A BIBLE READING ON THE ATONEMENT.

BY PASTOR MUTCH.

Read at the Cape Breton District Meeting and published by request.

INTRODUCTION, EPH. 1: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ . . . According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

It is indeed sad to find the whole human race guilty before God, but the scriptures so declare, Rom. 3: 9-10. "For we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin. As it is written, there is none righteous, no not one;" experience and observation sustain the declaration, we will not dispute the testimony, but will search for a remedy. Is man's condition hopeless, the scriptures answer no, and assures us, that, God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

"Much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also glory in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." Rom 5: 8, 9, 10, 11. The whole scope of revelation bears witness to this plan of salvation as well as to the universal guilt and misery of the race. The law of Moses presents it to us in many ways, but nowhere does it set forth its sacredness of nature, and demand for us, more clearly than in Exo. 29: 36 46 and part of the 30th chapter, if the blood of Christ does not atone for our sins, this law is meaningless, this ceremony is empty, a conclusion to which we cannot come.

I leave the types with this brief reference and present a few New Testament passages in support of this grand, and soul ennobling doctrine.

Upon enquiry as regards Christ's mission here, he says: "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost," Luke 19: 10. He also tells us how he saves, Matt. 20: 28. "Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Also in Luke 22: 19-20, he gave the bread to them saying, "This is my body which is given for you." Likewise, also the cup after supper saying, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you." Thus he clearly shows that by his death he atones for our sins, and did it all without an assistant as Isaiah said in his 53rd chapter and then again in his 63: 3, "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there were none with me." John introduces him as "the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," John 1: 29. Peter says, "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," Acts 4: 12. And Paul tells us, "There is one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." 1 Tim. 2: 5-6. This same witness testifies saying, "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Heb. 2: 9. Yes, he did the work alone as seen by every scriptural writer. Leaving them here to procede to enquire if this work is acceptable to God, if so it is the atonement indeed, if not it is all in vain.

The Father bears record in heaven yet, and his testimony we will receive. "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased," Matt. 3: 17. How am I to understand this testimony, but that he is well pleased with the Son's undertaking, that he is pleased to accept Christ's life as a sacrifice for sin, instead of the death of the sinner, in whom he could have no pleasure. As a son the father always had pleasure in him, and none the less now that he appears as our sin-bearer, this testimony then, affords every assurance that the sacrifice is acceptable, and that the sinner will go free.

Again, it must be acceptable to God, for "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law; to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons," Gal. 4: 45. Then in Gal. 3: 13, Paul says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." In the above reference we have the fact, that God sent him, the purpose for which he was sent, also that he did the work expected of him, and how he did it. Can we then for a moment suppose that a work so perfectly done by him whom he sent to do it, would be other than acceptable to him?

Now listen to the new song. Heaven was the scene of the song, and all that enters there is acceptable to God. "And they sang a new song, saying, thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation," Rev. 5: 9. Here is brought to light the further use made of the atonement, "redeemed us to God." Is there any doubt remaining now, as to the accomplishment of the Father's predestined purpose in our introduction, "the adoption of children by Jesus Christ." Any doubt now as to whether the work was acceptable to God, seeing he has made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins? Again it is acceptable to God, for it is a revelation of his righteousness. "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets," Rom. 3: 21. Notice the scope given us from which to draw our witnesses, "the law and the prophets;" to prevent doubt, and misunderstanding, Paul says, "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all that believe, for there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," Rom. 3: 22-23; verse 24, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God, to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Here we have the atonement of Jesus Christ setting forth God's righteousness, a righteousness without spot or blemish, perfect in every part. Such a righteousness the law requires, but finds it only in this expression of God's wisdom and love. We are here taught that the blood of Christ is set forth as a propitiation through faith, now what is a propitiation, but a means used under the law for averting the divine displeasure for a breach of the law, or the offering of the blood of the sin offering of atonements, rendering God again propitious toward the offender, and John tells us, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world," 1 John 2: 1-2. Here we are encouraged to plead the atonement when conscious of having sinned; knowing the author is our advocate with the Father. Oh precious privilege, who would not accept the Father's testimony concerning his son, given through the law, the prophets, and the apostles, and more especially since we know that "the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin," and makes that beautiful righteousness of God's ours, by imputation.

The atonement is the greatest possible exhibition of God's love to us, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," Rom. 5: 8; and John says 1st epistle 4: 9-10, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins."

We have also in the atonement the greatest possible exhibition of the love of Christ, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," John 15: 13. "I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep," John 10: 11. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, I lay it down of myself, I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again, this commandment have I received of my Father, John 4, 17-18. Such love as this cannot be equalled, much less surpassed. It is said "Love worketh no ill to its neighbor," but this worketh great benefit to us as seen in all the passages quoted. But who are they that are benefitted by the atonement? First such of us as are most vile in the estimation of our fellowmen, can we conceive of any more vile than those Corinthians of whom Paul speaks in Cor. 1st epistle 6: 9-10, "and such," he adds in verse 11, "were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God." Nothing but the all-sufficient, unlimited atonement of Jesus Christ, will cleanse, sanctify and justify such sinners as these, fitting them for the church, for heaven, and God, regardless of condition, the moment they believe. How beautiful it appears in its efficacy to save! The publican, by virtue of it, went to his home a possessor of the justification of which Paul here speaks. The woman sinner, left her Saviour's feet a possessor of that peace that passeth all understanding, as a result of her faith; the prodigal returned in destitution and his father banqueted him, "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." It brought salvation to Zaccheus and his house, for he was also a son of Abraham; it qualified the thief, and led him triumphantly into Paradise, without time to show his faith by his works. Thus by its fruit it is known. Saul of Tarsus possessed a large stock labelled, "mine own righteousness," overlaid with misdirected zeal in persecuting the church of Christ, but when his eyes were opened, he quickly discovered its want of value and cast it from him as worthless, putting himself in position to win Christ and be found in him, "not having his own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith," Phil. 3: 9. In Paul's estimation it is the only remedy for sin, and sufficient for the chief of sinners. Had the young man in the gospel complied with our Lord's advice, he would have soon found himself rejoicingly sitting at his feet instead of sorrowfully leaving his presence. Had the elder brother accepted his father's pressing invitation, he might have shared the banquet with his less virtuous brother, and together rejoiced in the great manifestation of their father's love. The rich young man and the elder brother, represents a large class of persons who limit the atonement in its operations, by their want of faith in Christ, and by begrudging the blessing it brings to their less favored brethren.

In conclusion, I recommend all to turn to Matt. 20, read and ponder well the words of our Lord in the first sixteen verses, and let not those, who have enjoyed many a shining hour, and improved many a golden opportunity, of showing their faith by their works, find fault with their Lord, for giving unto the lost, even as unto them the benefits of the atonement. Let each count ourselves unprofitable servants, and take our portion from the hand of the Great Giver, and enter the joy of our Lord.

Flashes of memory are quite as remarkable as flashes of thought; new thoughts come in them. So Peter found when the Holy Ghost was given to Cornelius and his household. "Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptised with water; but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost." The words explained the event and the event the words.—Ex.

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SLOW AND SURE.

BY SHEEN SMITH.

I find in the *New York Herald* of a recent date, a story that is worth repeating for the lesson it suggests. It seems that some twenty years ago General Newton, who was the engineer, in blasting the rocks that obstructed the East River channel at New York, visited a stone quarry near Greensburg, Ind. He found a Welshman in charge, and asked him how he managed to blast such huge blocks of rock, and how much dynamite he used. The reply was that he did not use dynamite at all, or powder either, but only unslacked lime. And the General goes on to say:

"Then he took me to the quarry. They had drilled a series of holes in the place he had marked, his judgment and trained intelligence telling him where the dividing line should run. Then they tamped these holes full of unslacked lime, poured water on it, keyed them shut and waited. In twelve hours the mass of rock he wanted would begin with groans and crackings to separate. In sixteen hours it would be free, and the force of the lime would be spent.

"'If I used powder or dynamite,' said he, 'I would rip out such a mass as that in fifteen minutes; but it would be chipped and cracked into a hundred pieces. Or, more likely, in a large blast, the powder would simply tear out a way along the least resistance, shelling out a lot of spawls, and leave my big rock as solid as ever.'

"I thanked my Welshman," said General Newton, "and told him he was much of a philosopher."

I wish that some of our would-be reformers would study that Welshman's philosophy. Their sole idea seems to be to make as much noise as possible, and to rend and tear in a hurry. They do not care how roughly the work is done, nor how many suffer in the doing of it. They use the dynamite of denunciation, and estimate their success by the quickness and loudness of the explosion.

We read in the Bible that God maketh the wrath of man to praise him. But the Psalmist adds: "The remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain." And James tells us in his General Epistle, that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." The forces by which God will renovate the world are not sharp and sudden in their operation, like dynamite, but comparatively slow and gentle. There are forces of expansion rather than of explosion. The consecrated men and women who are working quietly are doing more to hasten the coming of Christ than those who are running to and fro, and shouting as they run.

Fifty years ago some explorers in the Alps found a fissure, and thought that by putting explosives in it, they could tear off a mass of rock, and tumble it down into the ravine. They tried again and again, but without success. They had plenty of noise, but no movement of the mass. Then one of them put a handful of acorns deep down into the fissure and went away. The acorns did not explode, but they grew. Their expansive vitality was stronger than the inert resistance of the granite. Gradually, but surely, the rock was rent, and now lies in the deep valley.

Divine truth is living. When planted in faith it must grow. Nothing can resist its quiet, steady development. The kingdom of heaven cometh not without observation. When they cry, "Lo here, and lo there!" let us not go after them. Let us quietly work and patiently wait. God is never in a hurry, and yet God never fails. If we are to be "workers together" with Him, we must cultivate His Spirit. Expansion is better than explosion.—Journal and Messenger.

The rest of Christ is not that of torpor, but of harmony; it is not refusing the struggle, but conquering in it; not resting from duty, but finding rest in duty.

If the eternal griefs of every man could be read written on his forehead, how many who now excite envy would appear to be objects of pity!—Metastasio.

Now he, therefore, hath peace whom none troubleth; this is the peace of the world; but he whom all men and all things trouble, yet who beareth all things quietly with joy.—Mrs. Charles.

To-day is, for all that we know, the opportunity and occasion of our lives. On what we do or say to-day may depend the success and completeness of our life struggle. It is for us, therefore, to use every moment of to-day as if our very eternity were dependent on our words and deeds.—Trumbull.

Thank God every morning when you get up that you have something to do that day which must be done, whether you like it or not. Being forced to work, and forced to do your best, will breed in you temperance and self-control, diligence and strength of will, cheerfulness and content, and a hundred virtues which the idle never know.—Charles Kingsley.

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A Literary Curiosity.

A Cento Hymn in which thirty-six poets irrespective of creed, nationality or age, contribut each a line. The numbers refer to the authors of the lines of whom a list follows: 1, W. S. M'Kenzie; 2, Watts; 3, Steel; 4, Needham; 5, Mansell; 6, Tate; 7, Wardlaw; 8, Medley; 9, Elliot; 10, Cooper; 11, Cutting; 12, Stennett; 13, Doddridge; 14, Cotterill; 15, Blacklock; 16, Lyte; 17, Newton; 18, Fawcet; 19, Kelly; 20, Wissell; 21, Bronte, 22, Cleveland; 23, Gurney; 24, Gerhart; 25 Sinn; 26, Smith; 27, Balfour; 28, Beddome; 29, Reed; 30, Wesley; 31, Collyer; 32, Gregg; 33, Voke; 34, Marsden; 35, Krishna Pal; 36, Coffin.

BY REV. D. O. PARKER.

1. Ye mortals, come adore the Lord,
2. Join in a song with sweet accord.
3. The sovereign of your hearts proclaim;
4. With sacred awe pronounce his name.
5. Sing to the Lord of heaven and earth,
6. Glad homage pay, with hallowed mirth;
7. Loud and more loud the anthems raise,
8. In loftiest songs of sweetest praise.
9. O Thou, the contrite sinner's friend,
10. Before thy throne we sinners bend;
11. Our hearts in grateful anthems rise,
12. And swell the chorus of the skies.
13. Great Ruler of all nature's frame,
14. Loud hallelujahs to thy name;
15. Till listening worlds shall join the song,
16. And imitate the blessed throng.
17. Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
18. Pardon and peace through Him abound;
19. Wherefore rejoice and gladly sing,
20. And crown Him everlasting King.
21. Holy and mighty as Thou art,
22. Blest Jesus come and rule my heart;
23. Should friends misjudge, or loss defame,
24. O let thy love my soul inflame.
25. Arise in all thy splendor, Lord,
26. Most gracious to fulfill Thy word;
27. Be thine to shed celestial light;
28. Dispell the gloomy shades of night.
29. Poor sinner, harden not thy heart;—
30. Thy nature, Gracious Lord, impart;—
31. Go to his bleeding feet and learn,
32. Lest He depart and ne'er return.
33. Ye christian heralds go proclaim,
34. Through every clime of every name,
35. The Friend who all thy sorrows bore,
36. Whom with the Father we adore.

Wolfville, N. S.

STATUS OF THE PRESENT DAY LIQUOR DEALER.

A hundred years ago this man carried his head erect and moved abroad with respectable members of society, at the present day respectability admits of no rum-seller's company and he walks abroad with a department which is either brazen or hang-dog. A hundred years ago he was ranked with honest tradesmen, at the present day, he retires to his bar, where behind the questioned right of his licence, he leers upon the bestial men and abandoned women whose custom he solicits. A hundred years ago, his character, under the pressure of the rare ethical atmosphere, stood at the level of average morality, at the present day he is regarded, not only by the virtuous but by his own patrons, as a base, unprincipled and vicious person. A hundred years ago his business received the full consent of the law and the unquestioned approval of society, at the present day it is placed under limiting legislative enactments and by the great majority of the community is no more than tolerated. A hundred years ago the influence of his trade on the taste, health, and morals of the people was not appreciated, at the present day, a purer refinement, a keener science, and a truer moral sense have revealed and condemned it. A hundred years ago, if his business proved lucrative, his family as fashionable people might appear in those circles which considered wealth to be the principle condition of acceptance, at the present day the son of a poor working man was heard to say to his playmate, "Don't play with that boy, his father is a rum-seller."

H. SPENCER BAKER.

Milton, Queens Co., N. S.

Literary Notes.

In the April Magazine Number of The Outlook there will appear an article on William H. Prescott, by Kenyon West. It will be in commemoration of the centenary of the great American historian, who was born May 4, 1796. The article will be enriched by numerous portraits and other illustrations contributed from the private collections of members of the Prescott family, who have been interested in Kenyon West's tribute to Prescott. Among these are Mr. Arthur Dexter, of Boston, the nephew of the historian; Mrs. Roger Wolcott, Prescott's granddaughter, who lives also in Boston; and Mr. Linzee Prescott, of Greenwich Conn., who is the son of Prescott's eldest son.

In addition to its ordinary topics, the April number of The Homiletic Review contains a liberal supply of Easter matter and suggestion. The able article on "The Physical Resurrection of Christ, by Rev. Dr. R. F. Sample, of New York City, will be read with interest and profit. Dean Farrar's sermon on "The Crucifixion" has more than the usual brilliancy of that always brilliant preacher, while the sermon by the late Bishop Phillips Brooks on "The First Good Friday" has all the suggestiveness for which that lamented preacher's sermons were noted. "Thoughts and Themes for Easter" are drawn from the riches of several centuries, countries and churches. All the departments of the Review for April are peculiarly full and rich, and, widely as its value has been recognized heretofore, it cannot fail to grow in favor with all ministers who desire to be wide awake and abreast of the age in their views, and alert and enterprising in all Christian activities. Published monthly by Funk & Wagnalls Co., 30 Lafayette Place, New York, $3.00 a year.

The Treasury of Religious Thought for April closes the thirteenth volume. A year ago this magazine announced a new departure, and, each month it has presented, with beautiful illustrations fresh pictures of what the spirit of an applied Christianity is doing to make religion real among men. A most able series of sermons and sketches of sermons by some of the most effective preachers of our time, closes fully this month with Rev. E. H. Roy's Sermon on the Wastes and Resources of Life. Rev. Samuel Z. Batten furnishes a thoughtful study of "The Temptations of the Ministry," which, like Mr. Batten's article on the "Religious Weekly," in September last will probably need reprinting in pamphlet form. Prof. Geo. H. Schodde contributes a scholarly article on the origin of New Testament Thought, and Prof. T. W. Hunt, of Princeton, has an article on Milton, the fifth of an attractive series of "Literary Life Sketches." Prof. Charles H. Small gives a full illustrated paper on the Baptists, Disciples, and Christians, containing his Historical Treatment of Denominational Characteristics, which is to go on into the next year. The minor departments of the magazine maintain the usual excellence. Annual subscription, $2.50. Clergymen, $2. Single copies 25 cents. E. B. Treat, Publisher, 5 Cooper Union, New York.

The sight of the face of Jesus is, I think, what is meant by His glorious appearing, but it will come as a consequence of His Spirit in us, not as a cause of that Spirit in us. The pure in heart will see God. The seeing of Him will be the sign that we are like Him, for only by being like Him can we see Him as He is.—Gerge Macdonald.

The Congregationalist: To Pope Leo XIII. Your third invitation "to all Christians" to unite in one church by accepting you as their head is just received. We cordially reciprocate by inviting you to join us with the motto, "One is your Master and all ye are brethren." On those terms we will call you brother, but not master. For particulars see minutes of the National Council of Congregational Churches, 1895; action of church unity.

At DEATH'S DOOR

Friends Thought the End Was Near.

A Condition that Was Almost Hopeless.

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Mrs. Wm. Irvine, who resides in St. John, N. B., writes thus:

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