

# The Canadian Evangelist.

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"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.

### Bible Reading.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY PRINCIPAL GRANT.

The following address was delivered by Principal Grant, of Queen's College, at the Ontario C. E. gathering in Kingston, and should be widely circulated for the benefit of Bible readers:

The title implies that there is a great deal of Bible study in our day, and yet there is also a general complaint that the Bible is not read as it used to be in former days. Both ideas are correct. One has only to glance at the book reviews in any number of a quarterly like the "Critical Review of Theological and Philosophical Literature," or of a monthly like "The Biblical World," or of any of the numerous weeklies of particular churches, or that deal with religious questions generally, especially with Sunday-schools, to see what a constant stream of volumes about the Bible is issuing from the press. There must be a brisk demand, where there is such a supply. On the other hand, one has only to examine a class in a Sunday-school, or even in a college, or to note how seldom the Bible is read by people, as if they were eager to read it or enjoyed its study, to be convinced that the popular ignorance is great, WIDESPREAD AND APPALLING.

Illustrations were given of this general ignorance of and indifference to the Bible. What, then, is the explanation of this apparent contradiction? It is to be found in the fact that the modern movement of thought and new methods of study which are throwing light on all ancient literature, are giving new points of view from which to study the literature of "the people of revelation" both in itself and in its relations to all that man has produced, and particularly to other religions. The modern method of study is historical, rather than dogmatic; literary rather than statistical; comparative rather than isolated; critical rather than credulous; systematic rather than desultory and sporadic; and, above all, it is genetic. That is, it traces everything to sources, and looks for the explanation of anything living to previous life and environment. To study in this way requires time, patience and thoroughness; and all over the Christian world scholars are giving ungrudgingly what is required, and ever-widening circles of students are growing up both in the old and the new

worlds. But neither the modern methods nor the results have been popularized as yet. Besides, the old assiduous study of one book by average readers cannot be looked for, when books are multiplied and newspapers tell us that the whole world is doing from hour to hour. Real students, too, must always be few in number. Consequently, there is, in the meanwhile, a

**GREAT DEAL OF POPULAR IGNORANCE** with a good deal of confusion of mind with regard to the value of the new light that is being cast upon the Bible. Seeing, then, that there is much activity in Bible study, with a great deal of popular ignorance, and that the explanation is to be found in new points of view, and the difficulty of getting at them, what practical suggestions can be given to those who are desirous of knowing the Bible better, and of applying its teachings to daily life? We all feel that this is a scientific age, and that we know a thing only when we know it scientifically, but the Bible is a book for life, and life is the all-important thing. Before giving a few suggestions, it will clear our minds if I enumerate the various ways in which, as a matter of fact, the Bible is used, and point out the best.

First, there is what may be called the irrational or superstitious way. This regards it as a collection of oracles with little or no relation to each other. The book is opened at haphazard, perhaps with a pin, and where the pin points that is the text for us. Or a chapter or a verse is read as a sort of charm without any reference to connection with the context. Or the book is regarded as a treasure house of proof texts, from which we are to prove the system that we have been brought up to believe, and which it is our duty to defend against all comers. Now, so excellent is the Bible, that people get good even from this way of using it. Some word comes home to the heart and abides there. A single thought or text may illuminate the whole pathway of life. But, evidently this method cannot be considered satisfactory.

Then there is what we may call the devotional use of the Bible. This regards it as entirely for our spiritual up-building, and it is studied wholly from that point of view. Parts of it that do not really lend themselves to edification are spiritualized, or later meanings are read into older books and principles of interpretation are adopted that would make the Koran or the Talmud teach Christianity. Much ridicule has been cast on this method, but let it not be forgotten that the deepest truths of the Bible, and those that bear most on our lives, can be understood only by hearts that are right with God. We must bring this key to those truths with us, and the man who has that key is more likely to get at the secret of the book than the best scholar who has it not. Then there is

**THE LITERARY USE OF THE BIBLE.** This regards it as the literature of Israel, and seeks to understand it by the use of those historical and critical canons that have been applied within the last century or two to all literature

with splendid results. This is known as the higher, in distinction from the lower or textual criticism of any literature, and it would be just as wise to kick against its undoubted conclusions as against those of higher mathematics.

The true way to study the Bible is to combine the last two, the devotional and the literary. Good specimens of it are to be found in several volumes of the "Expositor's Bible," such as those on Genesis and Corinthians, by Marcus Dods; on the Psalms, by Alexander McLaren; on Mark, by Dean Chadwick; and on Isaiah, by George Adam Smith. What suggestion can be offered to those who are desirous of profiting by the present activity in Bible study? First, do not be afraid of scholarship or investigation, even though it is called criticism. Criticism is just another word for judgment or common sense. Remember that the Reformers of the sixteenth century, Erasmus, Reuchlin, Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, Colet and others, were the higher critics of their day. They gave us the Greek New Testament and studied the Old Testament in Hebrew under the light of the best scholarship of their times, much to the disgust of people who thought they were disparaging thereby the good old Latin vulgate. We must be

**THE CHILDREN OF THE REFORMERS.** No permanent advantage ever has been or can be made by the church that is not based on a more thorough study and a better appreciation of the Bible. The Salvation Army cannot, in my opinion, be a permanent force because it ignores this. It appeals to the emotional. It has done and is doing good work which we should cordially recognize, but whatever is valuable about its methods the church can adopt, while the Army itself must, like John the Baptist, be content to decrease and rejoice so long as the work is being done.

Some people are greatly alarmed because they are told that there are critics who are unbelievers, explaining everything by natural causes. But for every unbelieving critic, there are ten thousand unbelievers who are not critics. In Paul's day there were men who wrested his Epistles to their own destruction, but Peter did not therefore forbid Christians studying them. There was all the more need for study. So, the cure for evils connected with criticism is more criticism. Do not be afraid of reason, which is the candle of the Lord in the soul. Remember that there are believing critics, and that the Church must take its stand with these or perish morally in the presence of a scientifically educated world. Do not be afraid of truth. It will vindicate itself and come out in fuller beauty the more searching our investigation.

Secondly, remember that it is a one-sided view of the Bible to consider it a book. That view of it arose from what Bishop Westcott calls "a happy solecism," but what was really ignorance of Greek on the part of monks in the thirteenth century. They made the Greek plural a Latin singular, in defiance of grammar, and every time that we speak of the Bible as a book we are just repeating their mistake.

Previously it was always considered as a literature, or what Jerome called "a divine library," or as "the books." We have gained something by thinking of it as a book, but we have lost more. We now know that each book and each collection must

### BE STUDIED BY ITSELF

and in connection with the literary and historical circumstances in which it originated. To study one book or division in that way is to add permanently to our capital. Illustrations of how much we gain from understanding the new points of view were given, from the Law, the Prophets and the Writings, the three divisions of the Hebrew scriptures. In particular, he referred to an article on the Hexateuch by so conservative and trustworthy a critic as the Right Rev. Stewart Perowne, Bishop of Worcester, to be found in the "Companion to the Bible," published with the new Cambridge Bible; also to single books in other divisions of the Old and New Testaments.

Thirdly, learn to distinguish between the divine and the human elements in the Bible. There are both in it, just as they are in man, and they are so closely united that it is difficult to draw the line. But there is such a line. Learn to distinguish a principle or an idea from the form in which it was expressed at some particular time. Know that the letter killeth—the spirit giveth life.

In conclusion, Principal Grant urged his hearers to study the Bible daily, and to give the best hour of the day to it; also to commit long passages, especially from the gospels and the Psalms, to memory, that they might meditate upon them when otherwise engaged; assuring them that the more they might know of the sacred books of other religions, the more highly they would esteem the Bible.

### Yourself.

If you are a true teacher, your earnest desire is to see your pupils grow strong and wise, and loving and good. They will imitate you. What are you, yourself?

That little boy Jack, from Poverty Lane, with the pinched face and eager eyes—what is he to you?

You have heard the old story of the poet, how he said, "I get my inspiration in my garden;" and when the would-be poet asked to see this garden, the wise man led him to a narrow back yard in a crowded city, where a few struggling plants bloomed palely, how the would-be poet looked in ill-disguised contempt at "the garden"; and how the poet, looking reverently upward at God's blue heaven, said: "You see my garden is not very wide nor very long, but, ah! it is wonderfully high."

So little Jack should be your inspiration. He is only a dot, but he is wonderfully capable of becoming noble and high through yourself.

First of all, how is your heart toward Jack? I know teachers who pride themselves on "just hating children." I know "successful teachers" who neither feel love for Jack nor wish for his love in return. They say: "I will not be a hypocrite. I will teach him

well, and discipline him severely, and thus fulfil my duty. I hate maudlin sentimentality."

If you feel this way, if your heart does not go out to Jack in love and divine pity, become anything that is honest, but do not be a teacher.

Your heart being right, study yourself for Jack's sake. . . . Be strong and cheery, and full of human interest to him, so that he will not be afraid to laugh, and cry, perhaps, before you. Do not talk at him, but to him. Go to his home, and invite him to yours. You wish him to be neat. Dress as well as you can, and choose pretty colors, for children love them. Arrange your hair becomingly. . . .

You want Jack to be good. Are you trying to be? You want Jack to be loving. How do you treat your parents and your brothers and sisters? Are you anxious to do them kindnesses, and do you speak tender words at home?

Jack is looking at you yourself, reading you, weighing you. He sees your deficiencies, but he sees also your virtues; for the sake of those, he will make up his mind to be noble, and when he has once made up his mind to be so, you have accomplished as much as the noblest poet or artist or genius, for you have inspired a soul.—LUCY HAYES-MACQUEEN, in the *Journal of Education*.

### Improvement and Amusement.

Hon. William E. Gladstone says, in regard to the problem of pleasure versus work: "You want amusement, but that does not exclude improvement. Do you suppose when you see men engaged in study that they dislike it? No. There is labor, no doubt, but it is so associated with interest, all along that it is forgotten in the delight which it carries in the performance, and no people know that better than the working class. . . . But what is to be desired is that some effort should be made by men of all classes, and perhaps by none more than by the laboring class, to lift ourselves above the level of what is purely frivolous, and to endeavor to find our amusement in making ourselves acquainted with things of real interest and beauty."

### They Soon Grow Old.

They soon grow old who grope for gold  
In marts where all is bought and sold;  
Who live for self, and on some shelf  
In darkened vaults hoard up their pelf,  
Cankered and crusted o'er with mould;  
For them, their youth itself is old.

—*Youth's Companion*.

What will it cost me to be a Christian? Very little in comparison with what it cost my Saviour to offer me the privilege of being a Christian.  
—*Central Baptist*.

I pray you, with all earnestness, to prove and know within your hearts that all things loving and righteous are possible for those who believe in their possibility, and who determine that, for their part, they will make every day's work contribute to them.—*Rushin*.