

Report on Denominational Literature.

To the N. B. Western Association. Prepared by Rev. A. Freeman, Chairman of the Committee and Adopted by the Association.

Your committee on denominational literature in making their annual report can only go over the same ground so well broken up before by those better qualified to instruct and edify.

There is emphatically a denominational standpoint for Baptists, a strictly Baptist standard of principle and practice, set up by no less authority than the Word of the Lord, and maintained through all the ages in the midst of scandal, suffering and death. While there is a certain comity to be practiced towards other religious bodies, a certain generosity in matters not essential, there can be no compromise in matters of truth and righteousness. The standard of faith can never be lowered. We cannot turn from the "thus saith the Lord" and delight our souls in the "thus saith the man," though he be a Pope. There never has been an age when the Word of the Lord needed a more emphatic statement than the age now upon us. The spirit of the age demands the speaking of smooth things: the telling of pleasant dreams: the letting down of the Word of the Lord from its high tower of observation: the trailing in the dust of the banner of loyalty to love, unfurled by Jesus Christ. The levelling down process has many an advocate even in our own ranks, while the levelling up process is pronounced with bated breath. Neither the Baptist pulpit nor the Baptist press is expected to keep prominently before the world the distinctive principles and practices of the New Testament. That pulpit or that press daring to expose error or to emphasize truth as it is in Jesus along certain lines of thought, is set down upon by the "noblesse oblige" of our own denomination. Brethren such things ought not to be. We must not sell our birthright for a mess of red pottage. We must let the world know that as Baptists we are as staunch, as of old, to the truth, the whole truth, and to nothing but the truth.

We have a literature, that, in the Kingdom of God sense, is purely denominational. A literature not to be amended, that the higher or the lower criticism can never taint, that must always be left as clean as the source from which it came; that has been through the ages, in itself as a fountain of life. It is found between the two lines of the Bible. This old book has been the test of our fathers and of our grandfathers, and is still good for us. Just as good as it was for Moses, for David, for Isaiah, for Paul, for Jesus; just as good as for Bunyan, for Mayland, for Spurgeon or for Gordon. "The sermon on the Mount" stands for all time as the law of the kingdom. The sermon on the day of Pentecost as the creed of the kingdom so long as Jesus is King and any attempt to amend or abridge either of these, in the interest of sectarianism, is a thrust at the "riven heart." It is ours, as a denomination, to see to it that this book occupies, in the world's literature, the place assigned to it of heaven. Just so long as there is a pulpit or a printing press to protest against the dissection of Moses not a hair of his head shall fall to the ground. Just so long as there is a denomination to stand by Jesus to preach "Christ crucified" to the whole world, so long shall that denomination be maintained in its integrity. Swerve from the law and creed of Jesus and Jesus will seek another people as He, in the olden time, sought another King. What Baptists most need to-day is a new baptism of the water, fire and spirit of the old and ever new book.

It has been seriously said that if men of the other professions were as ignorant of their distinctive literature as a large proportion of the ministers of the gospel are of the literature of the Bible, their names would very soon cease to appear on the "roll call." Whether this be so or not we would be slow to declare it other than a slander. But it is doubtless very near the truth to say that many calling themselves Baptists are profoundly ignorant of the Bible in its divine interpretation and binding obligation upon the beliefs and conduct of men. The literature is in the Bible, but it waits to be incarnated into life. Sound literature makes sound mind and sound heart. In the outlook for the future, our denomination, true to the instruction of the word—"the logos" has nothing to fear. The advance of the Kingdom of God is to be along the line of Bible literature. Truth prevails, error fails. Jesus reigns the supreme righteousness. That literature which has not its root in revelation, which is not an expansion of the truth as it is in Jesus, is worthless to the race as "dime novels, as worthless dirt." That the Baptist denomination is set for the defense of truth "goes without saying." The ringing cry of the Master is watch. It is not to be regretted that Bible study is being emphasized as never before, especially in schools of higher learning and in the organizations of young people. The world is on fire, and the demand is for water and fuel—power must be generated.

There is a literature of the common school to be cared for. Text books and circulating libraries for special and general instruction are to be provided, and these ought to tap for fact and inspiration the fountain head of truth. But the tomahawk and the scalping knife are on the warpath. A conspiracy has been entered into purely in the interests of sectarianism to corrupt the mind of every child in New Brunswick and that too as to the Word of God. The definition of Greek word Baptizo is given in the speller as being "to dip or sprinkle," which has on the face of it a self-evident error as no word can be found in any language to express the two distinctive ideas "dip" and "sprinkle." Jesus seized upon that word to state an act that would express for all time a most vital idea of the Kingdom of God and it is ours to see that this idea is kept in its purity before the mind of this generation. Let us not fail of an open protest till the correction is made, till the definition is truthfully amended. We must not forget that the Baptist denomination is set for truth and against error for the whole world and not simply for a sect.

There is a literature for the Sabbath School, the most important institution outside of the church, the kindergarten of the church, is to be cared for by the church. This literature should be especially adapted to the youthful mind. It should not be watered into sickly sentimentality, nor be a leading into a "vanity fair;" but such as will fascinate to purity, and stimulate to truth. What is wanted here is a literature of womanly tenderness, of virile thoughtfulness, and of pure suggestion. The very best is not too good for the Sabbath School; and everything but the best should be carefully set aside. If there must be any organization outside of the church for the conduct of the Sabbath School, let it be with the express understanding that the American Baptist Publication Society's literature be used, as this is well known to be the best.

There is a literature for the schools of higher education and we will only say in passing that these institutions will do well to be on the watch-tower. The speculative tendency of literary thought is not always heavenward. There is a gospel of dirt, proceeding from the master mind of this generation as well as of the past, and that gospel will foul the most brilliant intellects, unless offset by intellectual life and sleepless energy. We would not demand that every writing be free from exaggeration or personal conceit, what some call heresy; that every statement strictly conform to set theological idea and old pious notion. But we do demand that every writing have a soul expanding tendency, a heart-mellowing influence. There may be objection to some of the sentiments of "The Mind of the Master," by Ian Maclaren, but the whole tendency of the book is Christward. We need not grovel in the mire because some seraph wing in contact with earth has taken to itself a particle of dust. For know thou that no particle of dust can cleave to seraph wing in heaven's pure air, neither can any stain mar the soul, that has taken into its inner sanctuary the Christ of God.

There is a literature for the home. The most holy of all the holies, the beginning of all carefulness, the fountain-head of life, the sanctuary out of which we look with unblurred eye into the heaven of love and power. It is ours to see that the home literature is such as fills the immortal with just conception of life and pure thought of God. A literature that makes the homely duties of this life, the shining way upon which the angels ascend and descend upon the Son of Man. A literature that transforms the lowliest sphere of this mortal life into a paradise of God, into the glad doing of God's will, that literature that lowers the standard of morality, that creates a morbid craving for notoriety, that plays fast and loose with purity, that gives the least possible license to prodigality, or that sets a mere sectional value upon the word of God, should be carefully labelled "deadly poison," and banished every home. We would commend as guardian of the literature of our homes as well as of our Sabbath Schools the Baptist Book Room of Halifax and the MESSENGER AND VISITOR of St. John, which is among the best literature of its kind, and ought to be read in every Baptist home.

As a denomination we should be well girded for the future. For the time is not far distant when there will be a turning back from the artificial to the natural; from the organization of bluster to the settled divinely appointed order; from the feverish world haste to the prophetic soul rest; from the mammon worship to the obedience of the enthroned Christ.

Unhappy is the man for whom his own mother has not made all other mothers venerable.—Richter.

The Christian Endeavor Union of Santa Clara County, California, has prepared pledge cards for bicyclers. There is space for five signers, each of whom promises not to ride for pleasure on the Lord's Day.

Diamond Jubilee Address.

DELIVERED BY REV. H. F. ADAMS, TRURO, JUNE 20TH, 1897.

The history of a nation is sacred. Especially is the history of the English nation sacred to every British heart, containing the struggles and triumphs of a thousand years. To one who observes little and thinks less, there will appear nothing remarkable in the abounding temporal blessings, political privileges and religious liberties which crown the sexagenary of our noble Queen. But to a student of history, to one who compares the lives of nations, and traces effects to their legitimate causes, there rises in his soul a fountain of deepest gratitude to the Almighty Father, for the inheritance received from the fathers. The expansion of the Empire, and inflow of populations, the growth of commerce and the tributary trade from the countries of the world; the abounding great literature and the general education of the people; the circulation of the Bible and world wide evangelization, are the fruitage harvested through the long and laborious sowing of millions of heroic men and women, the founders and defenders of the Empire; our heritage today.

A comparison of 1837 with 1897 of the national life and status will produce a contrast only equalled by a comparison of the girl Queen of 18, with the great-grandmother Queen of 78. And while an analysis of this period would reveal a multiplicity of operating forces, that have contributed to our present glorious national life, we willingly pause, first to think of, look at, and speak of the one noble woman who has been our noble Queen for 60 years. It is remarkable, nevertheless true, that England's two great Queens, Elizabeth and Victoria, contributed to the growth and greatness of the Empire, more than any two Kings in our history. During their reigns, liberty of the people and loyalty to the throne were, and are two great features of their reigns, that were the natural results of sound government at home, and colonization abroad, based on those eternal principles revealed in the Book of God, for the right and wise government of nations.

As we gaze upon the map and see the world Empire that Britons have reared, it would seem to an ignorant outsider that the lone Widow of Windsor Castle could not have had much to do with so vast an undertaking. But a knowledge of facts will entirely change such a view. History, (and especially as history is embodied in the biographies of statesmen who have occupied the great offices of the nation); reveals a personality that has been a strong factor in all the great movements of the past 60 years work of empire building. And while not obtruding her opinions upon the Cabinets that have been in power, she has always made them feel that they were her Executive, and she is their Queen. More than once she has averted war with great nations, by requesting her Premiers to modify their communications with other governments, while corresponding on critical issues of great importance. While we find in her Queenhood many fine qualities, that claim equality with any who have set on the throne, for statesmanship, it is rather her qualities as a woman, a wife and a mother that have drawn her 350,000,000 of subjects to her in unflinching attachment. For 60 years she has been before the world as a pure, and purity-loving woman. The admiration of Britons, and the envy of all other nations, her young life has been an exhibition of womanhood's noblest graces, and which has never been discounted by any whisperings of an injurious character. As a wife, her fidelity to the sacred vow that made her and the Prince Consort one, was as beautifully complete as was the perfect obedience she rendered to her ideal of womanhood. The abounding descriptions and pictures of the Queen's family circle during the 21 years of their married life, indicate a degree of domestic felicity that contrasts not only with all her predecessors on the British throne, but with the home life of nearly all contemporaneous sovereigns. And as a mother, we know that she has ever shown the deepest solicitude for the careful culture of every one of her nine children. And this Motherhood has been extended in unstinted watchcare over all the large and growing family of her grand-children, and great-grand-children. Indeed, our noble Queen has reached an Englishman's ideal of womanhood, wifehood and motherhood, hence our love and our devotion to, our praise and pride of, this unique woman.

Surely a Queen of such beautiful virtues, fidelity to principle, and heroic statesmanship, is a special gift from the Almighty Father. And for one who has lived so purely, and reigned so wisely, we feel it an incumbent duty, yea even a joyous privilege to unite our thanks, giving with 350,000,000 in the Empire, and praise and adore the King of Kings for His great gift to us a nation of nations, extending from the rivers even unto the ends of the earth.

While we are truly grateful for this noble woman, and all the good influences in the nation, we must not forget that mightier influences have emanated from another throne, which have been all-powerful in moulding the

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