

Quercus Robertson
U. W. O. LIBRARY

THE

ONTARIO EVANGELIST.

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

VOL. 2.

ERIN AND EVERTON, ONTARIO, DECEMBER, 1887.

No. 8

POETRY.

BY FAITH, NOT BY SIGHT.

The night is dark; all things invisible;
Deep shrouded in impenetrable gloom
I stand in solitude with saddened heart,
And feel a weird and superstitious dread
To think of loved ones lying in the grave,
Away from all the light and joy of home,
In outer darkness mouldering in the dust.
Yet as I upwards strain mine eyes in vain,
To see a rent or view a twinkling star,
The inspiration of a sacred thought
Brings sweet communion with the "things above,"
And gives the piercing eye OF FAITH to see
The holy scenes of Paradise and Heaven.
Elysian fields the eye hath never seen;
Sweet harmonies the ear hath never heard;
The bliss no human heart hath e'er conceived,
Are by the Spirit, through God's word, revealed,
And opened to the inward sight.
From earthly things shut out, 'tis joy to look
And see the light of an eternal day:
To gaze, by faith, upon the throne of God,
Encircled by the glorious rainbow's hues,
With brightened eyes and glowing heart, to view
The Saviour smiling on the seat of power;
Atoning justice to forgiving love.
In posture humble with obedient mien.
The angels, too, are open to my sight,
Standing in readiness around God's throne,
With patience waiting the Divine commands.
But what are these? Whence hither did they come?
Who walk in white amidst fields of Paradise?
The vast, innumerable throng I see,
Tended and nourished by the Lamb of God.
Their forms all glorious with celestial light.
Their voices tuned to everlasting praise!
Thank thee, Oh Father, for this glorious sight,
For here are those I knew and loved on earth,
Whose forms are hidden in the loathsome grave.
Not lost! Not lost! BY FAITH I see them now;
Their souls were cleansed by Redeeming blood;
Through tribulations great they reached their rest;
At home! At home! Forever with the Lord!

SURREY,
Ridgetown, Ont.

ORIGINAL.

A SERMON.

DELIVERED BY W. M. CREWSON ON BOARD THE
STEAMER *Atlantic*, AND PUBLISHED BY RE-
QUEST OF PARTIES IN THE AUDIENCE.

Text:—"With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Romans x: 10.

I.—"With the heart." In the scriptural use of this term, we are to understand that reference is made to the seat of the emotions, the affections, the desires, the convictions, the conscience, the motives or moving principles of our life. It is the seat of life, as the natural heart is the seat of natural life, the centre of the forces of that life, and of the activities by which these forces are felt in every part of the system, so in our spiritual organism there is a centre—I do not now refer to the *source*, for God is the *source* of all life—but to the *centre* upon which, and through which God acts; and that centre, in both natural and spiritual life, is the heart of that life respectively. Now when faith takes hold of that centre its power will be felt in the inward life, controlling the emotions, guiding the conscience, governing the activities of body, soul and spirit, and bringing all into submission to the *will* of Him, who is the object of that faith, which in the gospel is Jesus, the Christ, whom God hath raised from the dead. Then, and only then, may we be said to be really in earnest about our salvation. Then we *will* be in earnest, and if we do not already know what to do, will cry out, as did Saul of Tarsus, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do." Then we shall believe with all the heart unto righteousness; and this faith purifies the heart, and leads to an humble submission to, and a confiding trust in, and a loving fellowship with Him who alone is "the way, the truth, and the life." God requires the heart. He says "Give me thine heart" and "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," &c. And the servants of the Lord say, "If thou believest with all thy heart"; "With the heart"; "Purifying their hearts by faith"; and "See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently"; and Jesus asks, "Where is thy faith?" If your faith is only in your head, it

may act upon your knowledge, your reasoning faculties, upon the intellectual man, and lead you into Biblical research, make you very critical, asking for the reason of this and that, the why and the wherefore of everything that God says; but it will not make you a Christian. If it is in the heart it leads on to righteousness.

II.—"Man." In creation, "God created man and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." Paul speaks of man as a triune being composed of body, soul and spirit, 1 Thes. v: 23; and as comprising "The outward man," and "The inward man," 11 Cor. iv: 16; and with the Psalmist asks, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" Heb. ii: 6. It is man then, created in the image of God, with a spiritual as well as a corporeal life and a living soul, made a little lower than the angels, but still to have dominion over the works of his Creator, with an outward frame perishing, and an inward man which is renewed day by day; endowed with the forces of animal life, and the intelligence of angels, and with a soul that can be touched with a divine faith, thrilled with a divine love, merged into a divine nature, and find everlasting enjoyment in a divine life. Not demons, nor brutes, nor idiots, nor even unconscious infants, but intelligent beings, who can "In an honest and good heart having heard the word keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience," Luke viii: 15. This is the being that is permitted, and called upon to believe to the saving of his soul.

III.—"Believeth." Is there any difference between "faith" and "belief"? Some writers profess to be able to find a difference, but if there is, it is very small, and I think the sacred writers treat them as one and the same. What then is "Faith" or "Belief"? It is a confidence in testimony, or receiving it as truth. We are told in the letter to the Hebrews, xi: 1. "That faith is the substance or foundation of things hoped for, the evidence, or seeing of things not seen." This tells more of the position occupied by faith, than the nature of it. The word "substance," being very expressive, "standing under," and "evidence," as much so, "steering out of," show the power and use of faith in the gospel economy. The truth or falsity of the testimony does not appear to affect its power over even the heart and life, for a man will believe a lie just as firmly as the truth, and he will hold on to error just as persistently as he would to the soundest of logic, until he is convinced that it is error and not truth what he has, then it loses its power; but the final result of the two are quite different. Faith in the truth will always bring realization. Faith in a lie, disappointment. Faith in error leads to an erroneous life. Faith in the truth leads to righteousness. Faith in that which leads to wrong-doing always brings punishment. Faith in that which leads to righteousness always brings happiness. The "Faith" here spoken of is saving faith, for the preceding verse says so, and is simply believing the gospel "That Christ died for our sins, that he was buried, that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." Receiving these facts as true, and building upon this grand fundamental or foundation truth, "That Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God," brings our inner life into harmony with his life; and this is just what the faith of the gospel is intended to accomplish.

IV.—"Unto righteousness." What is "righteousness"? To do right. John says, "He that doeth righteousness is righteous even as he is righteous," 1 John iii: 7. But there is danger here of our accepting of a false standard of right. Shall we accept of man's standard, or God's standard, of man's or God's righteousness? Every one will respond, "God's standard of righteousness of course." Well, then, what is God's righteousness? Just to do what God thinks and says is right. If we do what man thinks and says is right, we are taking man's standard and following man's standard. Now we know that there are different opinions with regard to some of the things that Jesus says are on the way to righteousness. For instance, Jesus says, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God," John iii: 5; and to Saul, "There it shall be told thee what thou must do," and of his own act, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all

righteousness," in each referring more or less to baptism. But man says, "You can be saved just as well without baptism as with it." Which is right? Which will lead us into the way of God's righteousness? I should think "A way-faring man, though a fool, would not err therein." Again, Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan, and came up straightway out of the water, and thus showed us the act by which we are to fulfil the same righter act, and he commands the same act. In the case of the baptism of the Eunuch, Acts viii: 38, we must come to the conclusion that it was immersion. Also in Rom. vi: 4, Paul says, "We are buried with him by baptism into death, &c." But man says that, "To sprinkle or pour water upon a candidate in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is baptism." Which is right? Which is the safe way? The Lord's way of course every time, and to take his way is his righteousness, but to take man's way is man's righteousness.

V.—"With the mouth." The mouth is the outlet of the thoughts of the heart. Words are said to be signs of our ideas. Ideas are formed in the heart, and flow forth in words through the lips. The heart was defiled by evil thoughts and had to be purified. The mouth is made unclean in giving utterance to those evil thoughts, and must be sanctified through the truth. The word of the Father is truth; and what more precious truth than that which we are asked to confess, "That Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God." That is: "Jesus," Saviour; "Christ," Anointed; "Son," Heir; "Living," Immortal, Eternal; "God" over all, blessed for ever. So we confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus as another step on the road to salvation. This must be done publicly. We may believe the truth in our hearts. That is right. That is one of the steps we are to take; but no step will not answer in place of another, no more than one person can believe for another, or be baptized for another, or stand at the bar of God for another, and the faith in the heart must find utterance through the lips in a public confession before men. Then we become in a measure publicly identified with Christ who made that good confession before Pontius Pilate, 1 Tim. vi: 13.

VI.—"Confession is made." Confession is an act of one person to another—and may be public or private—but as before stated, this must be public; for Jesus says, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven." Matt. x: 32. When this statement was made, Jesus gave his disciples and the world a promise, but it was also conditional, as much so as the statement, "That whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"; and it is claimed that that promise will be fulfilled and become a *fact* when Jesus shall say to those on his right hand, "Come ye blessed of my father, &c.;" but by the scriptures we learn that that promise was made a fact—an actual occurrence long ago; for when Jesus, as recorded in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew, asked his disciples, "Whom say ye that I am?" Simon said, "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God." Here Peter confessed the name of Jesus before men, and complied with the condition annexed to the promise, and Jesus at once fulfilled his part by confessing Peter's name, "Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jonas," and "I say unto thee that thou art Peter, &c." Now, may we not learn from this that, when a poor soul, believing and penitent, makes confession of that grand truth announced by Peter, then Jesus immediately fulfills his part also, in acknowledging the name of that individual before the Father in Heaven. I believe he does.

VII.—"Unto salvation." The gospel, in all of its facts, commands and promises, is unto salvation. Jesus, its author, is the way, the truth and the life. "No man can come to the Father but by him," and all the steps that Jesus has taken to show us the way and that we are to take in coming to God lead on to the end for which the gospel was introduced, even the salvation of your souls. Let us illustrate. If I were in London, England, and wished to come to Guelph, I should most likely take train for Liverpool, then by steamer come to Portland, again by railway to Montreal, Toronto and then to Guelph. Now taking that route, leading from one city to another, each stage may be considered as a link in a chain connecting the two places, or as steps leading from one to the other and each step is necessary to be taken; for if I were

to stop at Portland, Montreal or even Toronto, I would not be at Guelph, yet each stage or step would bring me nearer to the end of my journey, would be bringing me unto Guelph. So faith is unto salvation, repentance is unto salvation, confession is unto salvation, baptism is unto salvation, because these are steps of note in the way, and as we arrive at any one of these points we know that we are on the way, for Jesus himself has marked them by his own footprints, and has commanded us to follow him, come unto the righteousness of God, and receive the salvation of our souls. Amen.

BROTHER LEDIARD'S DISCOURAGEMENT.

We wish to say a few words to encourage Bro. Lediard and all other Christian workers who get discouraged at times by looking at the small number of Christian believers compared with the large mass of unbelieving mankind. These remarks are brought out by Bro. Lediard's report in the supplement of the July edition of the *Ontario Evangelist*, and by the remarks of the *Apostolic Guide* in last issue of the *Evangelist*.

Ist.—The Saviour has not promised us the majority in this age of the world, whatever may be in some other age. The Gospel is to be preached as a *witness* unto all nations, but it is not said all nations will believe it or obey it. When the disciples asked the Saviour, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" He replied, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many I say unto you will seek to enter in and shall not be able." Again, Matt. vii: 13, 14, "Enter ye in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." It was so in the Saviour's day: it is so to-day. We always think it a great mistake when we hear any professing Christian man or denomination boasting of large numbers compared with others. We think it is a bad sign according to the Saviour's words, for if the fact of having the majority is a proof of being in the right way, then *Pedo-baptists* are ahead of all baptized believers in Christ, and the Roman Catholics are ahead of all Protestant *Pedo-baptists*, so we must yield the palm at last to the Church of Rome, and say she is in the right way, because she has the majority. But the Church of Rome must again resign the palm to the Hindoos or Mohammedans who also profess to believe in a God, so that all professing followers of Christ put together are far outnumbered by the followers of Mahomet.

What shall our friends say to this who are so fond of boasting of their numbers to prove they have more truth than other professing Christians?

But to crown all we find the downright Pagans who do not profess to believe in a God even as much as the Mohammedans or Roman Catholics exceed in numbers all others upon earth; so the Devil has the majority over all boasting professors yet, and can laugh at their silly efforts to prove they are in the right by the superiority of their numbers. We can, therefore, sing with all truthfulness still the words of the poet:—

"Broad is the road that leads to death,
And thousands walk together there;
While wisdom shows a narrow path,
With here and there a traveller."

Let no professing believer in Christ be heard boasting of his numbers in comparison with others, but rather the giving of thanks that the Lord has shown the narrow path of eternal life, remembering that "not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my father which is in Heaven."

In conclusion, therefore, we say to every Christian worker who may feel disheartened at the slow progress of the Lord's cause, and the small number of baptized believers in Christ compared with the unbelieving and disobedient portion of humanity, toil on brother in patience and humble trust in God, knowing that His word will not return to Him void, but the gospel must be preached as a witness unto all nations, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned." And though at times we may be forced to exclaim with Paul and Isaiah, "Lord, who hath believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed." "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people," yet we remember the Master's promise to those in the path of faith and obedience (who are always in the minority), "Lo I am with you always," and realizing this, let us "thank God and take courage."

A. R. BEST.

Oct. 21st, 1887.