

Messenger and Visitor

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Spiritual Life.

The strength of a church lies in the spirituality of its members. It is not and never can be in anything else. This spiritual life to be maintained must be sustained, *i. e.*, it must be fed. The intense activity of the age in the struggle for bread, has the effect of a narcotic upon the spiritual nature of Christians. They are unconsciously affected thereby. To prevent this there must be a greater heed given to the words of the Master, "Watch and pray." To maintain a proper relationship with God there must be vigilance, devotion and self-examination.

Take a good "square look" at our churches. What do you see? A great portion of the membership giving freely for the cause at home and abroad? or are they spending much more of their income for dress and pleasure? Do you see them regularly at the prayer meetings or at pleasure resorts? At Sunday Schools or visiting? How many do you notice about you doing good? feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, giving the helping hand to the weak and helpless, shedding forth the "light of life" to those sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, who have long been sitting there?

Enter the homes. In how many do you find a family altar established? What do our church rolls say to us. We get from them a thought something like this: "These are the names of those who serve the Most High God." How are they serving Him? By striking a compromise with the world? By draining a glass for "good fellowship's sake"? By telling falsehood for commercial gain? By visiting the dancing hall or the theatre? By bearing false witness? By living in luxury with eyes blinded to the poverty and distress next door? By any or all of these? Surely God is not served in this way!

There are some who "like the blossoms of the spring excited our hopes for a time, but a blight has gone up as the dust, and the root in many cases appears to be rottenness." How many of these there are we cannot tell. It is not for us to judge our fellows. It is sad to see men who confessed at least to have drunk from the "living waters," turn to the world and conform their lives to its maxims. The transformation is not by a "renewing of the mind," but by a conformity to the world. All worldly pleasures are transient. They are like bubbles which burst when handled. To him who serves God with an individual heart there is an abiding pleasure which the world cannot give, neither can it take away.

It is asked, "How shall we gain a higher degree of spirituality in our churches?" Here is the answer. "Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you." Conventions for deepening the spiritual life are good, but unless they succeed in getting the people who hang upon the speakers' words, to go home and do as the Holy Spirit through the Apostle has told us to do, it will all be "love's labor lost." In this age of "itching ears" our churches seem to be striving to "please" the world rather than trying to win it to Christ. The Gospel has lost none of its drawing power. An uplifted Christ is the mightiest force in the world today. Does the church believe in her message? If so why is it that in her public notices she makes the announcement that Madame — will sing a solo next Lord's day, or Professor — will be present to assist the choir next Sunday evening? Not a word about the great message which the preacher is to give. But this announcement is made to get the congregation, so that the people may hear the gospel of God's dear Son. Yes, that may be. Perhaps it is!

In order that no flesh should glory in His presence "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the mighty." When the church of God is striving to please Him—and to please Him is their main business, then there will be prosperity to that church. But when the church strikes hands in a compromise with the world, discord begins. There are strifes and envies, and jealousies, and no unity of the spirit. When more of our members, a great many more of them are found in the prayer and conference meetings of the church, in the Sunday schools either teaching the Word or studying its great truths, when the family altar is set up in the homes, when Christians remember to pray in secret and stand by their pastors as Aaron and Hur stood by Moses, then will our churches be as lights in the world and as cities set on a hill.

Honor to Whom Honor.

In a letter to the Montreal Witness, Sir Charles Tupper refers to his connection with the liquor traffic in the Yukon in a way not to be misunderstood. We think our readers should know the stand which this veteran statesman has taken on this question. He says:

I was not in London when the Klondike Mining, Trading and Transport Corporation was formed, but consented to accept the position of chairman. The moment I learned that there was any intention on the part of the board to accept a consignment of intoxicating liquors, I cabled the secretary on Feb. 2, 1898, as follows:

As stated in the outset I strongly object to any traffic in intoxicating liquors.

On Feb. 21, 1898, I wrote the secretary as follows:—Dear Mr. Stearns.—In reply to your letter of the 2nd instant, I beg to remind the directors that shortly after the formation of the Klondike Corporation I called the attention of the Board to the surprise with which I had perceived a provision made on the back of the prospectus for the sale of intoxicating liquors, and I objected to this in the strongest terms. I do not remember the letter from Moses Risk & Sons, to which you refer, but I do remember that when the subject came before the Board, I drew attention to the fact that under the act passed by myself, when I was Minister of Customs, the sale of intoxicating liquors was prohibited in the North-West Territories, and that I presumed that the same regularities were still in force. You were instructed to cable to Mr. Blount, "What is government regulations sale of liquors, Klondike." This was on the Dec. 6, and the answer received from Mr. Blount on Dec. 7, was: "Importation has been prohibited at present. Walsh proposes to issue government regulations sometime in near future," and that, I supposed, had concluded the matter. I object in the strongest manner to our engaging in the importation or sale of intoxicating liquors in the Klondike, as I believe it will have a most demoralizing effect upon the population, and be very injurious to all legitimate commercial operations.

From the correspondence it seems that a consignment of liquors was sent out, but that as soon as Sir Charles knew it, he at once cabled his resignation. The Company explained that the liquors had been ordered shipped before his objections had been received and that no more would be sent. Then the matter ended. Comment is unnecessary.

"One Spirit, One Mind."

There is a familiar story about John Wesley and others going to the river that bounds the Holy City and finding, to their astonishment, that they had to drop their cloaks and garments in which they approached. One drops his cloak, another his robe, another his surplice, and they came on to the other side astonished to find that they are all in the same white, beautiful robe, the robe of righteousness, which is Christ Jesus our Lord.

If a regular Baptist and Free Baptist were of the number mentioned in the foregoing sentences, what would these men have to drop in order to receive the white robe? The Free Baptist body of New Brunswick will soon meet, in St. John in their annual Conference. Has the time not come when these two bodies should settle down and ask themselves the questions: "Why do we maintain separate and distinct organizations? In view of the great needs of the world, why is it that the two Baptist bodies do not unite in the spread of the gospel?" The response to the words of the representative of the Free Baptist Conference at the Convention at Fredericton ought to be an index of the trend of

feeling which obtains very largely among the regular Baptists in the Maritime Provinces and especially in New Brunswick. The Baptists have held out the hand of fraternal welcome. Now let our Free Baptist brethren catch the same spirit, grasp that out-stretched hand, and say with a heartiness that cannot be mistaken: "We are with you, brethren in Christ, in your efforts to bless and save men."

"Be Ye Imitators of Me as I am of Christ."

This is the way it reads in the Revised Version. Thus translated the thought is beautiful and most expressive. From the word which is translated "imitators" we get the word "mimeograph." What is a mimeograph? It is a copy of a picture or writing on paper. To obtain this all that is necessary is to take a sharp pointed instrument and trace with it over the copy, line for line, down to the last detail. When this is done there will be on the prepared sheet of paper an exact reproduction of what has been copied, from which other copies almost without number can be taken. What did the apostle mean when he said, "Be ye imitators of me," etc.? Why, something like this. Jesus Christ had been his copy, and through the power of the Holy Spirit he had copied out to the very minutest detail the marvellous character of the Lord. Where he saw joy in that life he traced joy, and where it was sorrow he had traced sorrow; where it was gain he had traced gain, and where it was loss he had traced loss; where it was life he had traced life, and where it was death he had traced death, and this we are asked to do for ourselves. Imitate Paul as he imitated Jesus Christ. By so doing we shall set up the Lord Jesus as the absolute and only pattern of our lives; and this we are to do no matter how painful the process of copying may be. The life of every Christian, a copy of his Lord. Surely, surely it is well worth our while to make such a life a pattern for our own.

Editorial Notes

—The Alliance of the Reformed churches of the world which hold to the Presbyterian form of church government, estimates the number of members and adherents at 22,000,000, nearly 7,000,000 of whom are in the United States, 3,300,000 in Scotland, 2,500,000 in Holland, 2,000,000 in Hungary, 1,700,000 in Switzerland, 800,000 in France, 740,000 in Canada, and 250,000 in England. There are 24 separate church organizations included in this alliance. The first general council was held in Edinburgh in 1877. The last was in Glasgow in 1896, and one is now being held in Washington, D. C. Surely the meeting of such a body of representative Christians in the Capital of the great Republic ought to have some marked effect upon the community—and its influence ought to be felt from one end of the country to the other.

—The following paragraph from the Independent is worthy of the consideration of every thoughtful and loyal Baptist. "The Rev. A. Ben Oliei having left Palestine and settled permanently in Canada, has closed his house in Jerusalem, sold his goods at auction, and leaves absolutely nothing to pass over to any other mission, no property, no converts, nothing; notwithstanding the schools, meetings, classes, and many other forms of mission work that have been reported." We are not at all surprised to learn this, Mr. Ben Oliei has appealed at various times to a number of denominations, the Baptists being the last, and now that he has practically completed the list, he apparently thinks that some non-missionary community will be the most comfortable one for him to live in. Why is it so hard for people to learn that the regular Boards of the churches are the most reliable conductors of missionary enterprises? With some people there seems to be a sort of fascination about the term independent, as if a single individual could manage a great enterprise more economically than a society. The universal experience is that the Boards do their work more economically and effectively."

—To the mature thinkers whose services to the world cannot be measured, who explore the star-lit spaces of celestial fields yet unknown, we would appeal for a little more sunlight. The moon is