

"Does it seem like a loving God, to be watching for one slip of the tongue, or one thoughtless or irreverent word, and then to refuse to forgive that wrong, however penitent or humble the wrong-doer finally is? God sent Jesus into this world to show his love for sinners, and Jesus is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Is your view consistent with the Bible teachings about the never-failing love of God?"

"I shouldn't think so if it were not for those words of Jesus about this one sin as different from all other sins. But there his words stand, and I'm fearfully troubled because of them."

"Well, now, my friend, don't you misread those words as they were spoken and as the records of them stand? When did Jesus speak those words? and to whom? and under what circumstances? They are too important to be perverted and misused. Have a care, therefore, on that point. Read over more carefully the passage in Matthew's Gospel, and see what the words mean. Jesus was working wonders of grace. He was showing the love of the Father and the power of the Holy Spirit. He was opposing Satan and his works. Then those who opposed Jesus said that he and his disciples were representatives of Satan. At this, Jesus suggested that one who counted the Holy Spirit and Satan one and the same, was in a hopeless state; God could do nothing more for such a man. If one who sees God's work and Satan's work says that there is no difference between the two, God is powerless in that man's behalf. God has nothing better than the Holy Spirit's work to show to a man in this world or the next. My friend, can you see nothing better in the Holy Spirit's work than in the work of Satan?"

"Indeed, I can see a great deal that is better. There is no comparison to be made between the two. One is all good; the other is all bad."

"Then you have no doubt as to where you would stand on that issue?"

"Of course I do not."

"If, therefore, the unpardonable sin is being on the side of Satan against the Holy Spirit, as the great issue in the contest, in this world or in the next, you would feel that you were on the right side and in the right state,—would you?"

"Yes, I would, as you state the case. But I have not been looking at it in that way. I have not read the words of Jesus in this way before."

"Well, that is the way that I read those words as they were spoken according to the Bible record. I find a meaning in them consistent with the spirit of Jesus, with the general teachings of Scripture, with the peculiar circumstances of their utterance, with the lessons of sound reason, and with the very letter of the text. On the other hand, you find a meaning in the words as you read them, that is, as you admit, not consistent with what you have known of the love of the Father, with the spirit of Jesus, or with the known working of the Holy Spirit. Which of these two methods is to be preferred? Tell me frankly."

"Your view, I admit, does seem the most reasonable."

"We may always be sure that a positive command or threat of God is based on a principle prevalent throughout all God's domain. It is never a mere, specific offense or transgression that he refers to as cutting one off from hope; but rather an attitude of being, which would be the same in this life beyond. Thus it is in this instance. But, tell me, did it ever trouble you to think that the sin you had committed had shut you out from God's love and presence?"

"It has caused me agony unspeakable. I have mourned over it; and prayed about it day and night; and oh, how I have longed for help!"

"That is in itself proof that you have not committed the unpardonable sin. Jesus speaks of that sin as putting its doer in a hopelessly hostile attitude toward God. If you had committed that sin, or were in that attitude of being, you would not want to be forgiven or loved of God. No, no, my friend, you have sins enough that can be forgiven, which you ought to think about and strive to overcome, without worrying over the unpardonable sin which you do not comprehend, and which you evidently have not committed."

And that long troubled soul was led into the light, and found peace and rest in the assured love of God. May every soul similarly perplexed have like rest and peace!

He had been worrying over a sin which he had not committed; but which if he had committed he would have ceased to worry about. So, in fact, his very worrying was proof that he had no cause for worry. How Satan gives trouble to those who are his determined enemies, leaving alone those of whom he is already sure!—Sunday School Times.

### The First Baptist Convention in the N. W. Territories.

The Convention of 1902 adjourned to meet in Calgary, July 1903, provided a delegation sufficiently large to secure proper R. R. rates could be secured. Eight hundred miles from Winnipeg is no trifle and to many the project seemed doubtful. But the stirring appeals of Pastor Litch of Calgary, voicing the claims of the western portion of our Convention field, came as a Macedonian cry to the churches of

Manitoba. Individuals relinquished other vacation plans and turned themselves westward. Churches in the majority of cases contributed the larger part of the expenses of their pastors. And so it was a representative as well as a large delegation that filled the three special coaches attached to the "Imperial Limited" leaving Winnipeg, June 30th.

The attendance was upwards of two hundred and thirty. Of these one hundred and twenty were from Alberta. The Alberta churches never sent more than four delegates to a Convention in Manitoba. Thus the Convention must result in a quickening of spiritual life and denominational interest in our Alberta churches. The Manitoba delegates and their churches on the other hand will have gained enlarged vision and sympathy by a truer apprehension of areas and opportunities in our western field. A visiting Ontario pastor remarked that though he had ardently advocated our western work he had often felt like discounting the glowing accounts of Bros. Vining and Stackhouse. But the reality surpassed all that he had heard.

The reports indicated substantial results from the work of the year. As the Convention for special reasons met just at the end of the Convention year the full statistical returns were not yet in. From the report of Supt. Stackhouse and the partial statistical report the following facts appear. There are 95 churches. Of these 10 were organized during the year. The membership totals about 5,550, a gain for the year of nearly 800.

The churches have made gratifying progress financially. The reports that were in showed average contribution for all purposes per resident member of \$17.75. The average for missions was \$1.50 per member.

The fact that most of the churches are comparatively small doubtless calls out the beneficence of the individual. The following figures caught from the reports are interesting.

A self-supporting church of 83 members raised \$1813. A mission church of 21 members raised \$419. 36 members report \$1334. 35 members report \$1059. 32 members report \$1275.

Of the mission fields, seven have become self-sustaining during the year and eleven are asking for reduced grants. In this way \$1700 of last year's appropriations will be freed for work elsewhere.

Baptist services are maintained at 150 points by 84 men of whom upwards of 30 are ordained.

Fourteen houses of worship have been erected.

Work among foreigners demands special mention. The German population in the west numbers 80,000. The German Baptist churches number sixteen with 1000 communicants and with ten pastors holding services at 40 points. The year's record is one of enlarged congregations and increased self support. Two new churches were organized. The Convention determined upon a policy of decided advance in this part of the work.

Among the Galicians our work is not very large but the outlook is more hopeful than at any previous time.

The Icelandic mission in Winnipeg reports ten converts and enlarged congregations.

The Scandinavian work has been under the direction of the Women's Board which spent last year \$1800 upon this work. The work has grown and the opportunity for Baptist work among these descendants of the Vikings is enlarging. The Women's Board has handed the supervision over to the Executive Board of the Convention and pledged \$2,800 to sustain the next year's work.

The mission to the Indians, always interesting, is becoming more firmly established each year. The work is to be reinforced by the addition to the staff of Mr. Jeremiah Clark, of P. E. I., whose fitness for such work should commend this mission to the particular sympathy of Maritime Baptists.

No subject is of more vital interest to our Convention than the work in India. For this money is collected by our Women's Board and our representatives work under the Ontario Board among the Telegus. Hitherto we have supported Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Davis and native helpers. The conviction that we should enlarge our Foreign Mission effort has been felt by many.

A young woman, principal of school in an Alberta town, an experienced Christian worker, Superintendent of the local Baptist S. School, had been considering the claims of the foreign field. She had thought of communicating with the Ontario board. She attended the Calgary Convention. In that spiritually charged atmosphere her thoughts crystallized into conviction and resolution and she offered herself to the Women's Board for service in India. In addressing the Convention she mentioned the financial problem involved. Meanwhile an old soldier who had served in India, wandered into the vestibule in a half intoxicated condition. Seeing a woman on the platform he asked an usher what she was there for. It was explained that she was offering herself for India. He listened, and when she had spoken of the financial problem he handed the usher a five dollar bill, saying, "This is for the young woman." It was taken to the chairman who said, "Here is the first five dollars for our sister's support, who wishes to cover it?" In a moment hands were raised all over the house. Pledges were made as rapidly as they could be recorded of from one to ten dollars until the list aggregated nearly twelve hundred dollars. About half of this was paid on the spot. Thus God led the way and it only remained for the Convention

by formal resolution to pledge the continued support of another missionary in India. I have ventured to enlarge upon this point for two reasons. It affords evidence that the heart of our denominational life is sound. It gives assurance that it is no empty dream that the Canadian West if thoroughly evangelized now, will soon become a mighty force in the evangelization of the pagan world.

BRANDON COLLEGE reports an attendance of one hundred and twenty-three students. Of these, over twenty have the ministry in view. Most of these are already in the Home Mission work. It is singularly providential that at this crisis in Western Mission work we are equipped with such an institution. Three years ago there was nothing but promise. To-day the College has in buildings and paid up endowment assets (over and above liabilities) equalling \$92,000. When you have completed the Acadia's Forward Movement, and are looking for exercise along that line don't forget that Brandon has needs and that no money will do more for western missions than that given to Brandon College.

ADVANCE! The command rang in the ears of the Convention. 124,000 settlers entered the west during the past convention year. The rate is increasing, new territory is opening. Three years ago the writer was one of four English pastors in Alberta. Now we have eleven English missionaries on the same territory besides great expansion in German and Scandinavian work. In the great Saskatchewan Territory we have just two missionaries—students at Saskatoon and Prince Albert. We should be prepared to dot this region with mission stations in the next two years.

The vast Peace River district is opening up. It must not call to us in vain. We are preparing to grapple with this work. It has become necessary to have a representative of western missions at work in eastern Canada throughout the year. Bro. A. J. Vining has been called to this work, and it is expected that he will accept. Since he resigned the position of Superintendent and returned to Ontario for his wife's health he has not ceased to labor for western missions. Under his constant advocacy, we look for a doubling of funds from the east in a year or two.

Supt. Stackhouse will devote his whole time to fostering the work on the field. This will mean greater growth, and increased self-support and wise replanning among our mission churches. General Missionary McLaurin last year travelled 26,000 miles. In the Superintendent's absence in the east he filled that office. He spent weeks on pastorless fields. He did the work of an evangelist. He poured oil on troubled waters. He went on voyages of discovery to new settlements. He spent just nineteen days with his family. This year Supt. Stackhouse will remain in the west and the office of general missionary ceases. But Bro. McLaurin has accepted the call of the Board to carry our work into unorganized districts. He will preach as he goes. He will discover the Baptists settlers. He will exhort them to steadfastness. He will in various ways prepare for permanent occupation of the field. He will tell the people that the Baptists of Canada will send the men to uphold the banner which he unfurls.

Get ready to do your share. Advance!

#### PERSONALS.

Mayor Underwood, of Calgary, is a Baptist deacon and gave the Convention a royal welcome on behalf of the city. Among the new missionaries introduced to the Convention was a son of pioneer Alex. McDonald. "May their tribe increase."

Bro. H. L. Kempton, of Milton, N. S., is the new pastor at Okotoks near Calgary. His church took the opportunity to call an ordination council for the day following the Convention. He gave good evidence that God had laid His hand upon him and thrust him into the ministry. He is a graduate of Acadia and McMaster and no novice in Home Mission work. May his ministry worthily perpetuate the honored name he bears.

The beloved pastor of Logan Ave. church and editor of the N. W. Baptist, Rev. W. C. Vincent, has with his wife just been sorely bereaved in the death of their second son, Ralph, a bright boy of 15, who was instantly killed by slipping under the wheels of a street car which he was boarding. Many prayers will ascend for them.

Roland, Man. C. B. FREEMAN.

### The Sea of Dreams.

Afloat and adrift on the Sea of Dreams,

We two, we two together,

In an idle boat adrift, afloat,

Through all the summer weather;

In the silent night where the moonlight's white

And the single lodestar gleams,

In an idle boat adrift, afloat,

On the beautiful Sea of Dreams.

I wake—but the dream lives on for both;

We two, we two together,

Held fast we seem by the foolish dream,

Bound by the dream-strand's tether.

Through the toiling day, in the fray alway,

Though hid from the lodestar's beams,

By the foolish dream held fast we seem

On the foolish Sea of Dreams.

And I know some time we shall dream again,

We two, we two together,

Shall sail soul-free the impossible sea

Through all the summer weather;

Where the white surf breaks and the dreamer wakes

And the single lodestar gleams,

I shall come to you and the dream turn true,

By the beautiful Sea of Dreams.

—Selected.