

## The Problem of the Period.

In the arena of Foreign Missions we look back fifty years,—we find that the cry of God's people was "Lord open the doors that we may enter into the heathen nations and tell them of Jesus." In due time the prayer was fully answered. Then later the cry to God was, "Lord give us the men willing to go to tell the heathen of Jesus' love." Speedily six thousand men, moved by the same power that created myriads of worlds, volunteered to go. Of this number only 1,200 have been sent to foreign fields. The remaining 4,800 are waiting, crying to God that the way be opened that they also may be sent. Nearly all Foreign Mission Boards have the same story to tell, that is of retrenchment or inability to enlarge the work. It is then true that the great problem to be solved by the church of Christ today is: How can we raise money? Coming now to our own two million Telugus, with their urgent cry for 30 more missionaries to be sent, is there a pastor or a financier in the denomination that has an intelligent hope of meeting this emergency by our present human methods, or in other words, our present understanding of divine methods, of raising money? Yea, more. Is there a financier in the denomination—estimating on the basis of past experience—that would risk his reputation by indulging the hope that we will be able to send even one new mission family to the Telugus each succeeding year? We started twenty-four years ago with four mission families; we now have six. And now, dear reader, at this rate of progress, how many hundred years must elapse ere we have one missionary on the field for every 50,000 inhabitants? From the Atlantic to the Pacific this one problem confronts Baptists—How can we raise money for Foreign Mission work? Are we not to come to the conclusion that there is absolutely no hope of any considerable enlargement of our staff of workers under our present method of raising money? Man's extremity ought to be God's opportunity.

Surely, brothers and sisters, if you are in full sympathy with the Christ of God in his world-wide plans to save men, you are praying night and day "Lord give us the money," and now had you not better add this prayer, "Lord teach us from thy word how to raise money." Own up to him square that human wisdom is a failure and that you are now willing to be taught of God. Then begin to study and practice God's infinitely wise plan for raising funds which has now been nearly 6,000 years in use, viz., the paying to God of one-tenth of income with the additional privilege of expressing our abounding love to God by free-will offerings. God's plan of paying him one-tenth is the best (1) Simply because it is God's plan; (2) Because it brings all God's children, old and young, rich and poor, into real partnership with the Lord Christ in their business. The paying of one-tenth is the acknowledgement of the Lordship of Christ, from whom all blessings flow. (3) It is best because God's children are at once liberated from bondage to covetousness and worldliness, which now cripple them. God's plan is best because it is the A B C of Christian consecration. God's plan is best because without it Christians are left absolutely in the dark as to how much they ought to give back to God who gives them all; they are constantly liable each time they are called upon to give to have an inward battle with covetousness, worldliness and selfishness, with the chances each time in favor of these foes of the Christ-life within us having the victory. God's plan puts an end forever to all such unseemly, unnecessary, warfare. It is settled forever that each week, or when income is received, the tenth is set aside, ready to be paid out as opportunity offers. I shall never forget what was to me a thrilling incident that occurred while I was collecting benevolent funds. I called upon the now sainted Baptist Pastor R'chan, of Barrington, N. S. I scarcely expected him to be able to give anything, he having so long occupied that mission field. I had scarcely explained the object of my visit when he handed me out of the Lord's purse five dollars. I expressed my surprise at the liberal amount contributed. With a countenance beaming with heavenly joy, he said: "It is a part of the Lord's tenth." What a glorious day for collectors when God's people pay the Lord his tenth! No more long battles with covetousness and selfishness, in which the collector is supposed to take a principle part. Reader won't you pray that that millennial day may speedily dawn upon us when paying our money to Christ's work will become a joy to all God's people, and then answer your own prayers by immediately beginning to pay your tenth to God? But a voice just now says, "I think I give a tenth now." I hope so, but I have this to say, that after much investigation I believe there are but few who give a sum equal to a tenth of income. Also quite a number that give a sum equal to one half a tenth; the rest give a trifle. I notice, though, that those who have given the subject many years of the closest study believe that the average benevolence of Christians equals only one tenth of a tenth. A modern writer insists that the great need now is the church is to establish the authority of God. "Let us worship and obey his sweet will. The paying of a tenth to God—like the Sabbath—was one of God's moral laws, necessary for man's happiness, which from

the creation to the present time has been the duty and privilege of man to obey. We perceive then that paying the tenth was never any part of the ceremonial law. It preceded it and out-lived it even unto the tenth century after Christ. The ceremonial law did provide for a second tithe, or tenth, to be used in paying the givers' expense at the annual festivals.

The fact that in the early Christian Church both Jew and Gentile observed the tithe, is affirmed by Origen, Jerome, Augustine, Chrysostom, and many other ancient historians. Bingham, in his Christian's Antiquities, says, "This is the unanimous judgment of the fathers and the voice of the Church for more than a thousand years." All history proves, that to neglect to teach and practice any doctrine of God's Word, is a source of weakness and failure. During the dark ages over fifty millions of the faithful were slain. In the overwhelming confusion and tribulation of those times, the paying of the tenth fell into disuse. The Reformers neglected to teach it. Who can estimate the almost infinite loss to the church as a result? Loss both in temporal and spiritual prosperity, as well as the loss of untold millions of money, that might have been used to spread the gospel of Christ. Within the present generation tens of thousands of the faithful, believing that the teaching of Malachi 3, 8-11 is meant for us, and that by loving obedience to the law of paying to God—the tenth, both temporal and spiritual prosperity would thereby be assured, Sham brought the tithes unto His storehouse and proved Him therewith. The universal testimony of these is, that God is faithful to His promise. All Christians do not appreciate spiritual prosperity, but all Christians do appreciate temporal prosperity. Can any one tell me why most Christians are so blind that they will not take God at His word and enter into a direct partnership with Jesus in their business and pay Him a tenth; when by so doing increased prosperity is guaranteed by God Himself. "Heaven and earth may pass away but my word shall not pass away." Can it be that one great reason is that our pastors don't teach it? Can we expect scholars in Christ's school to practice a doctrine which has not been taught from the sacred desk? True, each can, if he will, understand this matter from the Word of God; but poor human nature has acquired the habit of accounting the precept and example of the pastor of great value. O for an army of pastors, every one in living partnership with Jesus, and in His business, and paying Him His tenth. Then, and not till then, will they have any moral power to teach to God's people that doctrine. It may be necessary, dear pastors, to be instant in season and out of season for several years, ere the doctrine of the tenth will be generally accepted. If you are faithful in the work, you will be called a hobbyist, too. Can't you afford to bear the honors meekly of being called a hobbyist for Christ's sake. "Have respect unto the recompense of reward." Well pastor, the years have gone by, you have worked faithfully, you say that every member now gives the tenth, and O, what an amazing victory you have gained. Such a marked increase in spiritual life and energy and intelligence in every member of the church. And this state of things seems to last all the year round. Why? Because they are now in partnership with Jesus in their business all the year round. Instead of having a special revival season perchance in the winter as of old, we seem to baptize each month in the year. Constant healthy growth. What about the finances now, pastor please? Our finances have steadily improved these years as the members came to understand and adopt the tenth principle, so that the aggregate givings of my church for all purposes are fully threefold more than in former years, and I ought not to omit another important fact, that every member of any church that pays the tenth has very much improved in temporal comforts. Now, dear pastors, brothers and sisters of the churches, can you not see how all this effects our mission to the Telugus? As soon as God's tenth is paid to Him by our churches, they have more abundant temporal prosperity, and immediately we have from \$100,000 to \$200,000 per year for Foreign Missions, instead of the paltry \$15,000 now paid. Shall we not all in joyful anticipation of those millennial days which is in our power to have, speedily sing,—"Praise God from whom all blessings flow!"

Just as I expected—Some critical brother is saying, "He has overdrawn the picture." It is not to be believed without further proof, that the capacity of each individual church for benevolence can be increased threefold by the simple giving of one tenth." Be patient brother, I knew you would be faithless at first, therefore I was very conservative in my estimate. I said that those who had given this subject the most careful study believed that when all God's people gave the tenth, the aggregate would be tenfold greater than at present. But what you now want is a proof in real life of my proposition, or in other words of God's propositions. God never lacks an Abraham, a Moses, or an Abraham Lincoln to illustrate and teach men His doctrines. So come with me to Philadelphia. There we find Rev. Russell H. Conwell, pastor of the Baptist Temple, a man of moderate ability as a preacher, yet perhaps he merits the encomium of being the most successful pastor in Amer-

ica. His church building modelled after Tremont Temple, Boston, seats 4200. His free hospital, that beautiful orphanage also free. His college with 6,700 students, all supported by or in connection with this church. Did I not read lately that he, as pastor of that church, had baptized into its membership 3785 persons? No doubt it is fair to say that his financial success is due largely, if not wholly, to his having been a hobbyist in teaching the doctrine of paying to God His tenth. And now is it any wonder that his church is so constantly in a revival state, since his membership are all the year round in partnership with Jesus in their business? Now brother, please draw your own conclusion from these amazing facts, that Rev. Russell H. Conwell, a hobbyist on giving the tenth is honored by God in probably handling more benevolent funds, collected in connection with his own church, than is collected annually for our Home and Foreign Mission and Educational Institutions at Wolfville all combined. Now dear pastors, brothers and sisters, ere I leave you let each answer this question. Shall we continue to live at this poor dying rate? or shall we take the position of obedience to God, by which He can give us the blessing of Malachi 3: 10, instead of Malachi 3: 8, under which we have been groaning. If God be God serve Him.

## State of the Denomination.

A HOMILY ON MR. B. H. RATON'S REPORT ON STATE OF THE DENOMINATION IN MESSENGER AND VISITOR, SEPTEMBER 6, BY N. F. ADAMS, TRURO.

Unless a business man takes stock annually, he cannot tell if he be gaining, or losing, or holding his own. If a captain does not take his soundings regularly, he cannot tell if he be in deep water or shallow, or nearing rocks.

What is true in business on land or on the great deep, is very true of a denomination, a church, a Christian. Occasionally we must take an outlook and an inlook, and compare notes. Refusing to do this may land us into spiritual bankruptcy, or on to the rocks.

In these days of co-operative effort, in religious movements, it is difficult to know just what test to use to ascertain how we stand as a denomination.

The Baptist denomination is composed of independent churches, churches are composed of individual Christians. Therefore churches are what their members make them, and the denomination is what the churches make it. The power of the denomination, both in quality and quantity, depends on the personal piety and its expression, of the Baptist Christians.

In what direction shall we take stock, in order to ascertain where we are, and what we are; if we are going forward or backward, or simply holding our own in the Maritime Provinces.

Ten years ago we had 43,995 members in 384 churches. This year we have 50,886 members in 410 churches. Here we perceive an advance in numbers in a decade, of 7,000 members and 26 churches. The last national census taken showed that we had 881,014 people in the Maritime Provinces, being an increase of 10,209 in ten years. Showing an increase in the population of the Provinces of only a little more than one per cent. Whereas the membership of the Baptist churches has increased during the last ten years at the rate of sixteen per cent. That means that the membership of the Baptist churches grew fifteen times faster from 1889 to 1899 than our population grew from 1881 to 1891. I cannot say that the same comparisons will be true when the next national census shall be taken in 1901. But from the standpoint of numbers, both in members and churches we are going forward. But though the increase in numbers may not be the strongest evidence of progress, it is clearly proved that the Baptists are not dying in these Provinces. And if there be, as is probable, fifty thousand adherents, in addition to the fifty thousand members of churches, every eighth or ninth person in the Maritime Provinces is attending a Baptist church.

With regard to our church property, our buildings are more beautiful, more substantial, and more commodious than ever. Our educational plant is one of the best; the professorships have increased, and the endowment never was so large. While the increased interest in higher education and attendance of students, is growing greater every year.

What shall we say of our missionary works at home and abroad. It is astonishing how much further a Baptist's dollar will go than any other dollar.

In the North-West, no other body can show such results for such small expenditure. Ten years ago there were a few dozen churches, now there are seventy, with a membership of 3370, who raised \$40,531 for local work and gave \$5,363 for missions last year.

The Grande Ligne Mission, works in a territory of 280,000 square miles amidst a population of a million souls. The last ten years the interest has been deepening to such a degree that last year there were ten French protestant churches with ten pastors, besides the large school doing a great work. The whole receipts and expenses last year amounting to \$17,939.

During the last ten years our Maritime Home Mission