

Notice.

We will send this paper for 50 cents to any one who will so scribble for it at any time between now and July next until July 1905, and will give back numbers from March, with the beginning of the story, "Crescing for the Cross." This offer applies to those to whom we have been sending sample copies, as well as to others who will accept the offer. Now let us have a goodly number of subscriptions coming in right along. All letters with or without money must be addressed to J. H. Hughes, Conard Street, St. John North End. And all papers in exchange or of value are to be sent to the same address and not to the Home Mission Journal. Never address anything to it, but as above given, because I live a distance from the printing office and cannot always see matter sent there, before it should go into the paper.

Acknowledgement.

We wish to gratefully acknowledge a donation of forty-eight dollars—mostly cash given us Tuesday evening, March 15, by the kind people of Kentville, N. B. This together with a beautiful slumber robe and cash presented to Mrs. F. earlier in the winter brings the amount of donation up to about sixty-two dollars.

B. S. FREEMAN.
Centreville, N. B., March 24, 1904.

Canadian Missionary Union.

Attention has been called to a proposed union of the present foreign mission operations of Canadian Baptists, and as the movement is one of vital importance to the churches at home, as well as to the missions abroad, it deserves more than a passing notice. It has arisen in this way. Our missionaries in joint conference with those of Ontario met recently at Coconada, among the Telugus, and in the course of their deliberations carefully and earnestly considered the desirability of closer fellowship and co-operation. By a unanimous decision they resolved to ask the brethren at home also seriously to consider this question. Their request seems a most reasonable one. No one, we think, on reflection, can give any good reason for the present division of foreign mission interests in Canada. And a well-grounded fear is, that if we continue to keep two separate boards, we shall at length have three—another for Manitoba and the west.

The time certainly seems opportune for consideration and action, and we look upon the appeal of the Telugu conference as a providential call to our churches to attend to this matter, and that too without delay. There are many good reasons for the step proposed. By the consolidation of our present missionary operations, east and west, we would form a denominational bond to hold Canadian Baptists in nearer relationship. And should we not be just a little nearer to the brethren of the Dominion than to those of any other land? This is but natural.

The union also would bring a larger variety of missionary needs to the attention of our people. The combined stations and interests of all our churches in the foreign field would afford a richer and more inspiring theme for missionary meetings, as also for circle and band instruction, and would undoubtedly evoke a better response in the way of benevolence. The larger the work we are doing, and the more varied its character, the wider would be the sympathies of our people, and the more generous their support. Every church member in Canada would come to feel a common interest in a great and important undertaking. Presbyterians, Methodists and Episcopalians, have greatly profited by this arrangement, being able to present all their foreign operations to each church and society, thus promising ground for a well directed appeal.

EXAMPLES ELSEWHERE.

Baptists, both in England and America, have invariably adopted the amalgamation plan. The two former missionary societies of Great Britain have for some years been invited in one—the Baptist Missionary Society. The four and a half million church members of the United States have but two—one for the North and one for the South. Canadian Baptists alone, with but one hundred thousand church members, have maintained the small divisions—the smallest reported

in general missionary statistics.

OTHER BENEFITS.

One advantage to be derived in forming a Canadian Missionary Union would be in the division of labor possible. The work of foreign correspondence and supervision could very properly be left to the Union, while the district secretaries—Eastern, Central and Western—would then be able to give almost exclusive attention to visiting the churches and denominational gatherings, presenting regular appeals, just as the secretaries of the American Baptist Missionary Union do in the United States. Such appeals, in behalf of the more numerous and varied interests of our united missions, could then be made most effectively, while all our church members would be aroused with the sense of responsibility involved. The duties of treasurer could be relegated to a regular accountant, a lay brother of course, instead of diverting, as in the past, an ordained minister from his regular vocation. All this we think would be a great improvement on our present plan.

Some other matters also could be greatly helped. Abroad we could open up educational institutions and hospital work, with an efficient staff selected from all Canada, thus furnishing the best equipment for such service. In our present divided state these things are out of the question. We are simply too weak to undertake them. We trust that Divine wisdom may lead all in rightly deciding this most important matter.

Prayer.

PAPER I.

By L. B. Hartman, D. D.

Prayer is coeval with the history of the human race. It is familiar to all, whether in Christian or heathen lands.

President Walker says: "You may find men without morality or affection—find deniers, skeptics and scoffers, but none who never pray."

Guthrie says: "Never yet did a traveler find a people on the face of the earth who did not pray to some being or other."

While prayer is confessedly the universal heritage of man, it may be said, without presumption, I think, that despite its artless simplicity, it is less generally understood and appreciated than any other exercise of mind, or privilege.

Few men fully realize that prayer—(the prayer of faith)—is one of the actual forces of the universe—a force as actual and as real as gravitation, electricity, growth, or will, etc. Each of these forces is a law unto itself, and yet all of them harmonize and mutually work together in a way far beyond the analysis of science, or the scope of human knowledge.

Science and genius have utilized these laws in the interests of humanity. They have invented many "graphs" and "phones" for the recording and transmitting of thought and speech, etc., but materialists have uniformly proudly ignored God's great cosmophone of prayer and relegated it to the realm of absurdity because "prayer can have no place in a universe of fixed laws." "They boldly tell us that since laws are fixed and principles are immutable and God unchangeable, prayer is useless and absurd.

But these scientists forget (or perhaps never knew) that prayer is also one of the fixed laws of the universe; and if one fixed law can crowd another out of existence, the question arises, which one shall remain? Will they not mutually crowd each other out and thus sink the universe into a lawless chaos? Clearly, the charge of absurdity falls back upon their own philosophy.

Let no one be confused by the doctrine that prayer can achieve specific results under the reign of the fixed laws of an unchangeable God. His great cosmophone of prayer is as loyal to God as is the universe itself.

"Law is a mode of action." The actor and the mode are distinct and not the same. No law is self-executive; God reigns and law is His mode of working. Now, in the presence of these laws men believe that special efforts achieve specific results; they act on this with all confidence everywhere and always. Why then should prayer be eliminated as absurd?

You plant a seed in the soil—it grows by the law of growth which is God's mode of action in this case. In the growth of that seed God now acts where He would not have acted had you not planted it, and moreover, He does now what He

would not have done but for your act. Analyze this as you may—account for it as you please, the fact remains that here is a specific result achieved by special effort under the fixed laws of an unchangeable God. Prayer is nothing more—nothing less.

He that said, "Sow and you shall reap," also said, "Ask and you shall receive," and that men should act upon the former in all confidence and hope, and ridicule the latter as absurd and irrational, shows not only error of intellect, but betrays insincerity and dishonesty of heart.

The telephone illustrates the same—if we can use the telephone fully confident that our voice will reach the ear of a distant friend, why should we hesitate to believe that through the great cosmophone of prayer our petitions will reach the ear of our heavenly Father? The same God is author of both, and the mystery of one does not exceed the mystery of the other—both are beyond human analysis, and the man who tells us that the one is rational and the other absurd betrays nothing so much as the arrogant conceit of presuming to know the unknowable, since both are incomprehensible to man.

Prayer not only holds a place as one of the forces in the universe, but it is the greatest and most puissant of all. Other laws may be classified—physical, mental, psychical, etc., but the law of prayer is above them all, subordinates all, and often commands their service and obedience. History verifies the startling fact that every known natural law in the universe has, at some time or other, been either suspended to make way for prayer, or compelled in some other way to subserve its demands; but, on the other hand, the law of prayer has, in no instance, ever been either subordinated or suspended in accommodation to any known natural law.

Prayer has had the "right of way" from the very beginning, and everything before it has been constrained either to retreat or bow obsequiously to its sway. It harnesses nature as its willing servant, and has behind it both the material and spiritual forces of the universe as the Egis of its power and the pledge of its supremacy, which our Lord has reduced to one sentence: "All things whatsoever ye ask in prayer, believing ye shall receive." (Matt. 21: 22). The annals of the past are replete with forceful illustrations of these truths, of which the prayers of Moses, Joshua, Elijah, Daniel and others are abundant evidence.

The connection between prayer and power is confessedly mysterious, but it is none the less real. A thousand forces in nature are equally mysterious, and yet they are the acknowledged verities of science. Thus the soldiers of Jerusalem could not tell how Peter got out of prison; nor could the jailer at Philippi see the connection of his prisoners with the earthquake that set them free—all because they knew not the power of prayer.

Prayer has been a power in all ages—a power superior to all others known, and every step of progress the church of Christ has ever made since the beginning, has had its birth in prayer. Men of prayer have always been men of power, and true church-power has never been divorced from prayer.

The lives of the Apostles—of Luther, Knox, Baxter, Spurgeon, Finney and hosts of others, place this fact beyond all disputation. Their power, as measured by their prayers, shook the world in their day, the tremor of which is felt even in the present hour.

"Such prayers have in the distance far away
Aroused the slumbering ages."

Trenton, N. J.

Ministerial Record.

Rev. A. Washburn who has resided for many years in St. Martins left March 22nd for Baker City, Oregon, where some of his family had settled. Bro. Washburn will be much missed by the St. Martins church, which he has regularly attended for a number of years.

Rev. F. W. Patterson, who is a New Brunswicker, has resigned his charge as pastor of the Nana St. Church, Winnipeg, to take up frontier work at Prince Albert under the Home Mission Board. Mr. Patterson is a man of fine ability and his work in Winnipeg has been highly appreciated by the church which he has served with much success for the past two or three years.