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HAMILTON, MAR. 1, 1893.

### The Union Question.

In the Feb. 1st number of this paper there was given an account of a conference on Christian union recently held in Toronto. We refer to that now to remind our readers that at that conference there was a very general and very earnest desire expressed for union, and that some at least of the speakers very positively declared their belief that denominationalism is a sin and sectarianism a curse. This is quite in harmony with the teaching of the apostle Paul, for example, in I Cor. iii. 1-4. When the conclusion is arrived at that divisions are sinful, those who love the Lord Jesus Christ will not need to be told that immediate efforts should be made to remove that particular sin. It is gratifying to notice that many pious persons have come to see that sectarianism is plainly contrary to the will of Christ and that they are really concerned lest they themselves may be implicated in the sin.

To admit that divisions are sinful is to believe in the possibility and necessity of union and to feel under obligation to do what in us lies to abolish the one and accomplish the other. And so we find that the thoughts of many are directed to the question, How can union be effected? Whether those who spoke in favor of union at the late Toronto conference have in their minds clear ideas of how it can be realized, we cannot say; if they have, they did not then so express themselves. An attentive listener might conclude that in the mind of none was there a scheme formulated. And he might further conceive that before an attempt were made to devise a plan of union it would be well to decide whether the Bible would be taken as the exclusive and final authority, or whether tradition, history and reason would be regarded as having co-ordinate, or even subordinate, weight as authorities. The settlement of this point is fundamental and vital. In fact, we may say that the great question of our day, from the Christian standpoint, is, What of the Bible? Is it an inspired book? Does it contain the word of God? Does it give a correct account of the sayings and doings of Jesus of Nazareth and of His apostles? This question, or these questions, or such questions, are in the minds of the people to-day perhaps as never before, and it behooves religious teachers—all those who in any wise are responsible for the religious thought and life of their fellow-men, to prepare themselves to answer such questions truly and intelligibly. For the increase of general knowledge and the enlarged acquaintance with the Bible as a book which characterizes our day and country, make it absolutely necessary that the people should receive a fuller account than our fathers received of the origin, character and authority of the Bible. And as we have intimated little substantial progress can be made in the direction of Christian union unless the

parties desiring union are agreed as to the place and authority of the Bible, especially of the New Testament.

The position of the Disciples of Christ in regard to the Bible may be briefly stated here. They hold the Old and New Testaments to be both inspired books and both profitable for these days, but they maintain that it is the New Testament alone that sets forth what the church of Christ is, what Christians are, and that what cannot be clearly established from the New Testament must not be imposed upon believers as a test of fellowship. They urge that the New Testament, and the New Testament alone, must be our authority in determining the basis upon which all believers can unite. And while willing to receive what light history and tradition may be able to throw upon the interpretation of the Scriptures, they contend that whatever is necessary to the well-being of the individual Christian and of the whole body of believers is clearly presented in the New Testament, and may be easily discovered without the aid of tradition or of history.

In harmony with such an estimation of the New Testament, the Disciples, in seeking for a basis of union, pass over all creeds and confessions, decrees of councils, etc., etc., and take their stand by the side of the Lord Jesus and His apostles. This course simplifies the matter very much and brings the problem within the reach of the average man and woman. We should like to see those Toronto ministers when they renew their conference, March 6th, seek for a solution of the difficulty confronting them along this line.

### Why Christ Gave Himself For Us.

Titus ii. 14: "Who gave himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works." (R. V.)

The question at the head of this article is answered by the beautiful verse quoted, and one might well feel that no words of his were needed to add to its beauty, clearness and force. Yet it is not impossible but that a few remarks may help some reader to realize it more fully and to undertake to live more faithfully in harmony with the Saviour's purpose in giving Himself for us. For we need to remember that if we have our hope set on Him we should purify ourselves even as He is pure. We must "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling" if we would have "God to work in us both to will and to work for His good pleasure." It is not going too far to say that unless a person is consciously and steadily thus working in the line of God's purpose he is not living a Christian life. The Lord prayed for His disciples, not that they should be taken out of the world, but that they should be kept from the evil. The apostle Paul exhorted Christians to "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." James wrote: "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." And Peter gave this admonition: "As children of obedience, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in the time of your ignorance; but like as He which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living." And John wrote: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye may not sin." And it is evident that when Jude wrote exhorting "the called" "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints," he

had in mind a class of professors who were teaching and practising impurity rather than purity. In Rev. xxii. 14 (R. V.) it is declared: "Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city." And so while we tarry here let us pray:

"More purity give me,  
More strength to overcome;  
More freed from earth-stains,  
More longings for home;  
More fit for the kingdom,  
More useful I'd be;  
More blessed and holy,  
More, Saviour, like Thee."

### Foreign Missions.

Inasmuch as the Foreign Society only asks one collection from the churches for Foreign Missions during the year, it is very important that collections should be as generous as possible; and, of course, if the collection cannot be taken up on the first Lord's day in March, some other Lord's day soon after that will do. Every church should give something; every Disciple should give something. Everyone who loves the Lord must desire that all mankind should have an opportunity of loving Him too. How dwelleth the love of Christ in us if we can hear unmoved of countless thousands who have never heard His blessed name? It appears to us that we scarcely need to enquire whether the Lord commands us to "Preach the Gospel to every creature." We simply need to ask ourselves, do we believe the Gospel, do we find it a source of present blessing and an assurance of future glory? If we do, and we do, if we are true Christians, how can we refrain from singing:

"Shall we, whose souls are lighted  
By wisdom from on high,  
Shall we to man benighted  
The lamp of life deny?"

The great apostle declared: "The love of Christ constraineth us." Can we say so now in 1893?

Bro McLean says the churches in Canada usually give generously to the Foreign work. Brother, sister, reading this, are you going to do your part towards keeping up this good reputation? Let us all be preparing ourselves by meditation upon the Word of God and by prayer, to make an offering worthy of the great cause of our glorious Lord.

### Notes.

"We have heathen enough at home," do we hear somebody say? Indeed we have, not only enough, but too many for a so-called Christian land. And it is more than possible that there are more heathen at home than there would be if all we Christians at home were doing our duty. But we can do our full duty to the heathen at home, and do a great deal more for the heathen abroad than we are doing now.

Here is something especially suitable for young preachers.

The *Christian Advocate* thinks: "Christian ministers are not policemen. If God had wished them to be a sort of spiritual patrol among their fellow-men, he would have equipped them, not with a message of truth and a spirit of power, but with the black-thorn clubs of the Irish constables. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." This old but unworn truth is affectionately commended to the consideration of those dear brethren who seem disposed to imitate Paddy, and to hit every head that comes in sight."

Is there any scripture forbidding the church to receive money from saloon-keepers?

Of course there is no passage which specially prohibits such a course; but it would be an easy matter to find some

principle of the gospel which would prohibit such a course. The casting of pearls before swine, which Christ prohibits, gives us the principle that we are not to place holy and sacred things at the mercy of brutish or carnal-minded men, or make them dependent on the support of such men. We would blush for shame for any church that would solicit the blood-money of liquor-sellers to support the pure gospel of Christ. The Spirit of God, which abides in Christians, teaches them to avoid such a course. His sanctifying power must be absent where such a course is pursued.—*Christian Evangelist*.

Nevertheless, where the liquor traffic is a legalized institution we all do receive support from the traffic, even if we do not solicit it from the liquor-sellers, and we take occasion once more to remark that the liquor-sellers are not so guilty as the people who license them. Give the liquor-dealers their due. The community is the greatest sinner, and the only way any of us can clear ourselves is to do all in our power to have the licensed traffic abolished.

J. B. Briney, now of Knoxville, Tenn., is an acute thinker, an able writer and a sound preacher of the Gospel. He has recently been delivering a series of lectures in Texas. We find one on the "Relations of Faith and Conscience" reported in the *Christian Courier*. We make one extract here, which is worthy of careful thought:

For my part I can preserve my conscience intact by protest and opposition, and while I can do this, the heavens may fall before I will rupture a church of the Lord Jesus Christ because the rest will not bow to my notions about things in regard to which God has not spoken in "plain terms," even though I call my notions by the misnomer of "conscientious convictions." In all matters of inference my inference is worth just as much as, and no more than, the inference of my brother who is as intelligent in the scriptures as I am; and when I insist that my inference shall prevail against the inferences of all the rest, I assume the offensive and interdicted prerogative of lordship over God's heritage. Yea, more; I become a disturber of the peace of Zion, and am guilty of the heinous crime of severing the body of Christ in twain if I cause a rupture.

If the law of God says in "plain terms" do this, my conscience says do it; and if a church will not do it, it is in rebellion against the King, and has ceased to be a church, and I must separate myself from it, or become guilty before God. If the law of Christ says, "Do not this," and a church will do it, it is in open rebellion against the King, and my conscience obliges me to come out of the organization because it has ceased to be a church of Christ, and has renounced Him. But if the law of Christ says neither yea nor nay, I become a rebel in arraying my will against the will of the church to the extent of a rupture.

### Our Omnibus.

Have you read "On the Rock"?

If you would like to have a copy of "On the Rock," put in 25 cents extra when you are sending your subscription for the CANADIAN EVANGELIST.

We call special attention to Bro. Jackson's offer of Revised New Testaments at low rates. Everybody should have a copy of it.

"The great problem is not how to save the world, but how to persuade each Christian that it is his business to be the means of saving some one man in the world."—DR. PARKHURST.

When you have read page two of this paper, please show it to your friends. Do not turn away from the long articles. Bro. Knowles and Bro. Macdonald are dealing with themes that are very timely in this country now.

We are very much pleased to be able to say that Bro. E. Sheppard is recovering from his serious, protracted and painful illness. He is able now to attend the Lord's day morning meetings and address the church.

Bro. J. B. Lister has sent in his resignation as preacher for the church at Minnedosa, Man., and expects to leave there soon. He is open for an engagement elsewhere. Churches in Ontario now without preachers should address Bro. Lister at Minnedosa until further notice.

A brother who has a small family, has had some experience as a preacher and desires to fit himself for greater usefulness, is willing to preach for a small church at a moderate salary. His name, address and references will be furnished upon application to the editor of this paper.

The CANADIAN EVANGELIST has many warm friends, we are glad to know. But many of these friends seem to think when they have paid their own subscription, that is all they can do for the paper. We should like them to try to get a new subscriber.

Have you been reading Bro. McLean's appeals with reference to the special collection for Foreign Missions? And have you made up your mind to do your duty on this occasion? Are you really ready to give as you have been prospered?

The other day an aged sister, who is not now able to meet regularly with a congregation of Disciples, sent us four new subscribers and stated that none of them were Disciples. Why may not other brethren and sisters do likewise?

A brother when sending his subscription to the EVANGELIST takes occasion to say that he does not want to pay for advertisements. The brother does not understand the situation. The advertisements help to pay for his paper. The reading matter is worth many times one dollar a year to an intelligent Christian.

Are you interested in the CANADIAN EVANGELIST? Would you add one to its list of readers if you could? If you are kindly disposed to the paper, please read over the list of offers on page three. You will then perhaps see your way to add at least one to our list.

"O mighty Friend forever near!  
O heavenly help I so soon forgot,  
So oft rebelled against and grieved,  
Unthanked, distrusted, disbelieved;  
Forgive us all, and hold us fast  
Till dawning lights the dark at last,  
And looking back we understand  
How we were kept and knew it not,  
Lord, by thy hand."

Whether Brooklyn shall become the better part of the Greater New York, and Canada shall become quite as good as any other part of the Greater American republic, must be determined by themselves. It is for them to make their choice, and they ought to know by this time how to choose. Invitations are out to both of them.—*The New York Sun*.

Thanks, Mr. *New York Sun*. If the good state of New York were as free to choose as Canada is, we might invite that state to become a part of the Greater Dominion of Canada.

A Methodist preacher in Texas was receiving several candidates into his church. To the question, "How will you be baptized?" some replied, "By sprinkling," others, "by pouring." The last person was a good sister, who replied, "Just like Jesus was." The preacher said: "You misunderstood me; how will you be baptized?" Again