

The Christian.

ST. JOHN, N. B., - - SEPTEMBER, 1898

EDITORIAL.

THE DUTY OF THE HOUR.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest. Eccl. ix: 10.

Other books treat of time, the Bible explains time and eternity, both of which are to us immeasurable. Our time may last for a few years or end at any moment, so that we can no more tell the length of time than we can the duration of eternity. Our life is given us as a stepping stone to eternal life, and this is one of the passages which points out the sure places for our feet and the eternal consequences of a mistake.

We are here urged to do whatever work we find to be good, and assured that there is no such work nor planning in the grave. Jesus confirmed and illustrated this truth when he healed the blind man. He says "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work." What Solomon calls the *grave* Jesus calls the *night*, referring to the space between death and the resurrection. The doctrine that Jesus' spirit went and preached to the spirits in prison while his body was in the grave, is clearly refuted by both Solomon and Christ. One says there is no work there, the other says, "when no man can work." However sweet may be its enjoyments, night is the time to rest not to work. Many may be deceived by thinking the day is given to them for Christian enjoyment rather than for Christian work. Jesus first did good then rested in the grave, then came forth to the resurrection of life; and his true followers do whatever their hand finds to do, rest in the grave, and his voice will call them forth to the resurrection of life. "These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." When the word of God thus calls us to do things with our might we ought to know what they are; not every thing that comes in our way, but the things we believe he approves. Some of these the Bible mentions by name, others are too numerous to be thus specified. When Paul tells the Philippians the things they were to do, he puts them in classes thus: "Whatsoever things are true—honest—just—pure—lovely—of good report." Each of these six classes might claim one hundred duties. How would it do for Paul to mention by name these six hundred duties when telling these people and us what is right for us to do? This will show the folly of refusing to do anything unless that thing is mentioned in the Word of God.

Jesus tells his disciples many things they are to do to others, but concludes thus: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them; for this is the law and the prophets." This command of Christ is easily understood and most safe to obey. He teaches us that it is always lawful to do good.

A tremendous evil is now encouraged by the law of this Dominion. Nearly every public crime in the land can be traced directly or indirectly to the liquor traffic, to say nothing of the unspeakable sufferings and wretchedness it brings to families and individuals. But a few men are making money out of the traffic and many more are encouraging them in it.

This traffic rests on two pillars, the lust of *gain* and the lust of *appetite*. When both seller and buyer have an interval of justice they will acknowledge this fact. The former will say "I know it is not just in me to take from my neighbor the money his hard labor has earned to supply his real needs and those of his wife and children, and give him in return what does him no good, but harm. *But my love of money makes me do it.*"

The latter will say "I know it is unjust in me to give the saloon-keeper the money my family needs for that which only robs me of all that is worth keeping. My dearest friend on earth whom I promised before God and men to love and make happy I injure in every way and am bringing her down to a premature grave. It is unjust to my children, who are as bright as other children, but are by them despised, and are clothed with rags on account of him whom they once loved and respected, but whom they now dread and expect sooner or later to lay in a drunkard's grave. Oh! it is not just to my wife and children; and as to myself, it destroys both body and soul. Can that man be happy whom God says shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven? In his soul is a constant tumult; his very *delirium tremens* is the prelude of the undying worm. *Yet I buy the liquor to gratify the very appetite which itself fosters.*"

This is a critical and important time. In a few days the vote for or against prohibition will be taken, and every elector in Canada will be asked whether he wishes the dreadful flow of intoxicating liquor to be aided or forbidden by law. Rum sellers will leave no stone unturned to defeat prohibition. It matters not how many men and homes are ruined, how many murdered by rum, nor how many houses or towns burned, these men want money and their logic is "give, give." Many of the buyers, too, will aid them in the struggle. And what is still worse, they have the aid and co-operation of many who acknowledge the evil of the traffic and deplore the ravages of alcohol. Even some who claim to be the preachers of righteousness are not ashamed to array themselves against prohibition and urge others to vote against it. The strongest argument they bring against a prohibitory law is that *it would be broken*, seeming to ignore the fact that every law can be, and in some cases is broken. A law that could not be broken would be perfect nonsense. Parliament might make a law forbidding a man to carry his neighbor's house and throw it into the river, but who would admire such a law, because it could not be broken? Would these logicians condemn and abolish the laws against murder

and theft because men will sometimes steal and murder? Yet this is where they place themselves in opposing prohibition.

Considering the zeal and money and determination of rum sellers in opposing prohibition, and how liable some from all classes are to aid and abet them in the struggle, how necessary it is for the friends of humanity, of right, and of justice to be awake and exert themselves to save this Dominion from the everlasting disgrace of proclaiming to the nations our determination to uphold the reign of rum and ruin! There are enough to give an overwhelming vote on the side of right *if all would come nobly forward on the 29th and vote*. Future generations will look back to this day either with joy or regret. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge in the grave whither thou goest."

EDITORIAL NOTES.

As an answer to kind enquiries coming from many quarters respecting my health, I have this to say: I had a sore on the side of my nose which for several years baffled all attempts at healing. At the repeated recommendations of Bro. Howard Murray, I went in May last to meet Mr. Frederick Böhner, of Martin's River, Lunenburg Co., Nova Scotia. On the 23rd of May, he met me at Mahone Bay and put on a small plaster which after ten weeks, came off taking the cancer all with it, and the cavity it left is now filling up most satisfactorily. I never lost an hour's sleep from any pain the plaster gave. I would recommend any person troubled with cancer to apply at once to Mr. Böhner who is moderate in his charges and most successful in his cure. I met him at Mellen's Hotel where I had kind treatment and had only to remain four days. D. CRAWFORD.

We have just received the Fourteenth Annual Report of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society's Committee in Japan. Our work began in the Sunrise Kingdom in 1883. The report is published in Tokyo. It shows 16 American missionaries and 8 native preachers and helpers. The membership is 484, or a gain of 125 during the past year. There are 22 Sunday-schools with 690 pupils; 7 day schools, with 321 pupils. There are 8 houses of worship and 40 meeting places. Altogether the report will compare favorably with many state reports in this country, where the gospel has been preached so long. The report is adorned with three admirable illustrations of our missionaries and the churches and schools of Japan. A card addressed to A. McLean, Corresponding Secretary, Cincinnati, Ohio, will secure a copy free of charge.

Several excellent "original contributions" are crowded out this month but will appear in the October CHRISTIAN.

The secretary's report of the C. W. B. M. business meeting has failed to reach this office, but our readers may expect a full account next month.

Notice that the Home Mission Board has a new secretary, W. A. Barnes, St. John. Send communications concerning home missions to him; also all remittances for the same