

Canadian Baptist Missionary Union.

The Union Conference of the two Canadian Baptist Missions laboring for the salvation of over 3,700,000 Telugus who are solely dependent on them for the good news and representing a home constituency of about 90,000 Canadian Baptists met in Coconada from the 9th to 12th of January after an interval of two years without assembling. Fifty one missionaries and eight little ones foregathered. Of these 17 were from the Maritime Mission, 31 from the Ontario and Quebec Mission and 3 were visitors. The annual conference of the American Baptist Telugu missionaries who met last week at Hanamaconda in the Deccan, numbered 75 including the visitors. The discrepancy between the strength of the two missionary bodies is yearly narrowing. Of these 51 missionaries three have been 30 years in the foreign service, one has spent 25 years and 13 are still at the language. Four are the second generation of missionaries on this field, being the children of pioneers and our work is dedicated to this definite work from childhood by Godly parents. In their journeyings to and from seven of them have encircled the globe and four of them, two travelling east and other two west demonstrated the possibility of circling the earth at its widest part in 73 days of leisurely travel. These men and women have come through shipwreck, through dangers from the wild-beast of the forest, from plague and pestilence and famine, from thieves and robbers, from famatics and floods; they have suffered the loss of home and separation from little ones, wives, husbands, all that human hearts hold dear for the sake of the Lord Jesus and the advance of his kingdom. They have counted not their lives dear unto themselves if so be that they may hold up the banner of the cross to the lost and perishing; and God has mightily blessed them with a great joy in their own souls. They are hopeless optimists, incurable believers in the triumph of the Gospel. Though each field worked by a missionary family and a single lady contains a population of over 200,000 souls and the increase by natural generation alone outstrips the additions yearly to their churches yet these men and women are full of hope. Last year they welcomed into the 49 churches on their fields over 350 by baptism, they direct the work of over 350 native agents and move amongst Christian communicants of 4500; and a total community close on to 7000. They evangelize over an area of 9059 square miles and reach the 3300 villages in which the dense populations of that area reside by all manner of conveyance, rail, train, canal boat, steamer, bicycle, horse back, carriage, slow moving country carts drawn by sleepy bullocks at the rate of two miles an hour and by the noisy palkees.

The prominent feature of this assembly is the devotional meeting where hungry souls shut out during the year from communion with kindred souls mingle in prayer, in songs of praise and the study of the word of God. These seasons were rich in blessing. What singing that was. The very flood gates of song were loosened, and hearts flowed out in such an expression of song as for many months they had not felt. The popular hymn was McGregor's "Jesus Wonderful Saviour," sung to Francis's, the M. Master hymn, it is, and the McMaster men would not be ashamed to hear it sung as it was by these missionaries. A missionary is only half a missionary if he does not know how to sing and if he cannot sing when he comes to India it is one of the first accomplishments he must take on or he will be seriously handicapped in his whole future usefulness. Then the prayers were such near approaches to God, such close touch, such touching pleading, such a full note of praise. Prayer is more frequently the missionaries' only resort than any other and he soon learns the secret of prayer, the last fine accomplishment of the Christian. Timpany used to long for a year to do not but pray. The missionary realizes that this war must be waged upon the knee and that the warrior fights best who falls overest to his knees. The petitions were definite, direct, familiar and reverent pleadings with God. The prayer seasons were amongst the most precious and souls then in coming nearest to God came very close together. The sermons and Bible readings were experimental rather than theological, practical rather than didactic, emotional rather than intellectual, they were the product of a working use of the word of God rather than of profound meditation on the deep things of Scripture. They represent of the life and met the need of the overburdened laborers.

The business sessions handled important subjects. Chief amongst these was the formation in Canada of a "Canadian Baptist Missionary Union," a union of all the Baptists of Canada, from the Atlantic to the Pacific in Foreign Mission Work. A strong resolution was passed and is being sent to the F. M. Boards and the denominations they represent and was supported by every vote in the assembly. For over 28 years this question has been in the prayers and thoughts of these two missions. The old desire is now quickened into new life by the prospect of the inevitable union of the home churches in this effort. Manitoba, the North West, British Columbia are now sending out and supporting missionaries in this work. It is impossible to believe that each of these young provinces will form an independent foreign mission board and just as impossible to believe that they will be content to send their missionaries out under a board on which they have no

representation. The Maritime Provinces are supporting the Western work of home missions and yet cannot by their great remoteness from the west expect the west to pass over a foreign mission organization in a nearer province to unite with them in sending out missionaries. Then too a corresponding secretary is very much needed to relieve the field secretaries for more deputations work amongst the churches and yet neither of the boards is large enough as yet to justify such an officer. If united there would be plenty of work for each: the present secretaries could remain as field or district secretaries; a good foreign mission monthly paper representing the general and the women's boards could be then issued and the entire strength of the foreign mission work at home increased and unified. Toronto would for the present be the centre for the work but the filling up of the west might make Winnipeg a more convenient centre. The gain on the foreign field would be immense. The interchange of missionaries, of native workers, of council, of funds; the union in higher education, in the theological school and the Industrial school would be very advantageous. The missionaries long for it with all the longing of a small force fighting fearful odds under disadvantages that are greatly increased by their division into two bodies when there is nothing to prevent their being one. All the prestige, power, influence, reach of union are denied them by an artificial separation. They long for union.

One of the most interesting discussions took place over the temperance question. The community from which the mass of the present converts come are very drunken and the temptation to drink is always present with the converts. Every means used at home to fight the evil are suggested in connection with the struggle here. The extent of the evil in this land can be gathered from the fact that at one time as stated in the meeting 120 cases of opium each worth \$1000 or over and totalling a value of about \$150,000 were seen at one time in the town railway station and that represents a three months supply for the four northern districts of the Telugu country to which the two missions labor. The drink traffic is a twin evil and threatens to be even more disastrous to the welfare of the people. The conference is alive to the dangers of the traffic and amongst the members are some of the most prominent and best known temperance workers in India. Reports from the Telugu Baptist Publication Society, the Telugu Language Area Committee, the Bible Translation Work, the Dr. Kellogg Home for Lepers at Ramachandrapuram, the Ravi Newspaper in Telugu, and other interests which have a vital connection with the work of the missionaries were presented.

The deliberations of the body were represented by a number of addresses. The retiring president, the Rev. J. Craig of the Samalkota Seminary, gave an interesting and most helpful talk on the ailments of Missions. The Rev. H. E. Stillwell read a most instructive and useful paper on the Missionaries' Monthly Meeting with his workers. He speaks from experience as the superintendent of 86 workers and the bishop of over 3000 converts. The missionary is the overseer of the churches, the director of the workers, the superintendent of his day schools, the master of colporteurs, and the chief arbitrator in all ecclesiastical and many other disputes. Miss Archibald presented a most spirited paper on Sunday School work. It was voted that she prepare it for publication and that it be sent broadcast through the Baptist Sunday schools of Canada. Mr. Laflamme told of the nine years work of the school for carpentry at Coconada from which 13 young men had gone out at an expense of \$3000 to the mission but so enriched their capacity to earn that they represent a profit of 24 per cent of the money invested and an educative and helpful power in the young Christian community that no figures can possibly estimate. The work of the school was commended by the missionaries.

Two meetings for social converse were most delightful. Music and recitation enlivened the proceedings. Historic and entertaining talent are not lacking in the body. The addresses from the new, the returning and the missionaries going on furlough were of fascinating interest and sounded like pages of romance. The spirit of the new missionaries Mr. Smith and Mrs. Scott and Miss Robinson are beautiful and gives great promise. The messages of Miss Hatch, Murray and Dr. Smith from the home churches and of the deepened interest there, were inspiring. The accounts given by Misses McLaurin and M. Clarke, the former of her journey with Miss Hatch around the world from east to west, via Japan and by the latter of her journey from west to east via New Zealand held the rapt attention of the audience. Miss Frith, who was the first Canadian Baptist missionary lady to come out to the Telugus unmarried gave a thrilling account of her work amongst the Daffas and the Himalayan tribes of Assam where she has been at work for the last five years. The conference, out of the deep regard in which they hold Miss Frith subscribed the sum of \$200 with one half of which they made her a life member of the Timpany school for English speaking children of which she was a charter member some twenty years ago. The balance of which was presented to aid her in the passage home for a much needed rest.

Several times the emotions of the meeting found fitting expression in the singing of the doxology, once when Miss Corning presented her first financial statement as treasurer of the Timpany school and declared it out of debt and

with a balance of \$18 on hand. This to the memory of those present had not occurred for so many years that none could recall. A second occasion was when it was announced that the baptism for the year on the various fields had reached the record number of 300. H. F. LAFLAMME
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Inspiration of the Bible.

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The following paragraph from the comments on the studies in Sunday School, is a very natural link between my last article and the present one.

"The transformation wrought by love may be seen all around us. A fair free girl, bent wholly upon the pleasures of the hour, and her mind filled with the innocent trifles of girlhood, comes under the sway of love. Lo, at once, we behold the child of yesterday transformed into womanhood, strong in character, brave in suffering, cheerful amid difficulty, her husband's wisest counsellor and most helpful comrade. Every day this miracle of love is being enacted on every side. So is that greater miracle of the transformation effected by the love of Jesus. Under the dominion of this new affection and purpose the weak-willed become resolute; the trifling become powerful; the ill tempered become serious and self-restrained; the passionate become gentle; the profane become clean of speech, the drunkards become sober; the godless become godly. Ranking in importance and significance with the miracles performed during his earthly ministry are those which the love of Jesus is bringing to pass day by day before our eyes."

To this I will add the case of Christian consciousness in the heart of a rude fisherman in Christ's day, which condescended the whole professional staff of learned critics at Jerusalem: "Whom do men say that I am?" said Christ to his disciples, while they were journeying north of the border line of Palestine. Some say Elijah, some one of the prophets, was the reply.

But to the direct question, "whom do you say that I am?" "Thou art Christ the Son of the living God" said Peter, the rough, unpolished fisherman. My Father and not flesh and blood has revealed that to you, replied the great teacher. A rock thou art. Keys too are in thy hands. Rocks for fitness. Keys to unlock heavenly mysteries are all such, whether rough Peters and polished and learned Pauls. Compare this outburst of Peter's heart with the learned discourses of the higher critics at Jerusalem. "I now whom I have believed, said the great apostle, and every believer has the same right to this knowledge. To know Christ is to know the Bible.

Some surface difficulties in regard to the inspiration of the Old Testament may now be considered.

The partial or rudimentary truths of the Old Covenant call for some remarks. (1) The Trinity, (2) The Atonement, (3) The work of the Holy Spirit in regenerating the human heart, (4) Heaven or future rewards of the righteous; (5) Hell, or the future punishment of the impenitent.

There may be added to these difficulties others arising from an apparent sanctioning of evil practices such as (1) Slavery; (2) Polygamy; (3) The toleration of intoxicating drinks; (4) Imprecations found in some of the Psalms; (5) The law regulating divorce; (6) Alleged wrong doing authorized by God, as in the case of his directing Joshua to hough hamstring the horses of the Canaanite army.

In regard to one and all of these difficulties, pages of "Why was this so?" and "Why was not that so?" might be written to no profit. God is his own interpreter. Why the revelation should have been only partial in the Old Testament, and left for further unfolding to the New Testament, no man can tell. It seemed good to the infinitely wise and holy God that it should be just as it has been. Finite wisdom cannot judge the judgment of infinite wisdom. The God of Heaven cannot but do wisely and right. It seemed good to him that the revelation of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Atonement, the person and work of the Holy Spirit, future rewards and future punishments, and other doctrines, should be given to the world as the corn comes to maturity—first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. The process was evolutionary or progressive. The results however of the fullest revelation are found in the first and great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind and strength and thy neighbor as thyself."

In the case of slavery, polygamy and the strong drink usage, the principles were given which condemned them. Slavery for instance was condemned by the law of loving the neighbor as self. Had that been kept in spirit and in letter, no man could have held his fellow man in bondage. Had the people heeded the characterization and curse of wine, total abstinence would have been the law of the Hebrew people. The original law of marriage restricted the institution of monogamy. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and they shall be one flesh." Here in the beginning was pure matrimony; but it was corrupted and polygamy followed. In the case of the divorce laws, Christ told the people of his day that, for the hardness of the people's hearts, Moses had given the divorce ordinances; that from the beginning it was not so. Generalize this, and it explains other cases in which the same difficulties are found.