

The Canadian Evangelist.

"GO . . . SPEAK . . . TO THE PEOPLE ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LIFE."

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The Canadian Evangelist

Is devoted to the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ, and pleads for the union of all believers in the Lord Jesus in harmony with His own prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, and on the basis set forth by the Apostle Paul in the following terms: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."—Eph. iv. 1-6.

This paper, while not claiming to be what is styled an "organ," may be taken as fairly representing the people known as Disciples of Christ in this country.

Sudden Conversions.

There has been great dispute as to the genuineness of sudden conversions. There are some who suppose that conversion is a gradual reformation, by which a person, leaving off one sin at a time, will in the course of years be free from their besetments. There is another view of the subject which holds that conversions are wrought by the power of God, and that they may be, and often are, wrought suddenly.

A story is told of a clergyman who preaching in a parish church, declared that conversions were impossible—six months was the shortest time in which a man could be saved. A laboring lad had recently been converted in a little cottage meeting. A farmer who was reluctant to allow the use of his kitchen for the purposes of social worship, heard of his conversion. Seeing him a few days afterward at work in a field, he asked him if the report was true—that he was converted.

"Yes," said the lad, "it is true."

"But the parson says it is impossible to get converted in less than six months."

"Well," said the boy, "it may take the parson six months to get converted, but all I know is that it did not take me so long."

It is believed that the Apostle Paul was pretty thoroughly converted, and he was no easy subject to be persuaded or cajoled. He left Jerusalem breathing out threatenings and slaughter. Near Damascus we find him crying out, "What wilt thou have me to do?" Three days after we see him in the house on Straight Street praying, and we hear Ananias saying to him, "Why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." It took no six months to change that persecuting sinner into a saint of God. Philip, sent by the Holy Ghost, found the Ethiopian treasurer on the Gaza road, reading the scriptures and enquiring, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" He preached to him Jesus, and came to a certain water and baptized him. Philip was caught away, but the traveler went on his way rejoicing.

The Jews who rejected and crucified Christ, when they heard of his resurrection, said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They were bidden to repent and be baptized every one of

them, and there were added to them that day "about three thousand souls." It is true that these were persons who already professed to belong to the people of God; they were not heathen; but the process of conversion in the case of heathen is not necessarily protracted.

The jailor at Philippi was not a Jew, nor is there any evidence that he was a pious man. He knew how to make his prisoners fast, pushing them into an inner prison and securing their feet in the stocks; but when an earthquake shook the prison to the foundations, when the voice of prayer and praise rung out amid the darkness, he was frightened and drew his sword and sought to kill himself. Then he came in trembling and fell down saying, "Men and brethren, what shall I do?" He was told what to do; he believed, was baptized and all his, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

At night he was a rough jailor, imprisoning the servants of God, at midnight he was thinking of killing himself, but before morning he was converted, baptized—he and all his—and "rejoiced, believing in God." And his conversion must have been a strictly orthodox one, for it was under the ministry of the great Apostle Paul, and Silas his fellow laborer.

There is no lack of instances of sudden conversions in the history of the Church of God. In fact all the calls of God preclude the idea of delay, and urge men to come to Christ for healing and salvation and to come at once, not delaying for a more convenient season, nor waiting till better fitted to receive God's mercy. Behold now is the accepted time; behold today is the day of salvation.—*The Common People.*

Unknown Ministers.

There are ministers in humble places where they are scarcely heard of from year to year. Yet in lowly homes and simple churches they meet the people and do a work without which the earth would be poor indeed. They will not be known as great preachers. They will not be spoken of as having achieved notable success. They will not be pointed out as men of commanding influence. They will be unheralded and not widely known. But what would the world and the church be without these earnest, faithful heroes, who work for Christ and for eternity? In the light of "that great day for which all other days were made," when every secret thing shall be brought to light, it will be seen that no place was humble where there was the opportunity to lead a single soul to Christ. To be unheralded here, does not mean that one shall be unknown forever. Usefulness is greatness, and to do one's duty in love to God and man, in one's own place, is to make life a success, so that at last, in the presence of angels and men, all shall see that it was successful and beautiful.—*Selected.*

How easy is the thought, in certain moods, of the loveliest, most unselfish devotion. How hard is the doing of the thought in the face of a thousand unlovely difficulties.—*MacDonald.*

Humility.

The bird that soars on highest wing Builds on the ground her lowly nest; And she that doth most sweetly sing Sings in the shade when all things rest; In lark and nightingale we see What honor hath humility.

When Mary chose the better part, She meekly sat at Jesus' feet; And Lydia's gently-opened heart Was made for God's own temple meet; Fairest and best adorned is she Whose clothing is humility.

The saint that wears heaven's brightest crown In deepest adoration bends; The weight of glory bows him down The most, when most his soul ascends; Nearest the throne itself must be The footstool of humility.

The Portrait of Christ.

Amongst the non-essential but always interesting topics of sacred discussion (says the *Christian Commonwealth*) most Christian people will include that of the Likeness of Christ. Of course the likeness referred to is the physical, not the spiritual. This subject has of late been receiving much critical and artistic attention. Everyone must have been impressed with the fact that although no authentic portrait of Jesus can be said to be extant, yet there is a constant type of physiognomy which attaches to all the ideal pictures of the Saviour. The question rises unconsciously in the mind of a thoughtful observer, how is it that there is a likeness of Jesus everywhere to be seen, which is adopted by every artist? Whence can this typical ideal have been derived? Mr. W. Ke Bayliss has been making this question a matter of diligent investigation, and he has written upon it in an admirable essay. The *English Illustrated Magazine*, in which the article this month appears, contains a striking collection of copies of the most ancient of the traditional portraits found in the catacombs and basilicas. Mr. Bayliss argues that there is a type of likeness of the Saviour's face which can be no mere beautiful dream, for we find it fixed in all the productions of Raphael, Correggio, Michael Angelo, Fra Angelico, and all the great masters of the Renaissance, as well as amongst those of our modern painters, Watts, Burne-Jones, Holman Hunt, &c. No artist ever ventures to depart from it, for he recognizes in the long-established model something greater, truer and more divine than he could himself create. Whence did it come? The answer is convincing. All through the Dark Ages, when art was dead, and when there were no painters for a thousand years who could have invented this ideal, yet it was existing in all its splendour as a living, speaking, authoritative likeness of Christ. Thus nearly 1,600 years ago the likeness of Christ was existing substantially as we know it to day. This at once takes us back to the early times of the Christian era. At that day the likeness was seen everywhere. The Roman and Greek artists all conserved the type. In Byzantium and Rome there was found a traditional likeness, and the Greek

and Roman artists alike followed it. Helena, mother of Constantine, built the Church of S. Prossede to enshrine a portrait she, rightly or wrongly, believed to have been actually drawn by an Apostle. Going back now to the very time of the Apostles, it is found that the Catacombs contained multiplied copies of the likeness. They all seek to copy the type, however rudely, and as this was the age when Roman portraiture flourished, it becomes a certainty that the type must be authentic.

The Pulpit First.

Rev. C. H. Spurgeon cautions ministers not to subordinate pulpit preparation to family visitation. The latter has its place and its importance, but in his judgment the former is of unspeakably more consequence. The value of ministerial visiting depends, of course, on the character of the visit. If it be only an interchange of social chat and local gossip, however innocent in itself, its spiritual value will not be very appreciable. Mr. Spurgeon says:

"I don't know about going from house to house, visiting. Some put it down as a duty for all Christian ministers to visit—to be always visiting. I am not alluding to any brother, but I have not observed anything miraculously good about the preaching of brethren who spend their time in that particular department. With all the force of my being, I say, whatever you do not do, keep your preaching up to the mark. You can do much better by a thoroughly good sermon, than by a dropping in here and there, and talking a little chit-chat. By all means keep the sermons up. The pulpit is the very Thermopylae of this war. Hold the pulpit!"

"The Victorian Baptist."

This paper has been improving so much lately, that we hardly recognize it any more. Not only has it improved in mechanical get up, but its contents have wonderfully improved also. Among other good things lately, has been a splendid discussion carried on between Rev. J. B. Gillison and Mr. Chas. Edgerton, on the subject, "Should Baptist churches admit non-Baptist members?" Mr. Edgerton's second reply in the May number is truly refreshing reading. Mr. Gillison had said: "Personally, I should make spiritual life the only qualification required for Church membership." "But what does the book say?" responded Mr. Edgerton. "Then they that gladly received His word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. The early church did not examine men and women as to the depth of their spirituality, however specious the argument may appear in its favor, but they gladly received those who professed to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and were baptized in his name." Now, we have not the honor of a personal acquaintance with Mr. Edgerton, but from the above we would conclude that he is a very near relation of ours. Mr. Gillison had hinted that at the best baptism was non-essential. This is the refreshing manner he is met by his lay

opponent: "As to it being a non-essential—who says so? Does our Lord? If Christ could associate the act of baptism with the act of faith in the salvation of the world, it is a moot point, whatever our sympathies may lead us to hope or to cherish, as to how far His followers should depreciate obedience to His distinct command." Mr. Gillison had spoken of some of Mr. Edgerton's arguments as "moonshine." If he has any sense of the force of a reply, he won't talk that way again: "Moonshine, forsooth! If Christ thought it worth His while to be buried in baptism, there is no moonshine in us requiring others to follow His example at His own command. Moonshine! If being baptized is set forth by His apostles as the ordinance significant of being buried to the world of sin and rising into newness of life in Christ Jesus, then it must surely be the glorious sunshine of the Son of Righteousness, rather than the pale light Mr. Gillison would have us believe. And in it we would rejoice, and trust by faithful teaching to lead others to enter in also." We rejoice at what we believe to be great boldness for the truth.—*Australian Christian Standard.*

Abstain for a Week to Try Your Appetite.

A young man carelessly formed the habit of taking a glass of liquor every morning before breakfast. An older friend advised him to quit before the habit should grow too strong.

"Oh, there's no danger; it's a mere notion. I can quit any time," replied the drinker.

"Suppose you try it to-morrow morning," suggested the friend.

"Very well; to please you, I'll do so; but I assure you there's no cause for alarm."

A week later the young man met his friend again.

"You are not looking well," observed the latter; "have you been ill?"

"Hardly," replied the other one. "But I am trying to escape a dreadful danger, and I fear that I shall be ill before I shall have conquered. My eyes were opened to an imminent peril when I gave you that promise a week ago. I thank you for the timely suggestion."

"How did it affect you?" inquired the friend.

"The first trial utterly deprived me of appetite for food. I could eat no breakfast, and was nervous and trembling all day. I was alarmed when I realized how insidiously the habit had fastened on me, and resolved to turn square about and never touch another drop. The squaring off has pulled me down severely, but I am gaining, and I mean to keep the upper hand after this. Strong drink will never catch me in his net again."—*Ohio Church Life.*

The following inscription was placed upon the gravestone of a little Irish boy: "I want to be a missionary when I grow up to be a man, but if I should die before I am old enough, I want this wish put on my tombstone, so that somebody else may see it and go in my place."