

VITAL EVANGELISM.

By C. H. Wetherbe.

Very much has been said in favor of "the new evangelism." I judge that one of its main features is that of telling unconverted ones that they have every reason to love God, and no reason to fear him. Another feature seems to be a religious cultivation of the best elements that are in one's self, so that there may be a full development into Christian character. Unconverted people are told to announce themselves as being on the Lord's side, and then they will be regarded by God as his own people. Now, I cannot be opposed to a thing simply because it is new, but I do say that any evangelism which does not emphasize the absolute need of a vital change of one's heart by the direct power of God, is a spurious evangel.

Rev. C. H. Yatman, an evangelist of long and efficient experience, says: "You can get a thousand people to sign a card without much trouble. I have tried it. It will take some of the old evangelism to get them to be New Testament Christians, with separation from the world, and sin given up to the point of sacrifice and restriction." He also says: "I affirm that men will never be moved Godward in great masses for regeneration, in its full sense, by the mere presentation of love. Law is a factor so great in Canadian life and government that its basic principle affords a ground of appeal that cannot be left out if you reach effectively the will of man, and no man is converted whose will is not reached by the truth that sets him free." Mr. Yatman vigorously rejects the new evangelism because it is both unscriptural and superficial. He is justified in his position. What is greatly needed is vital evangelism, an evangelism which is vitalized by the burning conviction that unless sinners so yield themselves to God that He can give them new nature they will be forever lost. The old gospel of Calvary cannot be improved.

The bishop of—never mind where—being somewhat troubled with a neglected diocese, thought to inspire his clergy to take services during the week by periodically visiting and taking one himself. On one of these occasions, having been moved to much eloquence in his sermon, he felt a not unnatural desire to know if he had made any impression on the congregation. So he questioned the clerk in the vestry.

Happy is the man who can see his Father's face in the flash of the lightning and discern, in the rush of the storm, the footprints of his Master.

To do right, whatever the smile or frown of the world; to hold the truth in righteousness, in spite of the friends we love, is to reveal a true knight of God.

If we forget the Giver it is proof that we have misused the gift.

The Centenary Fund for extending the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society has reached \$975,000 apart from the society's ordinary income. This fact a gratifying assurance that the Book of Books retains its wonderful power. Another gratifying circumstance is the large amount contributed by native converts and churches in the Foreign Mission field; large, that is, considering their means.

Missionary work on the Congo Free State side of Lake Tanganyika, as well as on the German side, north of Ujiji, is in the hands of the Roman Catholic Algerian White Fathers. They are increasing their stations, thoroughly equipping them, and establishing boarding schools for boys and girls, the last being under charge of nuns. They have industrial schools, great plantations, and they educate many natives as teachers or even as priests, after teaching them Latin. Some of the natives have been taken to Malta to study medicine, returning as doctors, to whom Europeans are not afraid to trust themselves.

The missionaries entered Japan as soon as it was safe for them to do so. At first they did their work in secret. Public preaching was not allowed. As late as 1858 there were edict boards which said:—"The evil sect called Christian is strictly forbidden; suspected persons should be reported, and rewards will be given." Now the emperor says the missionaries are his guests and must be treated by the people as his friends.

The Methodist Monthly Greeting, published in St. John's, Nfld, gives some interesting facts as to the status and prospects of temperance in that colony. In the whole colony there is but one license for every 2,326 persons—a record that is, we suppose, almost unique. Taking the population of all districts under license, the average is one for every 479 persons. But out of a total population of 220,984, there are no less than 173,521 of the inhabitants living in districts where no licenses are granted, and says the article from which we quote, outside the city of St. John's among the entire Methodist population of 54,651, only one person lives in a license locality, and among 6,074 Salvation Army, 542 Congregationalists, 495 Presbyterians, and 122 others, not one lives in a license district. The total amount of liquor on which duty was paid was last year 156,427 gallons, whereas thirty years ago, with a population about one-third less, the amount was 212,616 gallons, a decrease of over one-fourth. The greater number of the districts in the colony have availed themselves of the Local Option law and cleared the saloons from their midst, to the unspeakable advantage of the people.

It is wonderful to think that a minister who was thirty-seven years of age in the fateful year of the Disruption in Scotland should have survived to see the dawn of 1905.

Prince Ramazani, one of the relatives of the native King of Toro, Uganda, Central Africa, is a boy of fifteen and a Mohammedan. Because the Mohammedans of that religion are very ignorant, a Christian lad has been employed to teach him to read and write. This led the prince to write to the Prime Minister of Uganda asking to be educated as a Christian. His letter contain this passage: "This is a very bad religion; it is a religion of death. I want to become a Protestant and join Mr. Hattersley's school for chiefs." The boy wants education; he may find Christ.

The Scottish correspondent of the Belfast Witness says: With a pang of regret many will learn of the death of this veteran of the Scottish ministry, the Rev. James Guill, some time pastor of St. Peter's Free Church, Peterhead. Mr. Guill was born in April, 1806, was educated at Glasgow, licensed by the Presbytery of Glasgow in 1833, and in 1835 appointed minister of the Chapel of Ease at Peterhead. There he lived and laboured, first as a minister of the National Church, and from 1843 as a minister of the Free Church of Scotland. He was an outstanding figure in the life of Peterhead till increasing years and infirmities led to his retirement from office. For fifteen years Mr. Guill lived in tranquility in Aberdeen, and there he died on Saturday at the age of 98. The men of the Disruption are nearly all gone now, and soon the Church they founded will have nothing but the memory of those "who saw and heard and could remember all."

In the Belfast Witness, of recent date, there is a very able and informing article on the subject, "Are We Improving?" The article, of course, relates mainly to conditions in Britain; yet the descriptions would in a measure be applicable to conditions on this continent. The writer of the article contrasts Britain of sixty or eighty years ago, during the reign of the Georges, with Britain of today, and makes out his contention that the people are improving in many ways. The people are now less cruel, the laws are more humane, the treatment of crime is more just, people are less profane, public life is less corrupt, conversation less indecent, quarrels less frequent, duels are abolished, and there is less gluttony and intemperance. This is a hopeful picture. The "good old days" are often rather mythical. The way that vice and crime are published in the newspapers perhaps makes things seem worse than they are. The world and especially the Christian world is growing better.