

REPORTING ONE'S WORK.

(By C. H. Wetherbe.)

It is eminently proper for every pastor of a church to report to his denominational paper such items of the condition of the church and of its prospects as may be of interest and help to the readers. But some pastors refrain from doing so, lest it should appear that they would be praising themselves. I think that this is a false modesty. The apostles did not withhold from their brethren reports of what the Lord had done through them. They seem to have been glad to bring good tidings of the progress of Christ's Kingdom, even when they themselves had a prominent part in the work.

But there are pastors who yield to the temptation to make reports of their work which are beyond the bounds of strict truth. Judging by the printed reports, one would suppose that during a certain one's pastorate everything was booming at a marvelous rate, when, as a fact, the general condition lacked much of being so immense.

Some time ago a ministerial friend of mine, living at a considerable distance from my place of residence, in a letter to me referred to a pastor in the same association and stated that every pastor in the association had ceased to have any confidence in the printed reports which came from that pastor about his work. He unduly enlarged upon whatever he did. This became so notorious that those who knew the real facts could not rely upon the reports.

Such a thing is exceedingly unfortunate in any pastor. The loss of confidence in him by other pastors is very detrimental to him; and his own people also lose confidence in him and respect for him. Unconverted people, who know this fault, are prejudiced against the man. Moreover, when a reader of a religious paper discovers that certain reports of church affairs are far from the actual facts, he is quite apt to suspect that many other printed reports of pastoral work are likewise defective. It ought to be unnecessary to say that a pastor should make his reports of church affairs so true to facts that they can be implicitly relied upon by all who read them.

A MARKED CONTRAST.

How mighty is God and how helpless is man! Before the Infinite the mightiest human power dwindles into nothingness. When God ariseth to shake terribly the earth, how impotent is man! With all his greatness of intellect, with all his wonderful grasp on the forces of nature, he stands as one in paralysis before the almightiness of God. He hurls the sea against coastwise cities, and their great ashler walls are crushed as eggshells. He makes the billows clap their hands and in the impact great ships are crushed like glass in the tempest. He sends the cyclone across the fields and nothing can stand before it. Villages are but playthings in its path, and the century-old monarchs of the forests are overthrown. When he sends his tidal wave against the beaches of the seas, men made in the image of God, with dominion over earth and sea, are drowned like rats in their dwellings and all the greatness of their hands is as dust in the whirlwind or turned into a dwelling place for fishes and slimy things. When the trumpeting of the volcano is heard, and God calls from the depths of the earth in fire and ashes and lava slime, burying rich orchards, vineyards, homes and cities beneath rivers of molten rock, one might well cry out, "Lord what is man that thou art mindful of him!"—United Presbyterian.

MARKS OF THE LORD JESUS.

John Berridge—that wonderful apostle of the last century in England, whose preaching of Christ gathered in thousands as he rode from village to village, with the old Gospel on his lips—thus touchingly refers to the wonders and surprises and joys of the great meeting-day, when the parted laborers of the Church of God shall look each other in the face once more. "What," says he, writing to a fellow-sufferer of the cross, "if such a poor, weak, weather-beaten, and almost shipwrecked vessel such as I should land at last safely on the shore of everlasting rest? Sure you would strike up a new song to see me harbour in the heavenly port, if you are there before me. And what if such a poor, weak stripling as I should come off conqueror over an armada of enemies—sin, death and hell? And what if you should meet me in the peaceful realms above, with my robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb, and a palm of victory in my hand? Perhaps you may know me by my scars. But even every one of these will be a set-off to the freeness, sovereignty and unchangeableness of the love of God, the worth of the Redeemer's merits, and the power of the Almighty Spirit."

These scars, which are to be found, more or less, in some shape or other, on every faithful minister of Christ, are not things to be ashamed of, nor blemishes which one would like to see effaced. They are "the marks of the Lord Jesus," traces of the wounds received in His service here, to be recognized by Himself hereafter in the day of His appearing, with the "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—Dr. H. Bonar.

THE NEW BIRTH ILLUSTRATED.

In your school days you worked over your problems and found the answer was not right. But when you found that it was wrong you changed a figure here, another one there, and when finally you could not make it come right you took your sponge and wiped it all out and said, "I am going to begin over again." Now that is what Christ said to Nicodemus: "Begin over again as a child. Don't do it as an old man; begin to grow up into the childhood toward God, and then when it comes time to go to heaven you will simply go home." I asked my little girl one day when she came home at noon, "Why did you come in here?" She opened her great eyes and looked at me; she did not know what I meant. I said, "Why didn't you go into the doctor's next door?" Finally she said, "Why this is my home." Yes, it is home; that is the reason you are going to heaven—you are going to your Father's home. It must be a home. You have to be a child of God if you wish to enter the Father's home. There is not a man living who does not need this new birth. There are a great many men living today who need to have their lives turned back to the very source and to be born again into a real childhood, and fitted for the home that is in heaven. So I say it is one of the gladdest and most joyous things in the whole gospel. To think of it, my friends, that a man can be born again. Think of it, that your life with all its blunders can be wiped out; that your sins can all be cast into the sea; that you can start all over again and prattle as God's child, and work as God's child, and finally go home, because heaven is your Father's home. Surely the story of the new birth is good news to the men and women of this day.—Dr. Alexander McKenzie.

ECHOES FROM PRESBYTERIAN PULPITS.

Rev. Dr. Herridge, St. Andrews, Ottawa, "The Dominion possesses great material resources and wealth, but what we need is men of high ideals to direct the national life in the right path. That people only can win and keep greatness who know and love God and keep his commandments. No nation can disregard righteousness without ultimately suffering for its error. The punishment comes not from without, but from within where the canker lies."

Rev. R. G. McBeth, M.A.: Jeremiah asked the question of the text ("Is there no physician there? Why then it not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?") because of the moral epidemic prevailing. Nothing is so contagious as the power of human sin. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life." Jesus said: "I am come that I may call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance." He came asking us to accept the remedy for sin. He opens the doorway of a new life to everyone who comes repentant. The modern thought is to decline to call sin by its right name; hence there are so many who do not realize they are full of sin. Our prophets of to-day must awake them from their lethargy, show them the contrast between their wicked state and the immediate life of Christ, show them that, though steeped in sin, Christ will cleanse them if they will come to Him. The day is coming when the church of Christ will be held responsible for the injustice done to the masses of men by congesting them in its intense commercial and industrial activities and destroying the village and country life heretofore obtaining. It is Canada's salvation that three-fourths of her population is engaged in tilling the soil.

Rev. E. A. Mitchell, B.A., Erskine church, Ottawa: "It is only repeating what we all know when I say bigness does not spell greatness, if so, Africa would be amongst the great nations of the world, nor do numbers spell greatness, else China and India would dominate the world to-day. A country's enduring and real strength lies, not in its wealth or its armies and navies, but in the character of its men and women. Just in proportion as we catch the spirit of the Christ, and allow His principles to be the energizing forces in our lives, in our homes, in our political institutions shall we become great. In view of these things what shall be said of men especially with such possibilities and such dangers before them, who are living with no outlook beyond the work of the day, or the simple recreation which such work may enable them to enjoy? With no honest effort at equipment for citizenship! When one thinks of such possibilities and dangers, he is simply amazed to find bands of young ladies gathered together for the express purpose of meeting this crisis, by carrying the gospel to these people, while the young men whose country this is, have no organization from the Atlantic to the Pacific as far as known to me, for the express purpose of aiding this work. Ralph Connor tells us of a missionary encountering the keeper of a dive on one of his visits to a town. On his next visit the place was closed, the keeper said: "since your last visit I have had the feeling that it wasn't right." What woke up his conscience? If we are wise we shall support to the very fullest extent of our power the church which means so much among this heterogeneous mass of people who are rapidly coming into the enjoyment of the rights of Canadian citizenship."