

—The annual Convention of our Baptist brethren of Ontario and Quebec was held last week at Woodstock, Ont. Our Ontario co-respondent has our thanks for so promptly sending us an account of the proceedings, and we very much regret that a delay in the arrival of the mail and an additional delay in its being distributed has made it impracticable for us to publish Mr. Dayfoot's letter this week. The reports from the different departments of denominational work appear to have been generally of an encouraging character, and the backward glance which the close of the century suggests shows that great progress has been made and affords inspiration for the future.

Comfort for the Aged Saint.

A PASTORAL LETTER FROM REV. J. WRBB.

MY DEAR AGED ONE:—I heard a voice saying, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God;" and I looked around me to find some one to comfort; and I saw thousands of God's dear people with tearful eyes and hanging heads, and with hearts brimful of trouble, and I asked: "What is being done to wipe away these tears, to lift up these heads, and to gladden these hearts?" Presently, after a death-like pause, the answer came and the voice said: "Go ye and comfort them." I asked, "To whom shall I go, there are so many?" And the voice said, "Go to my dear aged ones and comfort them." Then I looked through the denominational paper, and I found that columns and pages were devoted to the interests of Foreign missions and Home missions, and Sunday Schools and the Young People, in fact, nearly every class or people were cared for but the Lord's aged and afflicted ones. Then I said, "I will go to them as a MESSENGER from God. I will be a welcome VISITOR in their homes, and in their lonely chambers. I will sit by their side and tell them there is comfort for them."

Now, dear friend, having thus briefly introduced myself, will you not let me come near to you in the form of a short letter, and talk to you a little while about the things that you love? I know that you do not need a long sermon about everything and addressed to everybody, therefore I bring to you just a few lines all to yourself.

It has been a long, long time since you had the pleasure of sitting in your pew in the church, and of listening to a gospel sermon, but you do not forget it. Then you could say with David: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple." As you listened to the gospel preached by Fathers Manning, Harding, and others of that time—the gospel which revealed the beauty of the Lord—you felt a thrill of joy in your soul, and you exclaimed, "Yea, he is altogether lovely!"

You cannot go now with the people of God, with a multitude to keep holiday. Your spirit is not quite so buoyant as it was; dark clouds and doubts and fears make you tremble when you think of the dark valley. All this comes through being shut in. John Baptist, while he was preaching, while he was actively engaged as the "voice of one crying in the wilderness," was strong; but when he was shut up in prison he became weak; he had his doubts and fears; so fearful did he become on one occasion that he had to send to Jesus and ask: "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" David feared as old age approached, and he cried out, "When I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not."

There is comfort for you. You are God's child. You are tired now after your day's work. Night is drawing nigh and you are growing weary. The time was when you could comfort others; your cheery smile and your heartfelt sympathy was as balm to the downcast; but now you need to be comforted yourself. Jesus says to you, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you." God comes to you in his Word. Here is comfort for you: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." A good Quaker once said to a poor man who had met with a great loss, "I pity thee a sovereign!"—If God pitieth thee, my aged friend, it means a good deal. Physicians and friends can do much to comfort in old age, but he "knoweth our frame"—he knows all about you—he never grows weary of you—his love never fails. Lean upon his strong and faithful arm; lean heavily for he is able to bear you up. Learning on the everlasting arm you can say: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Your sins are washed away with blood. You stand in Christ justified before God. Your name is engraved on the palm of his hand, and in the Lamb's book of life. You have a home in the city of God where there will be no old age, no tears, and no troubled hearts, and Jesus has promised to come for you himself.

Trusting that this visit, by letter, will comfort you and help you to "lift up your eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh your help," and praying that our blessed Lord will favor you with a view of the Promised Land and a foretaste of its joys,

I am yours very truly,

J. WRBB.

Kingston Station, N. S., Oct. 10th, 1900.

Letter From Rev. S. D. Ervine.

I suppose it is both becoming and expected that I should send some report to the press, that those who may be interested in our welfare might know how and where we are.

At present we are at the old homestead at Andover, where I was born and reared. As I write many remembrances of the past force themselves upon me. Those of

the kindnesses and prayers of loving parents; love and fellowship of nine brothers and sisters, and of the associations of the best of young people I have ever associated with. But, oh, how changed are the scenes of other days, how scattered are the friends of the past, only a few remain. To these may be added those of a vital Christian experience in all its varied hues, from conviction to the taking of ministerial degrees. Then of the different successes and failures; curses and losses; conflicts and victories; until the present. Too many to mention. O, how God has led. Truly, it has been "in ways I know not, and paths I had not seen."

Now in my physical weakness I return either to regain my former vigor or to continue in decline, as God "whose I am and whom I serve" wills. My return to this place now is not of choice, but it seems to be the guidance of the divine hand. And "where he leads I'll follow," hoping in the near future to be led into some sphere of usefulness in the Master's vineyard.

The Springfield churches are now vacant and desirous of a suitable pastor. Regarding the field I would say, that during the four and three-quarter years I spent there I have no evil report to make. Myself and family received many kindnesses and ample support. Had my health continued good, enabling me to perform pastoral duties, no doubt our stay would have been a much longer one. The coming man need not fear. But just let me say, he who comes asking \$700 salary, etc., will be disappointed, for such a demand is beyond the means and will of the people. But no servant of the Lord will suffer on this field if he works and trusts.

For the extra and unexpected expressions of kindness extended us in our affliction, we tender our heartfelt thanks, praying that heaven's richest benediction may rest upon them. I wish also to make mention of the very kind and generous remembrances of the brethren at the N. B. Convention in so tangible a form a \$50 gift, which with other gifts from friends are aiding us materially over hard places. To each and all we would say heartily, "Thank you," and may God bless you all.

My future address will be Perth, Victoria Co., N. B.

Andover, Oct. 16th, 1900.

S. D. ERVINE.

A Pastor Wanting a Church.

I do not think that it is the wisest course for a minister of the gospel to take (when he is at liberty to settle on a new field), to advertise himself open to a call, and lay back waiting for some church to call him. I think a large majority of our pastors would get left if they adopted the above system. A good brother said at one time that it was no use to write to a church, the best way was for a minister to visit the church, preach to the people, let them see and hear him and a man's gift will make a way for him. He who said to his apostles, go, and also to the people, why stand ye here idle, always went himself, he never waited for a call, and he who sends his servants will never fail to open a door and find work for them. Jesus said go ye into all the world, go ye into my vineyard, go ye into the harvest, and whatsoever is right ye shall receive, he that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal. Dr. Joseph McLeod said at one time that a great many people laid back waiting for something to turn up, instead of going to work and turning up something. Jesus said, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened, and lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world and he that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me, and take with you neither purse nor scrip, for the laborer is worthy of his hire.

JAS. A. PORTER.

New Canada, N. S.

Politics and the Christ-life.

J. GARLAND HAMNER, JR.

Vital interest in politics is a marked evidence of the Christ-like spirit. If that statement seem extravagant, it is because of the false notion men have of politics. The word means the art of living together—or "the government of our every-day life by laws, their enactment, and their enforcement. The question as to what these laws shall be and who shall enforce them, are the questions that are now agitating our country. The division of voters into "parties" is, or ought to be, a division according to the way citizens think about the laws and the men. "Parties" may mean the division of office-holders into the "Ins" and the "Outs," who make questions about laws and invent stories about men to scare voters into keeping them in, or putting their opponents out of office. . . . In a democracy the people make the laws and elect their servants to enforce them. Danger to the democracy arises when the servants' attempt to make the laws for a few and enforce them for the few, and those few themselves and their friends. A few men acting concertedly, with a definite plan, will be able to have laws made for their own benefit, unless the people think, and register their thoughts in the method provided, the ballot.

This thinking cannot be intelligent if it is confined to

a few weeks before election, and if men allow others to do their thinking for them. The words "spell binders" used as a joke of campaign speakers, is most significant, and far more than a joke. Their favorite methods are to stir up prejudice, abuse their opponents, and confuse the issues, so that those unused to thinking will take refuge in the past record of their "party" in their confusion, trusting that all will come right. Consider for a moment what complete change is often wrought in the leaders and principles of any of the great parties within a few years. Such a method must be unsafe. He who says, "My party right or wrong," and vows to vote for it without thought, must escape the charge of being an imbecile, only to be convicted on that of being a traitor. to himself, his countrymen, and his God.

For the Christian young man the responsibility becomes even more urgent. If the laws of Christ are to govern men, they must be enacted and enforced by Christian men through the ballot. There is no other way of making and enforcing laws. To say, that this is taking religion into politics, is only another way of saying that it is taking religion into our every-day life, and this goes without saying.

This, then, is the duty of every Christian young man: To think. Not to read party papers, or to hear party speakers only, but to think, and talk to Christ, and study his word. He who supposes he cannot find the questions of Imperialism, Expansion, Money and Tariff in the Bible, is mistaken. They will not be found by a concordance under those headings, but the principles involved will be found there. One may be surprised to find that both parties are wrong. "The Kingdom" has not yet come for its laws are not yet enacted or enforced. We pray "Thy Kingdom come!" over and over again. We must vote for it.

The eminently practical young man may ask whether he will not throw away his vote if he cast it for a candidate for whom he sees no probability of election. He who votes for what he does not want throws away his vote. The men who voted for the Abolition ticket did not elect a president but incessant agitation brought about the death of slavery. A great principle is worthy of a vote, as well as a great man.

The new party of thinkers and voters will be born of the Spirit of Christ and will be led by him into the new theocracy—the Kingdom of Heaven.—The Brotherhood Star.

The Madonna and Christ.

Under the above heading Mr. Franklin Edison Belden presents a fine collection of prints, embracing among other notable pictures, reproductions of the most celebrated Madonna and Christ paintings by the world's greatest artists, with full page descriptions accompanying each figure. There are forty pictures in the collection, including such master-pieces as "The Immaculate Conception," by Murillo; "The Sistine Madonna," by Raphael; "The Descent from the Cross," by Rubens; "Cherub Choir," by Reynolds; "The Temptation," by Scheffer; "Christ Entering Jerusalem," by Dore; "Christ Before Pilate," by Munkacsy; Henner's "Repentant Magdalen"; Sir Edwin Long's "Christ or Diana"; "The Last Prayer," by J. L. Gerome and Dore's, "Christian Martyrs." There are also several fine pieces by Hoffman, including his "Christ in the Temple," by Scheffer, by Gabriel Max; "Rock of Ages," by J. O. Oertel and "The Soul's Awakening," by James Sant, are all remarkable pictures. The collection is an excellent one throughout, and the prints are finely executed on heavy glazed paper. The size of the page is 11 by 9 inches and the covers are white buckram with gilt lettering. The book is one which cannot fail to be highly attractive to everyone possessed of artistic taste, and it indicates a wonderful development of the printer's and engraver's arts, that such a book can be produced at the price of one dollar. It would be most appropriate for a Christmas or birth-day gift. The publishers are The Saalfeld Company, of New York, Akron, O. and Chicago.

Peloubet's Select Notes on the International Sunday-school lessons for 1901, published by W. A. Wilde Company of Boston (price \$1.25) has appeared in good time. For twenty-six continuous years a volume under this title has been issued of the "Notes" therefore need no introduction to a very large number of Sunday-school teachers and scholars. It is the aim of the compilers and publishers of these "Notes" to make each succeeding volume better than the last, and this ambition seems to have been realized in the present volume. The publishers say:

In preparing this year's Select Notes, Dr. Peloubet has not only exhausted his own unrivaled Biblical library, but searched the leading reference and theological libraries of this country, in order to concentrate into this one volume all the clearest thoughts and latest determinations of the world's scholars. He has thus made Select Notes for 1901 a veritable storehouse of selected facts, explanations, deductions, and comments of the highest possible value to every student, and which are positively essential in order to attain a correct understanding of the subject-matter.

No student of the International Lessons can afford not to have this commentary for 1901.

Work while you have the light, and be a light yourself.

The loving service of the weak and wanting is an essential part of the discipline of the Christian life.—Daily Messages.