

Messenger and Visitor

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Walk in the Light.

The distinction between darkness and light is so great and so apparent that no one endowed with vision is ever in danger of mistaking one for the other. And the distinction between moral good and evil, between wisdom and folly, uprightness and wickedness, is as real and as vital as the distinction between light and darkness, or between health and disease, purity and corruption, life and death. But the influences of the world, the flesh and the devil, are ever working to obliterate these distinctions, putting darkness for light and light for darkness, and creating confusion in the minds of men as to what is good and what is evil. The subtle falsehoods of the serpent are now, as at the beginning, whispered into every ear. "This fruit, so pleasant to sight and taste, was made for man," it insinuates. "Surely no poison can lurk in things so fair. This way, so beautiful, so attractive cannot lead to death." Still the tempter cunningly persuades that it is man's natural right to eat of every tree of the garden and that the fruit of transgression is not death but god-like knowledge. And to-day, as of old, men and women listen to the voice of the serpent, the poison of a practical atheism is insinuated into their hearts, conscience suffers a partial paralysis, and the power of keen discrimination between good and evil is lost. It would be well if the preaching and teaching of this day could become so searching and awakening as to convince the eaters of forbidden fruit that no thicket of moral sophistries can hide from the All-Seeing Eye, or afford a refuge from him whose voice calls the sinner to account.

Most urgently does the Bible admonish men to love and loyalty to truth. "Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go; keep her, for she is thy life." The truth is not merely to be discerned, and gazed upon and admired; it is to be obeyed. The right way is not merely to be perceived or remarked upon or even pointed out to others; it is to be walked in. The path of the wicked is to be avoided as one avoids a plague-infected house. "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass on." There must be no dallying with sinful pleasures, no "sowing of wild oats," no playing with fire. Experimenting with wickedness is too costly a business. If any young man wants to know what are the fruits of licentiousness, there is plenty of evidence ready to his hand. No sane man thinks it necessary to thrust his hand into the fire in order to be assured that fire will burn. But too often the words of the wise and the manifest results of human experience are disregarded. Young men somehow persuade themselves that the fire which has burned others will not burn them, that the quagmires in which others have sunk to perdition will afford them a safe and solid footing, and what has proved to be, for others a poisoned cup will be to them a delicious and refreshing draught. But no man is strong enough to play with the Maelstroms and Niagaras of sin, and it is no mark of wisdom or of courage to venture within the circle of their influence. Regard for others as well as for ourselves should keep us to the ways in which it is safe and right for all to go. Suppose that a man can occasionally go to the theatre without injury to his own moral character, is he not bound to consider what the theatre is as a whole in its character and influence, before by giving it his patronage and influence, he commends it to others who will not, as he does, discriminate between its worse and better elements? Suppose that upon occasion one is able to drink wine or strong drink without losing self-control or becoming dominated by the drink habit, is he not bound by con-

siderations which no true man can disregard to consider the terrible results of the drink traffic as a whole and the probable effect of his example upon a class of men who are so easily overcome and destroyed by the appetite for strong drink?

The way to avoid stumbling in the darkness is to walk in the light. And the effectual way of finding deliverance from the bondage of evil is to give one's self, heart and soul, to the service of righteousness. A positive determination toward the good is essential. To the man who chooses Wisdom and earnestly sets himself to walk in her paths, there comes a sense of freedom and of safety. "When thou goest thy steps shall not be straitened; and if thou runnest thou shalt not stumble." "If ye continue in my word," said the great Teacher, "ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." He who steadfastly follows the truth is like one who walks by the light of the rising sun. The pathway may not at first be very clearly discerned, but every minute the light is growing and all things are coming more and more to appear in their true outlines and relations, the traveller's horizon constantly enlarges, any fear that he had missed the right way is dissipated, and as he proceeds he rejoices in the light that shines more and more unto the perfect day. How forceful and how true in comparison is the description of that other way,—the wicked plunging on blindly and recklessly in the darkness, stumbling and knowing not at what they stumble.

The N. S. Eastern Association.

The Eastern Nova Scotia Association, in which are comprised the churches of Cumberland, Colchester and Pictou counties and all the counties lying eastward of Pictou, met in its fifty-second annual session on Friday, July 11, at North Sydney. Owing doubtless to the fact that the place of meeting is almost at the extreme eastern limit of the large territory embraced in the Association, and that attendance involved a rather long and expensive journey for those of the more western sections, very few were present from Cumberland and Colchester and the number of delegates in attendance was comparatively small. The first session of the Association was held at ten o'clock, the Moderator, Rev. M. A. McLean of Truro, presiding. After devotional exercises the list of delegates was read, and on motion the Bethany church of Sydney and the River Philip church, which is a part of the Oxford field, were received into the fellowship of the Association. Pastor Weeks receiving the hand of fellowship on behalf of the Bethany church and Deacon J. W. Priest on behalf of the River Philip church. The Association then proceeded to elect its officers for the year. Rev. F. O. Weeks was chosen Moderator, Rev. T. B. Layton was re-elected Secretary, Rev. F. S. Mason, Assistant Secretary, and Bro. J. W. Ingraham, Treasurer. President Trotter, Principal Britain, Rev. F. W. Patterson and Rev. E. J. Grant were invited to seats in the Association.

The letter of the North Sydney church, in which the Association was heartily welcomed, was then read, and the noon hour having arrived, the session adjourned.

The afternoon session opened at 2.30. Prayer was offered by Dr. Trotter and Rev. D. H. McQuarrie, and after reading of the Scriptures an earnest and instructive sermon was preached by Mr. William Cummings of Truro, from John 16:23.

A large part of the afternoon session was devoted to reading of letters from the churches. These for the most part indicated an encouraging degree of progress.

The report of the Committee on Missions was presented by Rev. O. N. Chipman. In respect to the Foreign work the report noted that there are encouraging features as well as some discouragements. The force on the field has been strengthened by the return of Mr. and Mrs. Archibald and Mrs. Higgins to the work and the addition of Miss Flora Clark to the staff. Miss Martha Clark has come home on furlough. Regret was expressed that the condition of Mr. Morse's health forbade his return to India at present, and his consequent resignation. During the past year 77 have been added to the Telugu churches of the mission field by baptism and 34 by letter—a total addition of 111. The net increase was 80. There are now eight churches with a total membership of 495. None of the native churches are as yet self-supporting, but the members are being trained to give and many are giving a tenth of their income to the support of the cause. The receipts from the home churches for the work of the Mission will, it is hoped, nearly if not quite balance the expenditure of the year, but it is to be remembered that a deficit of more than \$4,000 was carried over from last year.

In reference to Home Missions, the report referred to the absence of available statistical information, the resignation of Rev. A. Cohoon from the Board and from the secretaryship, the duties of which he had so ably discharged for many years, the appointment of Rev. P. G.

Mode, and, on his recent removal, the appointment of Rev. W. F. Parker as his successor. The work of the evangelists employed in connection with the Board has been mostly for the past year in the Eastern Association. Brethren Baker and McLean have labored together with much success in Colchester, Cumberland and Guysborough Counties. The work of Rev. H. F. Adams in connection with the Twentieth Century Fund was referred to with appreciation. Mr. Adams reports that the New Brunswick churches have pledged nearly \$10,000, those in Nova Scotia \$12,000 and India \$4,000, and thinks that there is every prospect that the \$50,000 will be raised if only there shall continue to be earnest co-operation in the work.

At the opening of the evening session a very interesting and instructive Scripture reading was given by Rev. D. H. McQuarrie.

The remainder of the evening was given to missions. Rev. E. J. Grant who is a member of the H. M. Board, spoke briefly in regard to the home work, showing its great and fundamental importance in respect to all our denominational work, and of the important results that had come from home mission work in the Provinces. A very large percentage of the additions reported to the membership of the churches for the past ten years had resulted from work on home mission fields. But this work was being hampered for lack of funds. The salaries of missionaries were at the best small, and a number of fields were unoccupied because of lack of funds, and yet there was money enough in the hands of our people to support this work liberally and there could be no better investment for this money.

S. McC. Black spoke in the interests of the Foreign Mission work, presenting some considerations why the work should enlist the fullest sympathy and co-operation of Christians. Jesus Christ is in the work. He came into the world as a missionary, invested all he had—and none was ever so rich—in the cause of missions. The cause of missions is the crown and fruitage of the divine purpose in the world, and stands or falls with Jesus Christ. The gospel has been put into the hearts of Christians. It must have expression, it demands to be told. The Holy Spirit, in the beginning of missionary work when Paul and Barnabas were sent forth to the western countries, took the church into partnership in the work. Every church that is faithful to its high calling realizes this partnership. The needs and the results both call for the fullest sympathy and the largest activity on behalf of this enterprise. It represents the transcendent opportunity for the investment of influence.

Rev. F. W. Patterson spoke with eloquence and persuasive force on behalf of the Northwest work. Few enterprises, he believed, could offer greater inducements than the Northwest mission work. He spoke of the greatness of the country and its resources. A hundred years ago Lord Selkirk had said that the country west of Lake Superior was capable of sustaining a population of 30,000,000 of people living by agriculture alone. This forecast seems in a fair way of being realized. Last year 65,000 persons came into the country. The immigration from the United States is considerable, and constantly growing in volume. It will not be long before there are more people west of Lake Superior than east of it. But with this rapidly increasing population there is great spiritual destitution and ignorance, and consequently great need of the gospel which Baptists preach. Much had been done considering the available means and there is great need that more shall be done. The great requirement is more money with which to support missionary pastors. The Baptists of the Northwest are giving most liberally, but if the work is to have adequate support and a great opportunity is not to be lost a larger measure of help must come from the east.

At the close of the service a collection was taken on behalf of the Northwest work amounting to some \$35.00.

At the opening of the Saturday morning session a sermon was preached by Rev. O. P. Brown from I Peter 4:1-2. The discourse dealt with the methods of spiritual warfare and the foes to be opposed by the followers of Christ. It was stimulating and helpful.

The report on Systematic Benevolence, presented by Rev. G. A. Lawson, held up the New Testament standard of benevolence as that of complete consecration. God has laid upon Christians the duty of evangelizing the world. This involves sacrifice for the sake of Christ's cause. If all were faithful to duty and privilege in this matter every channel of benevolence would overflow, and there would be abundance in our denominational treasuries. The report emphasized the importance of systematic giving and expressed the opinion that no Christian should give less than a tenth of his income. It also commended the 20th Century Fund to the sympathy of the churches. In the discussion which followed the reading of the report some of the pastors spoke of their successful experience in the effort to promote systematic giving in their churches, also the importance of the subject under discussion and the opinion was expressed that a place should be given it in some of the more public meetings when subjects were discussed from the platform. The people need to be shown the blessings connected with Christian stewardship. It was said that