

# The Canadian Evangelist.

"GO . . . SPEAK . . . TO THE PEOPLE ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LIFE."

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## THE Canadian Evangelist

is devoted to the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ; and pleads for the union of all believers in the Lord Jesus in harmony with his own prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, and on the basis set forth by the Apostle Paul in the following terms: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."—Eph. iv. 1-6.

### Sunday School Convention.

The Sunday School Convention of the Northern churches gathered at Owen Sound on Tuesday evening last. This is the first of this class of district or local conventions for the advancement of Sunday school work in this Province. It was experimental along a line laid out by Bro. Lediard at the Convention in June last. The experiment was a success. The following congregations were represented: Warton, Collingwood, Cape Rich, and Euphrasia, Kilyth and Owen Sound, Walkerton and Glencairn expected to have been represented, but circumstances over which they had no control prevented. On Tuesday evening Bro. Colin Sinclair spoke at considerable length on the relation between the church and the Sunday school. Two thoughts that were presented in the speech and the discussion that followed were (1) "that the church should support the school financially, and that the contributions of the children be devoted to missionary or benevolent purposes; (2) That the church in the present day cannot prosper without the Sunday school as a feeder. There was much profitable discussion on the subject, in which quite a number took part.

On Wednesday morning Bro. Amos Tovell, of Warton, read a most instructive paper on the topic, "The Bible the text book of the teacher." Bro. Tovell dealt very severely with the teacher who will bring any lesson notes to the class with him, and denounced the teacher who will read his questions to his class from a lesson leaf. He maintained that the teacher should first of all study the lesson thoroughly from his Bible; after that he may read any helps, notes, etc., that he chooses.

At the afternoon session Bro. Lediard, in the absence of the sister who expected to take the subject, introduced the topic, "Gospel work in the Sunday school." A thought that is, no doubt, new to many of our teachers was brought into special prominence, viz., that the Sunday school teacher should strive not only to bring his pupils near to Christ, but to go farther and induce them to confess their Saviour without waiting for special evangelistic services. The teacher was shown to be in a much better position to do this than the preacher, and that there is no reason why a scholar who loves his Saviour and de-

sires to follow Him should be compelled either by custom or a shortcoming on the teacher's part to await some special occasion, or yearly meeting, in order to be saved. The salvation of the scholar was concluded to be the ultimatum of all Sunday school work. There was much brought out on this important subject, both in the introduction and the discussion that followed. This was followed by Sister Lediard showing how to teach an infant class. She taught to a class of children in a very admirable manner the lesson of Sunday, Sept. 20, entitled "Christ the Good Shepherd." The infant class teachers present were especially thankful for the example of teaching, which was much more instructive than to be told how to do such work.

In the evening Bro. Lediard dealt with the subject, "Elements of Success in Sunday School Work," in a practical and exhaustive speech. The teacher, the church, the scholar, in fact every phase of the subject, was handled in a way that will not soon be forgotten. One point might be mentioned especially: That the church should take an active interest in the school. That all church members, whether young or old, should come to Sunday school. If they cannot be regular attendants, to come sometimes and be acquainted with the work being done and give it sympathy. Some parents do not seem to be able to forego the "orthodox" Sunday afternoon sleep, but expect the Sunday school teacher and their children to do it. No wonder children neglect to come when their parents are so indifferent. If you expect your children to go to Sunday school regularly you should be "trabbling along dat road yourself." There was a spirited discussion on this topic. The "question drawer" was then opened and about a dozen practical questions answered, principally by Bro. Lediard, who was chairman of the meeting. This first local convention was really a treat; much good will result. Everyone present that we were speaking with seemed delighted with the meeting. Their conceptions of the pleasure, the responsibility, and the necessity of the work were much enlarged. There will be increased activity in this northern district in this good work the ensuing year.

Can you not gather together the active workers within thirty or forty miles in convention this fall in your district, and have just such an instructive and pleasant time as we had in the meeting at Owen Sound.

If you cannot get a convention together, invite some brother to give a couple of discourses on Sunday school work in the church some week-night when he can get away from his work. You will never regret it.

We were delighted to make the acquaintance of Bro. Roberts and to have him with us on Wednesday. We all profited by his ideas brought out in the discussion of the various topics on Wednesday. Bro. R. seems to be

a hard-working, faithful preacher. He labors with the congregations at Cape Rich and Euphrasia and preaches at one or two mission points besides.

The congregation at Meaford is said to have a large and prosperous Sunday school. We would have been pleased to have had a dozen of their teachers with us. We might have profited largely by their experience.

Bro. Tovell's paper on "The Bible the text book of the Teacher," would be appreciated by all who love "The Word." Bro. T. has the MSS. We feel sure if he would allow it to be published it would be a benefit to many who could not be present to hear it.

If you have anything in the way of methods or ideas on Sunday school work write them out and give others the benefit of them. Don't keep them all to yourself. Every one at the convention profited by the experience of others.

O. A. F.

### Creation.

E. SHEPPARD.

Jehovah—God; the Lord omnipotent! Thy power is great; omnific, unconfined; To man incomprehensible; unknown; The deep resources of creative skill. Thy word shook *אשׁוּף*. Thy all-powerful will Strowed boundless ether with unnumbered worlds, Which, like a vast, untiring army, march In silent grandeur round Thy heavenly throne. "Let there be light"; the peerless beams shine forth In brilliancy from the eternal source. Let man be formed: he rises from the dust An image of the pure and holy God; Favored by Thee, Thy blessing he receives; And lord of animated nature reigns.

### Public Opinion.

J. W. MONSER.

#### SCHOLARS' DECISIONS ABOUT BAPTISM.

[These selections are made at the instance of Dr. Crosby, whose conclusion is: "Immersion (i. e., submersion) is the result of superstition, and that to practice it is to help superstition." See Church Union, March 15, 1890.]

Speaking of John's baptism, Renan says: "That rite was baptism or total immersion."—*Life of Jesus, Carleton Edition, p. 121.*

Pressense says: "Scarcely is He plunged in the waters of the stream, when a glorious vision completes the illumination of the Baptist."—*Jesus Christ; His Life and Times, Holder & Stoughton Edition, p. 225.*

Geikie says: "Holy and pure before sinking under the waters, He must yet have risen from them with the light of a higher glory in His countenance. His past life was closed; a new era had opened. . . . It was the true moment of His entrance on a new life. Past years had been buried in the waters of Jordan."—*Life and Words of Christ, Appleton Edition, Vol. I., 413-14.*

Meyer says: "What was symbolized in the baptism of John was the meta-

noia. To this, however, the immersion of the whole of the baptized person, as the *metanoia*, was to purify the whole man corresponded with profound significance, and to this the specifically Christian view of the symbolic immersion and emersion afterwards connected itself by an ethical necessity."—*Commentary on Matthew, Funk & Wagnalls' Edition, pp. 77-8.*

Dean Stanley says: "For the first thirteen centuries the almost universal practice of baptism was that of which we read in the New Testament, and which is the very meaning of the word 'baptizo'—that those who were baptized were plunged, submerged, immersed into the water."—*Christian Institutions, Harper Bros.' Edition, p. 17.*

Godet says: "Modern commentators are not at one on the question whether the apostle means to allude to the external form of the baptismal rite in the primitive church. It seems to us very probable that it is so, whether primitive baptism be regarded as a complete immersion, during which the baptized disappeared for a moment under water (which best corresponds to the figure of burial), or whether the baptized went down into the water up to his loins, and the baptizer poured the water with which he had filled the hollow of his hand over his head, so as to represent an immersion."—*Commentary on Romans vi. 4, Funk and Wagnalls' Edition, p. 210.*

Conybeare and Howson say: "It is needless to add that baptism was (unless in exceptional cases) administered by immersion, the convert being plunged beneath the surface of the water to represent his death to the life of sin, and then raised from his momentary burial to represent his resurrection to the life of righteousness. It must be a subject of regret that the general discontinuance of this original form of baptism (though perhaps necessary in our Northern climates) has rendered obscure to popular apprehension some very important passages of Scripture."—*Life and Epistles of Paul, Chapter 13.*

Phillip Schaff quotes the above from Conybeare and Howson, and remarks: "With this we entirely concur. It is well known that the reformers, Luther and Calvin, and several old Protestant liturgies gave the preference to immersion; and this is undoubtedly far better suited than sprinkling to symbolize the idea of baptism, the entire purifying of the inner man, the being buried and the rising again with Christ. But the Baptists go too far in making immersion, after the fashion of Jewish legalism, the only valid form of baptism." (*Just above, however, Schaff had said enough to commit himself, thus—J. W. M.): "The impartial historian is compelled by exegesis and history substantially to yield the point to the Baptists, as is done, in fact (perhaps somewhat too decidedly and without due regard to the arguments just stated for the other practice), by most German scholars."—History of the Apost. Church, Scribner, Armstrong Edition, p. 570.*

G. P. Fisher says: "Baptism, it is now generally agreed among scholars, was commonly by immersion." In a foot-note he cites the following authorities: Justin Martyr, Prof. Stuart, Tertullian, Cyprian, Chrysostom, Calvin, Luther, Bingham, Herzog, Dr. Wm. Smith, Conybeare and Howson, Stanley, Wall, Mosholm, Neander, Blunt, Schaff, Meyer, Bleek, Winer.—*Beginnings of Christianity, Scribner, Armstrong & Co., p. 565.*

Thayer says: "Baptizo means (1) to dip repeatedly, to immerge, submerge; (2) to cleanse by dipping or submerging. . . . In the New Testament it is used particularly of the rite of sacred ablution, first instituted by John the Baptist, afterwards by Christ's command received by Christians and adjusted to the contents and nature of their religion, namely, an immersion in water, performed, as a sign of the removal of sin."—*Greek-English Lexicon of New Testament, p. 91.*

#### REMARKS.

In the light of these testimonies, what must we think when so scholarly a gentleman as Dr. Howard Crosby says: "We do not believe that submersion (which you call 'immersion') ever was practiced, until a superstitious idea came into the church that the body should have all parts of it washed if the soul was to be wholly cleansed. Peter, you know, had a little of that notion when the Lord wished to wash his feet only?" (*What of Paul or the author of Heb. x. 22: "Having our bodies washed with pure water?"*)

Will the Doctor give us ten as scholarly men as we tender him, by way of endorsement for these peculiar notions of his? We can afford to wait and see. Let it be remembered that our witnesses prove their honesty and impartiality by speaking against their creeds. Not one is a "Disciple," nor, I think, a Baptist. Disciples may be superstitious, but certainly they will not be scared out of the truth by so unwarranted an *ipse dixit*.—*Christian Standard.*

#### "None But Christ."

Mr. Birch, an English evangelist, tells of a dying infidel, whom he visited by request. The man had been long ill and in great need. Mr. Birch, with Christian liberality, had supplied his wants, and now the dying man told him that he had sent for him, not to speak of religion, for he didn't believe in it, but to thank Mr. Birch for his great kindness to him and his. Mr. Birch then said:—

"Will you answer me one question?" "Yes," said the dying man, "provided it is not about religion."

Lifting his heart in prayer to God, Mr. Birch said: "You know I have to preach to-night; many will be gathered to hear, mostly poor people, who will soon have, like you, to face death; I ask you, what shall I preach about?" Silence for a while, then with tear-dimmed eye and trembling voice, the unexpected answer was given:—

"Mr. Birch preach Christ to them; preach Christ." And then, utterly broken down, the dying sinner sought mercy from God for his own soul.—*Selected.*