

Greece was beautiful in art, poetry, oratory and statuary, but worshipped itself, vain and unvirtuous. What is France to-day? A gilded sepulchre of vice and selfishness. What is true, virtuous Christianity, honest toward God? It is the only good thing we know of in the world. The character of Jesus shines, and shines the more you examine it. He is love divine, order, orderly humanity, and His true religion would conduct the world to a paradise, would suit a heaven of angels, and is the product of a divine mind. Speaking of Greece as beautiful, yet St. Paul found it profoundly ignorant of God, and a statue erected in one of its public resorts "to the unknown God." So, now, Mr. VanNess, the Unitarian, and Herbert Spencer, Col. Ingersoll, and other agnostics, might erect in Washington, London, or Paris, a similar statue "to the unknown God." If God is only known in theory and speculation, not in prayer and secret communion as Christ and His apostles, and Abraham, Moses and the prophets knew Him, then God is unknown. All the converted Christians make God their friend as Abraham was called, and is not a matter of theory. True Christians believe, and I certainly do, that God answers sincere soul-prayers. We have a proof of this in the establishment of charitable institutions and missionary efforts all over the world. Mr. VanNess' coming religion is not founded on this theory and belief. The coming religion cannot be different from that of Jesus, if it is to make the world better. If it does, say what is it to be, how carried out? Our true object as humanitarians, is to make the whole earth happy; an earth of common brothers and sisters in love and good works. Are missionaries not trying to do this in the present day? Science of itself can never do it, although it is proper in its place; but it does not cure the heart of evil, regenerate the soul, bring consolation to the widow or dying and distressed. We in death want an Almighty friend to whom we can speak in prayer, and confess our sins, unburden the broken heart. Oh, that God may send down in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, that spirit which Jesus showed on earth, and has gone to Heaven to make perpetual. Such a religion is green and beautiful; not coming but here. We need look for no other.

We need in all discussions about religion a large amount of charity; and in anything said about this Unitarian minister, let it be said in deep humility and charity. He cannot see as we do, but it seems to me ridiculous to look upon Jesus as only a man like ourselves, for if so, what was He better than Confucius, Washington, or even than His own Apostles? We must look higher and consider Him as from God directly, as He said Himself, "I came forth from God, now return to God." The best evidence of this is the glorious fact of His resurrection. Impute not Christianity's corruption by bad men to Him—He was great and pure.

Toronto, Dec. 12, 1893.

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

THE NEW BOOK OF PRAISE.

BY PRESBYTER.

The Presbyteries of our church are now, for the most part, considering the following remit, sent down by the last General Assembly, viz:—"That the Hymnal Committee be instructed to include the entire Psalter in the proposed new Book of Praise."

This question is one that should be fully discussed in our church papers. The time of Presbyteries is so limited that a general discussion there is impossible. Upon this question, there is a great difference of opinion. Let all the arguments *pro* and *con*. be adduced in your widely circulated paper so that as ministers and elders we may cast our votes intelligently.

It is charged by those in favor of the remit, that if the report of the Hymnal Committee be adopted, and selections made, that it is mutilating the Psalter. Those who raise this cry should be very certain of the ground upon which they stand, for even if it has no foundation in fact, it appeals, very strongly, to the prejudices of a Presbyterian community. The very moment the cry of mutilation is

raised, a great many good people will consider that if the church makes selections, she brings upon herself the woe pronounced in Rev. 22: 19. And yet, if selections are a mutilation, a taking from—are not hymns then an unauthorized addition? Are not those who take this position standing upon the very same ground as the old Presbyterians who opposed the introduction of hymns. If, too, selecting some of the Psalms is mutilation, what word will describe the conduct of our Baptist, Methodist, and Congregational brethren who pass them over entirely? The mistake of these brethren is, that they assume that God intended the Psalms of David to voice the praises of His people in all ages, and that every part of them correctly represents the feelings of real Christians at the present day. Such a position cannot be maintained. God has never given any indication that such is His will. The Psalms of David are inadequate to express the full tide of Christian emotion. Hence the church, in all ages, must have her paraphrases and hymns. Besides by the higher, clearer, and more spiritual revelation of Jesus Christ, the church has been brought into such a condition that she cannot sing as her praises some of these Psalms. We cannot, for a moment, think that He who said to his followers: "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you," ever intended that they should sing the latter part of the 137th Psalm. Principal Caven, in his very excellent sermon from II Tim. 3: 16, before the Assembly last June, made the following statements which I think every one will be ready to endorse. "It is not said that all Scripture is profitable for the same ends nor that it is of equal value, nor that every part of it is of the same value at all times, and to all people." The italics are mine. Further on he says, "Christian intelligence and the sense of our personal necessities or the necessities of those we teach, must largely direct us in the practical use of scripture." Since, then, it cannot be proven that God intended the Psalms of David to constitute the Book of Praise of His church, the Christian intelligence of His people making appropriate selections therefrom is no more mutilation than paraphrasing a few passages is the mutilation of the New Testament. Our Christian intelligence tells us, that what was very appropriate, to be sung in ancient times and in the condition and surroundings of the then church, may not be appropriate to our times. This is the judgment of the church to-day, the judgment of our ministers and congregations, rendered not in a church court, where men are more or less trammelled by the usages of the past, and where they are expected to be very orthodox, but in their assemblies of worship. It is a fact which cannot be gainsaid that a large part of the Psalms are never sung.

Again, in our church making selections she is dealing with the Psalms of David in metre, which are not in that form the inspired word. Many of them have thoughts expressed which are not in the original, and thoughts expressed in the original are suppressed in the metrical version. Good men, at various times, have attempted to give our English version a rhythmic setting. In many cases they have been successful. In some cases they have completely failed. So that where the thought may be quite appropriate to present experiences, the Psalm cannot be sung owing to a lack of rhythm and to harsh expressions. In some Psalms, we get a few verses with most felicitous expressions. These, however, abruptly terminate and before the minister is aware, the singing is wretched, because the singers have lost their feet. In the future, the verse, and perhaps the whole Psalm, is avoided. The poetic form invariably suffers where there is great anxiety to keep close to the original. For the church, then, to make selections, is only to say, that in many cases our modern poets have failed to give us good metre and felicitous expressions, which would have captivated the ear and moved the heart. Every Psalm has its practical use. They are for reading as well as for singing. For praise and adoration they have never been equalled, but some of them savor more of the old law than of the gospel. To cast them into good English poetry, it is necessary to

enter into their spirit and this is perhaps the reason why our modern poets have failed with a number of them.

Why do we want a selection?

1st. We do not want a book of praise too bulky.

2nd. All the portions which can be sung will then stand out more prominently and thereby secure more attention.

3rd. It will make indexing and arranging of them under proper subjects more feasible and as a consequence enable the pastor more readily to make a choice in harmony with his sermon. This will tend also to their more general use.

PARK AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, LONDON, ONTARIO.

Sixty-two years ago the first Presbyterian congregation was organized in London, and this was the beginning of what is now the large body connected with the Park Avenue Presbyterian Church. On Wednesday, July 2nd, 1890, Rev. W. J. Clark, the present pastor, was inducted. At that time the membership was 183, while now it has reached the number of 364. Over a year ago the question of increased accommodation was mooted. It was at first thought that to remodel the old building, would meet the requirements of the case. Such an idea, however, was not long entertained, and it was finally decided to demolish the existing structure. It was believed, and rightly, that to follow out the renovating process would end merely in a patched edifice, lacking many of the imperative necessities of a modern church. On the 13th of March last, therefore, the congregation bade farewell to its home of thirty years, and immediately afterwards the work of demolition began. The result is that there now stands upon the same site a house of worship which is unequalled in this city in its particular denomination, and, in point of architectural elegance, chasteness of finish and comfort in its arrangement, will challenge comparison with the best buildings of any other body in the city. The outward appearance of the building, pleasing and attractive in its general effect, is an adaptation of the early English Gothic style. The foundation walls consist of blue limestone. The superstructure is built with pressed red brick, and the buttress slopes, belt courses, sills, label moulds, gable copings and finials are formed of Ohio freestone. The roof is slate, and the ridges are finished with copper and galvanized iron cresting. The height of the tower is 110 feet, while the main gable is 60 feet. There are three main entrances and two at the side. The former enter into a main corridor running across the whole width of the church. In this lobby are two handsome oak staircases leading to the gallery which only extends from one side of the rear portion of the auditorium to the other. The interior of the audience room is 66 feet wide by 103 feet in length. Transepts extend seven feet on either side of the nave. The ceilings are 38 feet high. The walls are plastered in adamant and tinted in two shades. On either side of the choir and organ loft, which is situated behind the pulpit, are two small alcoves—the one over the minister's vestry, the other over the managers' room—in which the children's choir, led by Mr. John Cameron, will be placed. The organ—a production of the S. R. Warren Company, Toronto—is a finely toned instrument. It has twenty-six stops, is operated by water-power, and cost \$3,500. Mr. W. C. Barron, the organist, is a graduate of the New England Conservatory, Boston, and has besides studied at Leipzig. This is the first church in London to utilize electricity for lighting purposes. The central chandelier is filled with 100 incandescent pendants, while forty additional are distributed throughout the church. The windows are many, large, and stained glass. The total cost of the church will be \$25,000.

INDORE MISSIONARY COLLEGE FUND.

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| Reported already up to Jan. 18th | \$267.67 |
| W. F. M. S., Seaforth, per Mrs. McDonald | 20.45 |
| Mrs. Catharine McKenzie, London | 5.00 |
| Mrs. Rowat, London | 1.00 |
| A friend, Belleville | 6.00 |
| Mrs. Dougall, Hensall | 1.00 |

Total \$301.12

The three months asked for are now nearly up. The last of these detailed reports will be sent in next Wednesday, Jan. 31st. Money received later will be reported in detail only to the *Record*.

ANNA ROSS.
Brucefield, Ont., Jan. 26, 1894.

Christian Endeavor.

BLEST, TO BLESS. (CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR DAY).

REV. W. S. MCTAVISH, B.D., ST. GEORGE.

Feb. 4. Matt. 10: 7, 8. 38-42, Gen. 12: 2.

This is Christian Endeavor day. Our thoughts naturally turn to our Society and as they do so our perception must be dull indeed if we do not realize that we have been greatly blest. The Sabbath School, the Y.M.C.A. and other kindred organizations have now become mighty instrumentalities for good, but though they have all developed with astonishing rapidity, yet we think it may be safely asserted that no society has made more marvellous progress than the Christian Endeavor. It is only thirteen years since the first little Society was organized in Portland, Maine. But there are now about 28,800 societies with a membership of 1,600,000. More than 1,800 new societies have been organized since the convention was held in Montreal. Branches of this society are to be found now in almost every quarter of the globe. A missionary in South India wrote that he had organized eleven societies in his village congregations there.

But while there has been a wonderfully rapid growth in numbers, there has also been a beautiful development in the spiritual life of many of the members. Many have been led through the pledge to see more definitely their relationship to the Lord Jesus, to consecrate themselves more unreservedly to His service, and to live more wholly to His glory. They have acquired clear views of truth and duty, they have become better acquainted with the Scriptures, they have become more beautiful in character, and in life more earnest. Scores of pastors would willingly testify to this. Whether we look then at the external growth, or at the internal development, we must confess that we have been blessed abundantly.

Why have we been thus blessed? Certainly not that we might boast about our wonderful progress. Certainly not because we deserve to be. But we have been blessed that we may be the means of blessing to others. Jesus told His disciples that, inasmuch as they had received freely, they should give freely. If we are true Christians we shall desire to share our blessings with others, for, as Matthew Henry says, "True grace does not wish to eat its morsel alone."

How may we bless others? There is scarcely any limit to the ways in which we may do this if we are only in earnest about it. We cannot, of course, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, or cast out devils. But we need not sigh over the impossible when so much of the possible lies within our reach. There are many ways in which we can bless others if our hearts are willing. We can make strangers welcome at our prayer-meetings and at our church services. There is no doubt that our church has lost much in the past by neglecting this simple duty. Strangers are not likely to return to the place where they have not been heartily welcomed. Then we might invite the careless to the house of God. What an abundance of room to labor here! We are constantly reminded that many never darken the church door. Pastors may do something in the way of remedying this evil. But the efforts of pastors are much more effective when seconded by those of a band of consecrated Christian Endeavorers. Again, we should always see to it that we come well prepared to the meetings so that the exercises may be bright and instructive. With the Bible and so many other helps at hand there is no excuse for allowing a meeting to drag. Still further, we might help the sick by visiting them or by sending them little tokens of remembrance. How greatly too we might bless others, especially ministers and missionaries, by praying for them! We might be like Aarons and Hurs holding up the hands of God's struggling workmen. "Kind words can never die." Then be it ours to speak a word of comfort to the afflicted, of encouragement to the downcast, of cheer to the dispirited and of kindness to all.

The above are a few of the many ways in which we who have been blessed may bless others. Other lines of usefulness will readily suggest themselves to those who have eyes to see and a heart to feel. "Oh, the good we all may do while the days are going by!"