

The Home Mission Journal.

A record of Missionary, Sunday-School and Colportage work. Published semi-monthly by the Committee of the Home Mission Board of New Brunswick.

All communications, except money remittances, are to be addressed to

THE HOME MISSION JOURNAL,
56 Dock Street, St. John, N. P.

All money letters should be addressed to
REV. J. H. HUGHES,
Carlton, St. John.

Terms, - - - 50 Cents a Year

NOTICE.

Anyone sending us 50 cents—the subscription price of THE HOME MISSION JOURNAL for one year—will receive the paper from now until the end of 1900.

The Bible as Literature and Much More.

ROBERT STUART MACARTHUR.

XI

(Continued from last issue.)

The Contents of Scriptures.

The nature of the contents of the Scriptures also furnishes a strong argument in favor of their inspiration. The inherent excellencies of both Testaments witness to their heavenly origin. The New Testament particularly stands out in marked separation from all other contemporary literature. In matter, effect, and motive, it is beyond all comparison superior to all other literature. In many respects, in its thought and expression it is to allly opposed to the entire spirit of the age in which it was written and the people to whom it was primarily given. The development of literature in different countries is recognized among all literary students; but the New Testament, in its pure thought, heavenly atmosphere, and divine influence, stands apart from all the laws of movement and attainment among uninspired writers of every country and century. The volume possesses a unity, a singleness of purpose, and an elevation of tone which stamp it as a work alike of human genius and of divine inspiration. Its statements are characterized by a sublime simplicity and a divine sublimity. Its calmness, comprehension, reticence, and majesty differentiate it from all the literatures of the world. Well may Van Oosterzee say: "He who will acknowledge in Scripture nothing higher than a purely human character, comes into collision not only with our Lord's word and that of his witnesses, but also with the Christian consciousness of all ages." It is impossible to account for these exalted qualities on any other hypothesis than that the writers of this uncommon volume were under the special influence of God in thought and speech. These records have been subjected to every conceivable form of criticism, and yet they have remained unimpeached and unimpeachable. There stands God. These records are as much superior to the traditions of mere men as Christ is superior to all false christi, who for a time have challenged the thought of men simply to disappear in total silence or to linger before men in utter dishonor.

It would seem that in the apostolic church inspiration was not confined to the apostles. Portions of Scripture were written by others than apostles, and were yet in harmony with the spirit, doctrine, and facts of the apostles as given in their Scriptures. To this class belong, probably, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and certainly the Gospels of Mark and Luke. All testimony points to Mark as the companion and secretary of Peter, from whose early teachings he probably composed his Gospel; and it is certain that in his writings Luke had the assistance and endorsement of the apostle Paul. The Old Testament was Christ's Bible. He loved it; he quoted it; he endorsed it. But he never once criticized it. The Jews of the time of Christ universally recognized the Old Testament writings as sacred; and the progress of our investigations in history, archaeology, and

exploration all tends to confirm the statements of the ancient Scriptures. Repeatedly did Christ cite the Old Testament as undisputed authority; Matt. v:17; xi:13; xv:4; xxi:31; and in many other passages. The apostles in all their writings, as in 2 Tim iii:16, and 2 Pet. i:20, 22, directly assert the inspiration of the Old Testament.

From the days of primitive Christianity the Bible has been received as a book containing the truest history, the sublimest poetry, the deepest philosophy, the purest morality, and the highest revelation. "Search the Scripture," said Christ, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me." The Bible has no rival. It is the Mont Blanc; it is the Himalaya of literature. What Christ, the living Word, was as compared with other men on the earth, that the Bible, as the written Word, is to-day as compared with other books. It comes to us with the authority of heaven; it guides us to the blessedness of heaven. Give this unique book earnest, believing, prayerful study. Loving obedience to its teachings will give the best evidence of its inspiration. They and only they who obey Christ can truly know His doctrine. Let us bless God that the Bible, as His highest revelation, is worthy the praise of saints and seraphs; it would be the theme of redeemed sinners in heaven if it contained only this one verse; the Bible in miniature, and a verse containing sufficient truth, if fully believed, to save the whole earth, a verse which shows us the very fear of the eternal God: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii:16.

(To be Continued)

How to Promote Revivals.

The history of revivals in the past shows that they must begin with a great revival of prayer. The whole trend of the teaching of scripture is to the effect that in the outpouring of the Spirit, God has shut himself up in the prayer of his people. Take the case of the return of the Jews from Babylon; although God had definitely promised through Jeremiah that their captivity was to last only seventy years, it was not until Daniel found this promise and went to pleading it in fervent, importunate prayer, that the decree of Cyrus was issued. Look at Pentecost: it was while the church was assembled in earnest waiting upon God—and after this had continued for ten days, too—that the flood gates were opened and the mighty blessing came. Take the revivals in Wesley's day, and you will find that they had their beginnings in the groans and tears of David Brainerd, as he poured out his heart before God in far away America. I have never known or heard of a genuine revival of religion that did not begin in this way.

The centuries that have passed since Jesus Christ came to this earth have proven over and over again that in the work he came to do and the message he came to bring, the deepest needs of men are fully met, and in that work and message alone. The one message of the church in the last months of the nineteenth century is still of Jesus Christ crucified, risen, and coming again.

Let us be faithful in the delivery of it, honest in dealing with our own hearts in the light of it, continue instant in prayer for God's blessing to attend it, and before this century closes there will be a sound of abundance of rain.—D. L. Moody, in Record of Christian Work.

In order to a belief in Christ's second coming and personal reign, it is not necessary to accept any given theory as to how this is to be accomplished. That is a distinction that it is well to bear in mind.

Deacon George W. Chipman, senior deacon of Tremont Temple, member of the Executive Board of the Missionary Union, and one of the most widely known Baptists of New England, dropped dead in front of the Old Granary Burying Ground in Boston on Tuesday morning. Tremont Temple will not seem the same without his familiar face.

Church Prosperity.

ALBERT C. APPELGARTH, PH. D.

1. What is the Purpose of the Church.

As one looks on the Christian world, two courses are open to the observer. He may be a pessimist. He may view the dark side. He may declare times are not as they were. Now the church is impotent. Ichabod is inscribed above its portals. God has practically forsaken his people.

With such opinions I have little sympathy. They never honor God. They proclaim to the world that the arm of the Almighty is shortened. To be sure, it is admitted that in former days Jehovah did valiantly. But now His power has been wrested from him by the devil.

Fortunately, another attitude is possible. A person may be an optimist. To him the church of the 19th century is a vast improvement upon that of any former period. He views all things ecclesiastical through rose-colored glasses. On every hand prosperity smiles.

This position is infinitely better than the other. But it is not perfectly correct. In fact, neither course is desirable. Both of these positions contain wisdom blended with folly. Now, as ever, the truth lies half way between these two extremes.

Every one must recognize that the church has its faults. These are sufficiently patent for all eyes to behold. But the church cannot fail. God girds it with his strength; and Divine blessings are like flowing rivers, they deepen and widen until they sweep their currents into the sea.

Of one thing there can be no question. All wish health and long life to the church. Even the worldling does this. History has demonstrated that the church has accomplished what no other institution could perform. It has lifted whole races out of barbarism. To day it is as great an honor to be an Englishman or an American as it was in the olden times to be a Roman. But two thousand years ago the fore-fathers of the English on both sides of the Atlantic were nothing but savages. What has civilized England and America? Simply the cross of Jesus Christ.

The world, also, wishes well to the church, because it is the best police agent known to earth. Shut up the churches, and our jails, our penitentiaries will be crowded. In all ages the church has prevented crime. Peace, quiet, harmony, have invariably followed in its train. To secure these blessings great corporations freely spend money in establishing Christian missions and Y. M. C. Associations among their men.

In these days, therefore, we hear much about church prosperity. The converted and unconverted alike wish it success. But to the Christian, the church is more than either a civilizing influence or a police agency. It has higher aims. It is a Divine institution. It stands for the visible kingdom of God. This is why every redeemed man and woman is to seek first its interest.

But if the prosperity of the church is to be really promoted, the meaning of this oft-repeated phrase must be clear. In order that such may be the case, consider.

What is the purpose of the church of Jesus Christ? Our ideas upon this subject will largely determine our conduct. But, as to the object of the church, many are mistaken. Certainly, however, there is no occasion for obscurity. The Bible has distinctly defined its sphere. When the Scriptures are consulted, some things become evident.

Of course, human life requires relaxation, recreation, amusement. But this was never the purpose of the church. If possible, every individual in this enlightened land should be intelligent. But I have nowhere read that the Messiah founded his church to educate the people in worldly knowledge, desirable as that may be. All Christians ought to be cordial and friendly in their intercourse with each other. Yet sociability alone is not the church's mission on earth.

What, then, is its object? The answer is found in the name. It is known as the church of Jesus Christ. If true to its original intention, therefore, it must carry on the same work which the Master began to do while upon earth. Do you inquire what that was? Perhaps a three fold division may make the matter plainly: (1) To