

"A child that is old enough to become a criminal is old enough to become a Christian." Shall we take it for a watchword? I do not altogether like the ring of it. It gives the devil several years' headway. Would not this be a better motto—*SAVE THE CHILD BEFORE HE IS OLD ENOUGH TO BECOME A CRIMINAL*? That is, see to it that he is a Christian before eight years of age. When? If you are to be his parents, pray that it may be with him as it was with John the Baptist, and with Jeremiah, who were filled with the Holy Ghost before their birth. If you are his teacher, remember that in God's word nothing is said about "coming to years of discretion" before becoming a Christian. There is no limitation as to age, but Christ Himself quoted with approval from the Psalms, that praise is perfected out of the mouths of babes and sucklings.

After all, devil-grass is but one of the hindrances, the hearts of little children are most responsive to right influences:

"Loving thought
And loving prayer,
Loving word
And loving deed."

These are the fruits that seem to be brought forth as by magic in the heart-garden of childhood, and in such abundance that we hardly dare to reach out to garner in the harvest of little Christians. Who among us, teachers or pastors, can say that we have gathered in all of this kind of increase with which God has blessed our labours? We are afraid of the fruit. We fear it is unripe. Hear what Mr. Spurgeon has to say upon this point—"I will broadly say that I have more confidence in the spiritual life of children than I have in the spiritual condition of adults thus received. I will even go further than that, and say that I have usually found a deeper knowledge of the Gospel, and a deeper love to Christ in the child than in the man converts; I will even say that I have sometimes met with a deeper experience in children of ten or twelve, than I have in certain persons of fifty or sixty. Capacity for believing is more in the child than in the man. We are less rather than more capable of faith. Every year brings the unregenerate mind farther away from God, and makes it less capable of receiving the things of God."

"But our fruit is not acceptable, nobody wants it," says some teacher who believes more in child Christians than those about her. "Nobody wants it," did you say? Possibly the Gardner, the Church, may have told you so, but not Christ, the Purchaser. The inconsistent gardener does seem better pleased with the harvest gathered from the ground that was once rock bound than with the fruit that is now being brought forth.

This inconsistent gardener does not seem to realize that he will get the best fruit from the ground that has not for years been given up to wrong activity. He should not cease to do what he can for the poor parts of his garden, and gladly to gather its fruitage, but he must look for the surest crop, the largest yield, the best fruit in the portion where the thorns and stones of sin have not hitherto held sway. We who are the spiritual guardians, the true godfathers and godmothers of the little children, are responsible for a better state of opinion on this matter than now prevails. There is a *dead theology* that gives infants no hope in their death. There is a *living theology*, voiced at the funerals of little children, that says, unhesitatingly, childhood belongs to heaven through the merits of an atoning Saviour. The living theology says that all children, whatever may be their antecedents, are saved until they come to years of accountability. Eight years, as has been before stated, is the age of accountability in law. Who would not hesitate to say that all children over eight years of age are lost, unless they have made a deliberate choice of Christ. On the other hand, who would not hesitate to say, when we look about us, and see the children, particularly in our city streets, grown old before their time, who would not hesitate to say that all children, under eight years of age, are unconsciously saved through the merits of Christ.

The age of responsibility is a question that must be answered according to the surrounding circumstances. The late Dr. Guthrie, of Scotland, tells of a boy brought before a judge as a criminal. He was so small, that the judge, in surprise, asked his age. "Five in body and forty in soul" was the astounding reply. Evidently that boy's age of responsibility had been reached sooner than at eight. Bear in mind that the living theology does not fix the age of responsibility otherwise than to define it as coming to a knowledge of good and evil. Just as maturity in physical life is sooner reached in the tropics than elsewhere, so, when the full sunlight of the Gospel falls upon any land, will maturity in spiritual things be reached.

No one can deny that there is a prejudice against receiving children into Church membership. It was found even among the Apostles, when they tried to hinder the little ones from coming to Christ. Mr. Moody, from wide observation, says—"I find that on this one point of reaching the children, there is more infidelity in the Church than on any other. A great

many professed Christians don't feel rejoiced about the conversion of children, because they think they won't hold out. Ministers preach their sermons right over the children's heads, and then if their own fathers and mothers don't build them up, of course they are dragged off into the world, and you will find, when trying to reach them afterwards, that their last state is worse than their first. It is the best thing we can do to bring our children early to Christ, before their habits or characters are formed. You will find, too, that these turn out the best Christians."

I wish to mention here the questions that the ministers and elders asked a little boy only seven years old, to see whether or not he was ready to join the Church. I will read the answers the boy made:—

Q. "What is baptism the sign of?"
A. "It is a sign that Jesus can wash your heart by praying to Him, and asking Him to forgive our sins."

Q. "What does the wine of the Lord's Supper stand for?"
A. "For Christ's blood."

Q. "And what does the broken bread make us think of?"
A. "It stands for Jesus Christ's broken up body, broken by the nails and the sword." (Only mistake, sword for spear.)

Q. "What do we mean when we call the Bible the Word of God?"
A. "It means that Jesus guided the people not to put in what He did not want them to put in."

Q. "What should one pray for who wants to be a Christian?"
A. "For a wise heart and a good heart."

Q. "Why did Jesus die on the cross?"
A. "To save sinners. Hedied for us."

Q. "What are some of the things one will do if he is a true Christian?"
A. "When the game went wrong they don't get mad. He won't be rude in playing. He won't do naughty things behind the teachers in school. He won't swear or say nasty words. He won't disobey mamma when she tells him anything."

Q. "If a Christian should do anything sinful, what ought he to do about it?"
A. "He'll ask God to forgive him."

Q. "What good does it do to join a church?"
A. "We know that we are in Jesus' care, and He is taking care of us."

Q. "What is it to be a Christian?"
A. "To love God and keep His word."

Q. "How young may one become a Christian?"
A. "As soon as he can understand to love Jesus."

Q. "What is it to repent?"
A. "To be sorry for your sins and stop doing them."

Q. "What are we going to do about it?"
A. "I am thoroughly convinced that I am a sinner, and I am deeply settled conviction is the strongest impelling force in the world. A person with a conviction knows not what weariness means, and acknowledges no defeat. Let us believe that the best hope of the Church is child Christians."

2. Let us make of our teaching earnest work. It need not therefore be dull and heavy, and be taken or given as a dose. A wise teacher will lead even the very youngest children to *delight* in the truth presented in songs and lessons. The Sunday-school session will not be to us a pleasant pastime, instead, it will be an opportunity to "apply saving truth and living grace to the daily lives of the little children."

3. Let us see that something is done for the children in the churches with which we are connected. Mr. Spurgeon says, "There is often nothing in the service for the children. The sermon is over their heads, and the preacher does not think that this is any fault; in fact he rather rejoices that it is so." If our pastors do not think about this matter as we do, let us call upon them occasionally and tell them of our convictions. Let us try to prevail upon them to preach short sermons to the children. Let us invite the children of our classes every Sabbath to go to church, and let us sit with them and initiate them into churchly ways. If we can not do this, let us count each Sabbath all who attend church.

4. Let us inaugurate a weekly children's meeting, in which the children may be prepared for intelligent, faithful Church members, by being taught the Apostles' Creed and the Catechism, the history of the English Bible, the wonderful story of Missions, the workings of the different benevolent boards connected with the Church. A part of this work can be done in the Sabbath-school, but there is not time for all that needs to be done. When such meetings as these are generally held, the objection that children do not know what they are doing in joining the Church will be overcome.

Last of all, let us do our work with hope and a steady purpose, despite the lack of sympathy and co-operation we should like to have. We can do it because we know that the children need our guidance. As we hope to meet them in heaven, let us be faithful to them here.

"Train the little ones for Jesus,
Fling them with us to His throne,
And be careful that our teachings
In our daily lives are shown.
They will follow our example,
Ever watching our every bearing,
That our lamps may never be burning,
That the young their light may see."

Correspondence.

DISRESPECTFUL STATEMENTS.

[To the Editor of the Presbyterian Review.]

SIR,—The published report of a late meeting of the Brandon Presbytery, which appeared in last week's issue of your paper, January 3rd, represents that court as refusing to "receive" a certain petition from the Strathclair congregation, on the alleged ground of its containing "disrespectful statements."

Will you, therefore, allow me to say that I have carefully read the said petition, and that I find nothing in it that need offend any man who is not previously determined to be offended.

Allow me, also, to say that this is not the first time that certain members of that court have attempted to snub elders and managers of this congregation; and I seriously submit that those brethren should find some more commendable employment.

The strange sensitiveness shown in regard to Okanase, seems all the more mysterious in view of the fact, that our Superintendent has, for years, felt the need of serious changes in this Mission, and has, of late, publicly promised that an adjustment must soon be made, which is exactly in the direction recommended by the memorialists of this congregation. Yours, etc.,

JOHN MCKAY,

Presbyterian Minister.

THE GALT CASE. REPLY TO MR. ROGER.

[To the Editor of the Presbyterian Review.]

SIR,—In your issue of Jan. 10th, Mr. G. M. Roger, in referring to the Galt "Heresy Case," asks the suspended friends some questions. In reply to the same, and in as few words as possible, I would say that when a person makes a consecration of his whole being to God—as the Apostle Paul speaks of in Rom. xii. 1—"Body, soul and spirit," which is his reasonable service," and receives by a definite act of faith the gift of the Holy Ghost, we believe that such a person is delivered from sin, and as he walks in the Spirit he is kept from sin, through the indwelling Comforter.

In Luke i. 74, we find these words:—"That he would grant unto us that we being delivered out of the land of our enemies might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our lives." Surely provision was made in the atonement of our Saviour to set the captive free. (See Isaiah lxi. 1). It is our privilege to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. I ask this question, Was it merely a partial deliverance that our Father had in view, when he gave His son, Jesus Christ, to redeem us from all iniquity, or was it a complete deliverance? When we receive Christ in His three-fold office, as taught in the Shorter Catechism, viz., Prophet, Priest and King—as a king to rule in and reign over us, defending us from all our enemies—we are delivered, and the result is we enjoy a full salvation. I mean by this a salvation from sin, not in sin. Because Christ and Belial cannot dwell in the same temple. (See 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17; 1 John iii. 18.) "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." (2 Cor. iv. 4.) "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new." Again in Eph. iv., vs. 22, 23, 24, we are asked to put off the old man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of our minds, and that we put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; that is, after being thus renewed in the spirit of our mind, and translated from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear son, we are then exhorted in the 3rd chapter of the 2nd Epistle of Peter, to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," (2 Cor. iii. 18), "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Strictly speaking, until such time as there is a complete surrender to God without any reservations, giving Him the right of way in our hearts, working in us by His spirit to will and to do of His good pleasure—strictly speaking, I say—it is only then that we begin to grow in the true sense of the word.

Our friend asks the question, Would not such a view immediately paralyze all further effort and render impossible all future growth in grace? Paralyze all further effort! By all means, but the whole ground can be covered in a few words, namely, by that of allowing the Holy Ghost, who is the sanctifier, to do this work in us and for us. The result of which will be a life well pleasing to God. (See Col. i. 10) "being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God," so that as we walk in the Spirit the righteousness of the law will be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

The question is also asked, Is there any Scripture parallel to their position? We answer, Yes. The Bible is brimful of instances along this line. (See 1 Thess. chap. i.) Also 2nd chap. 10th verse, "Ye are witnesses and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among them that believe." Again another question is asked, Is there any Scripture parallel to their position, and in what respect does it differ from the error of the Pharisee, etc.? See Luke xi. 39, and further also Matt. xxiii. 23, "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Again v. 26, "Thou blind Pharisee cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also." v. 27, "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness." v. 28, "Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

The difference, then, between the Pharisee and the child of God is very apparent. The Pharisee outwardly appears beautiful, but inwardly is full of all uncleanness, whereas the child of God who has been

cleansed from sin and all unrighteousness, and is walking in the light and liberty of the Gospel through the indwelling power of the Holy Ghost, his inner life, and consequently his outer life, will then be clean and pure. (1st John iii. 11). "Both a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter." Read the balance of the chapter as well. The result of such a life will be made manifest outwardly by bringing forth the fruit of the Spirit as mentioned in Gal. Love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law—for they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit.

Truly yours,

JNO. D. CRANSTON,
One of the Seven.

GALT.

Church News.

TORONTO CONGREGATIONS—ANNUAL MEETINGS.

CENTRAL CHURCH.

The annual congregational meeting of the Central church, Rev. Dr. McTavish, pastor, was held on Monday evening, Jan. 14th. Proceedings were opened with a social tea. The business session was convened at 8 o'clock, with Rev. Dr. McTavish in the chair. After religious services, Mr. Garnet Meldrum was elected secretary and Mr. A. R. Creelman was made permanent chairman for the evening. Addresses of welcome were then made to Rev. Dr. McTavish—who became pastor during the year—by Mr. J. K. Macdonald on behalf of the Session, by Mr. Geo. Anderson, for the Sunday-school, of which he is superintendent, and by Mr. A. R. Creelman, the latter speaking for the Board of Managers. Rev. Dr. McTavish replied in appropriate terms. Whether or not he should leave his people at Lindsay was long the subject of anxious prayer, but now he was satisfied that his decision was a wise one. He warmly commended the various organizations of the church, and was pleased at their prosperity and progress. The old debt on the church was a burden on his spirit, and he hoped that it would be removed. He would willingly do his share. The annual reports were then presented. The pastor read the report of the Session, showing a total membership of 432. Encouraging reports followed from the W.F.M. Auxiliary and Mission Band, Mothers' Meetings, Ladies' Aid, Sunday-school, (showing an average attendance of 160) Tract Society, Mission school on Elizabeth street, Bible Class and Penny Savings Bank. This last institution reported a balance at the end of the year of \$1,107, an increase on last year of \$220. The report of the Board of Managers, stated that though they began the year with a deficit of \$163.61 they closed with a surplus of \$39.06. The contributions for the year totalled \$5,925.30, and the managers asked for \$5,850 to cover the estimated expenses of next year. The one minor note was the reference to the debt of \$5,000, which has not been diminished since the opening of the church eleven years ago. At the close of the business proper some discussion took place as to the best means of extinguishing the debt on the church. It is understood that a vigorous effort will be made during the present year towards attaining this end. A motion to employ a missionary for the Elizabeth street Mission at a cost not to exceed \$300, if the Session shall so decide, was carried. The following new managers were elected.—Messrs. Petry, Meldrum, Wilson, Livingston, McEwen, Bain, Headley and Watson.

The annual meeting of the Missionary Association in connection with the church was held on the evening of Jan. 23rd. Mr. J. K. Macdonald in the chair. The annual report which was submitted by Mr. John MacEwen, and adopted, showed total contributions by the Association, \$2,551.99. There had been also contributed for missions through the Mission Band \$100, by the Auxiliary of the W.F.M.S. \$236.70, making a grand total of \$2,888.69. The amount contributed was \$3,886.60 more than that of 1887, notwithstanding that the church was without a pastor for six months. This amount was from 216 contributors, or about 166 families, an increase of forty-two contributors over last year.

COLLEGE ST. CHURCH.

The annual meeting of College Street church was held Jan'y 16th, the pastor, Rev. Alex. Gilray, M.A., in the chair, and Mr. W. F. Mitchell acting as secretary. The report of the Session read by Mr. Geo. E. Dalby showed that 157 members had been added during the year, and that 142 had removed, thus making a net increase of 15. The members on the roll at the close of 1888, were 695. Mr. G. B. Salmond presented the report of the Sabbath School Association, which showed an average attendance of 398, with 618 scholars, 56 teachers and 9 officers on the roll. Encouraging reports were read from the Bible class by Mr. Jas. Brown, from the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society by Mr. Gall on behalf of Mrs. Gall; and from the Seaton Village mission by Mr. J. J. Harton. The managers report showed offerings by envelope \$3,522.72 and the loose collections reached \$1,026.48, which was a total increase of \$380.91 over last year. The current expenses for the year were \$5,244.19, an average of \$9.94 per Sabbath. The wisdom of using the envelope system was urged, and it was pointed out that only 250 out of their membership of 695 employ this recognized system of the congregation. Other financial reports showed subscriptions to the building fund, \$1,908.67; received for Missions, \$1,117.22 (to which must be added \$163.05 raised by the Woman's Missionary Society); raised for Sunday School purposes, \$612.00; secured for Seaton Village mission, \$1,562.34. On this latter item, Rev. Alex. Gilray took occasion to say that he had received material aid for this work in Seaton Village from staunch Presbyterians connected with various other churches in the city. The total receipts for the year were \$7,612.09, an increase of \$660.48 over last year. The chairman announced that the Board of Managers for 1889, would be constituted as follows: Messrs. W. H. Mitchell, Geo. Gall, C. R. Paterson, J. McCracken, W. R. Callaway, K. B. Smith, D. W. Clark, John

Alexander, W. P. Elder, James Dalrymple, W. Clark, and G. E. Dalby. Mr. G. E. Dalby tendered his resignation on the ground that his time is fully taken up by the Seaton Village mission, of which he is manager and superintendent. Mr. Dalby has been Secretary of the Board of Managers ever since its formation, some fifteen years ago. While the congregation accepted his resignation, they adopted a strongly worded resolution expressing their regret at his retirement. Mr. J. McCracken also tendered his resignation, which was regretfully received in a like manner. Messrs. John Irvine and Joseph Calhoun were elected to fill the vacancies thus caused. Mr. C. K. Petrick was re-elected treasurer for the ensuing year, and Messrs. James Mitchell, George Gall and William Melville were made the Board of Trustees. Messrs. J. S. Brown and Robert Marshall were named auditors.

KNOX CHURCH.

The annual meeting of Knox church was held Jan. 16th. The pastor, Rev. Henry M. Parsons, D. D., in the chair and Mr. A. J. Somerville, acting as secretary. The report of the Trustees read by the secretary showed receipts from ground rents for the current year were \$1,259.80. The mortgage debt of the church remains the same as last year, viz., \$5,000, bearing interest at five per cent. The report of the Treasurer, Mr. Paul Campbell, showed receipts \$12,142.09, and expenditure \$13,048.63, leaving a balance due the treasurer of \$906.54. The report of the Session stated that the roll of the church has been increased by the addition of 144 names, which, added to the number at the beginning of the year, would give 1,124 members. From this number during the year 122 names have been withdrawn, making the whole number at the close of the year 1,002. The Mission at Duchess street has been prosperous and efficient and the Session have appointed Mr. James Millar, of Knox College, to conduct the work through the winter. During the year twenty-six members had been removed by death. The report of the Missionary Association read by Mr. J. H. Shearer, showed a total of receipts for missionary purposes of \$6,835.97 during the year. The report of the Deacons' court showed that \$737 had been given in the way of relief to the necessitous of the congregation. The report concluded as follows:—

We note with pleasure a great advance in returning on the third Sabbath of each month the blue envelopes for the Schemes of the Church. We trust that this system will be adopted by every member of the congregation. The amount for the regular schemes assigned to us by the Presbytery is a little larger than last year, owing to wants of the field. The items are as follows:—

Foreign missions	\$2,200
Home missions	1,150
Augmentation	1,000
Knox College	300
Manitoba College	300
French evangelization	950
Aged and infirm ministers' fund	400
Widows and orphans	200
Total	\$6,400

We have endeavoured to meet this apportionment and furnish that which the

Boards need for present obligations. For these purposes the congregation have contributed \$7,148.92. For other missions and various benevolent objects, \$3,120.45, making a total of \$10,269.37. The ordinary revenue is \$11,405, and the poor fund \$737.04, making a grand total of \$12,142.09, being \$325 ahead of the last year. These reports were adopted. A motion was carried to the effect that the contributions for religious and missionary purposes should go through the treasurer for missionary schemes. After an appeal for young men to work in connection with the Duchess street mission the meeting closed.

OLD ST. ANDREWS.

The annual meeting of Old St. Andrew's was held Jan. 16th, the pastor, Rev. G. M. Milligan, B.A., in the chair. After devotional exercises Mr. Milligan entered into some explanation of the difficulties which loomed up in the minds of a portion of the congregation, owing to his wearing the conventional Presbyterian gown, his statement being that it was too trifling to create any misunderstanding between himself and his congregation. He predicted that before a year is over those who raised the objections to his donning the gown would come round to see the affair as he did himself. The report of the Session was presented by Mr. Principal MacMurphy. It bore testimony to the continued prosperity of the church, the following being a few figures exhibiting the work carried on last year:—Eighty-five persons were admitted members in full communion during the year, there being now a total membership of 493. Encouraging reports were read from the Mission Band, Young People's Association, Ladies' Aid and other benevolent organizations of the congregation. The Board of Managers reported that the receipts of the year were \$6,209.06, and the disbursements \$8,911.82. They congratulated the congregation on the happy results which followed the adoption of the envelope system, stating that the receipts exceeded those of last year by \$1,200. It was mentioned that the sum of \$3,687.75 was contributed for the various Schemes of the Church, \$849 being set apart for the poor. The report concluded by recommending that the salary of the pastor be raised to \$4,000, which motion was unanimously approved of by the congregation. It was decided to delegate to the Board of Managers the authority to make improvements in the setting of the gallery, more in keeping with modern architecture. The Winchester street mission report was of a more than usually interesting character. It showed that regular services were held throughout the year, the attendance at the Sabbath school being large and all the time increasing in numbers. The Sunday evening services were conducted by Knox College students. The average attendance at the Sabbath school was 137, the total offering being \$130. The Sabbath school report was read by Mr. MacMurphy, the following being a few of the chief items of interest therein contained:—Number of teachers, twenty-seven; number of scholars, 474; collections, \$440.06; average attendance, 300. The section of managers resulted as follows: Hon. G. W. Ross, Messrs. John Lays, Jan, and Joseph Oliver.

YALE LECTURES

—ON THE—

SUNDAY SCHOOL.

The Sunday School.—Its Origin, Mission, Methods, and Auxiliaries. The Lyman Beecher Lectures before Yale Divinity School, for 1888. By H. Clay Trumbull, Editor of The Sunday School Times, author of Kadesh barnea, The Blood Covenant, Teaching and Teachers, etc.

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS.

- I. The Sunday School—Its Jewish Origin and Its Christian Adoption.
- II. The Sunday School—Seventeen Centuries of its Progress.
- III. The Sunday School—Its Modern Revival and Expansion.
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- V. The Sunday School—Its Membership and its Management.
- VI. The Sunday School—Its Teachers and their Training.
- VII. The Pastor and the Sunday School.
- VIII. The Sunday School—Its Auxiliary Training Agencies.
- IX. Preaching to Children—Its Importance and its Difficulties.
- X. Preaching to Children—Its Principles and its Methods.

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