.M., reported: "We do not deem it advisable to unite work with the American Board, and for the present no steps will be taken to adopt a Constitution." This report was adopted.

The Committee on Future Work presented the following, which were adopted by the Convention:

1st. That Minnedosa receive the first consideration of the Board.

2nd. That the Board employ a man at $500 for Minnedosa mission field. Of this amount Minnedosa can raise $200.

3rd. That $100 be paid the sisters of Denison Avenue, Toronto, for church furnishing funds.

4th. That Owen Sound be considered.

The following resolutions were unanimously passed:

1st. That we urge those churches which have not yet sent delegates to our Annual Convention to send representatives next year, and to take immediate steps to form Auxiliaries.

2nd. That all sisters who have organized Mission Bands and are not already Auxiliaries to the O.C.W.B.M. be asked to become such.

3rd. That we recommend churches in which "Children's Bands" have not yet been organized, to take steps to begin this work as soon as possible.

4th That we tender to the Trustees of the Baptist Church our most sincere thanks for their Christian courtesy in granting us the use of their school room for our C.W.B.M. meetings.

5th. That the thanks of the delegates and visitors be tendered to the friends in Owen Sound for their kind and hearty hospitality.

The old Board of Managers was re-elected.

ANNIE KILGOUR,
Rec. Sec.

Financial Statement of the Ontario Christian Woman's Board of Missions for the Year 1889-90.

RECEIPTS.

Balance from last year's account	$ 72 92	
Received on last year's pledges	37 35	
Collected from the Auxiliaries this year 1889-90	470 05	
Received from the Ontario Co-operation, being balance of Manitoba Fund in their hands	116 36	
Collection at the Annual Meeting at St. Thomas, June, 1889 (This was taken up to defray Sister Christian's travelling expenses)	34 00	
Total receipts		$731 68

PAYMENTS.

Muskoka Mission	$ 43 50	
Minnedosa Mission	350 00	
Hamilton Church Building	100 00	
Owen Sound " "	150 00	
Guelph Church (minister's salary)	25 00	
Mrs Christian's travelling expenses to St. Thomas, Annual Meeting	30 00	
Incidental Expenses	9 48	
Total payments		707 98
Cash balance in hands of Treas.		23 60
Assets	23 60	
Liabilities— Due Guelph Church	75 00	
Excess of liabilities over assets		51 40

JENNIE FLEMING,
Treasurer.

To the Sisters.

Our Annual Meeting for 1890 is a story of the past. For months we looked forward to it with joyful anticipations, and now we trust that all who were there can look backward with happy memories. There was so much to encourage and inspire us, and to increase our faith in God's loving guidance and approval of our work, that we heartily wish that all the dear sisters who so faithfully aided us during the year could have been with us to share the joy of the meetings, and the greetings. We know that they share with us in spirit, and who shall say that the prayers of the absent ones did not add much to the success of the meeting, as well as bring to themselves the blessing that always comes with the thought and desire for the happiness of others. It is one of the sweetest consolations of our holy religion that its blessings are not confined to *times* or *places*. They who must needs tarry at home, as well as those who have the privilege of meeting with their brethren and sisters, may prove the truth of this, that—

"Companionship with Jesus
Makes life divinely sweet."

And now we trust that *all* on turning their thoughts towards the work of another year with more zeal, more love, more earnest consecration to Christ and His work than ever before. Each year we leave behind us lessens the number given us for our labor of love, and this may be our last. With God's rich blessing—*which is sure*—let us make it the best.

Many things pertaining to the advancement of our work were spoken of by the sisters in convention. As had been suggested, the matter of having a monthly program prepared for our Auxiliary, and published in THE CANADIAN EVANGELIST, was brought up, and the general opinion expressed was, that in nearly all, if not all, of our auxiliaries the *Missionary Tidings* is taken, and as there is a monthly program published in that paper, it was thought to be unnecessary to prepare one specially for ourselves—but all agreed upon this—that we ought, through the medium of our "Woman's Work" column, to assist each other with our best methods and suggestions for making our monthly meetings interesting, instructive and helpful. Now, dear sisters, will you not do this? Just look upon this as a part, and a very important part, of the work that the Lord requires of you.

Our monthly meetings ought to be, and may be, a great help and stimulus to our spiritual growth. We can aid each other much in making them so, and the Lord will bless our efforts.

S. M. B.

NOTE REDUCTION IN PRICE OF "PURE WORDS."

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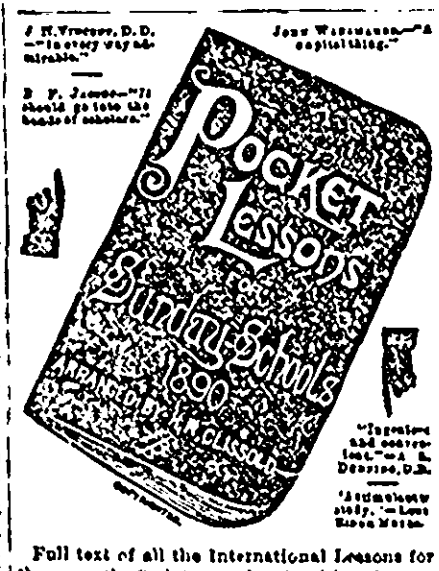

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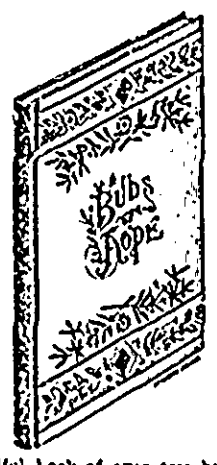

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