

SELECTIONS.

OUR CAUSE IN ONTARIO

The ONTARIO EVANGELIST comes to us this month with a supplement containing a most readable and instructive report from Bro. J. S. Lediard on the condition of the churches in Ontario. Bro. Lediard has labored as an evangelist for the annual meeting of the brethren in the province during the last eleven months.

It appears from this report, that there are about three thousand five hundred Disciples in Ontario, who are organized into congregations. These are distributed into fifty-six congregations, averaging a few more than sixty members each. We had supposed that the number was greater than this. Bro. Lediard thinks that too little attention is paid to the conversion of sinners, and that consequently the increase of membership is not so rapid as it should be. He sadly remarks: "I cannot help noticing how few attend our meetings outside our families and immediate connections, and how few unite with us from the world even in our most successful meetings."

But the small number of Disciples, and the slowness of increase, are attributed chiefly to the want of preaching. Bro. Lediard says, "There are too few preachers of the gospel, and too little preaching." We can well believe that this is the true cause, when we learn that among all those fifty-six churches there are only fifteen preachers who give their whole time to the work. This is the cause of slow growth wherever it is found. How to increase the supply of preachers, faithful and efficient preachers is the question of the day. Bro. Lediard says correctly that they must first be drawn out in the congregations, and then be properly educated; but he laments over the fact that in the congregations which he has visited, "it is rare to see young men sharing in the public service of the church," and that "the teaching and preaching are done almost exclusively by the elders, many of whom have grown old in the work." If the brethren of Ontario will suffer a word of exhortation from us, we would say to them, look sharply to the development of young men in your congregation, call them out as you find them worthy, and help them to a suitable education.—*Apostolic Guide.*

KEEP UP THE AGITATION.

Let the agitation go on. Witness the following from *The Independent*:

A discussion at Andover recently on Christian Union, in which Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Free Baptists, and Universalists and Unitarians were represented, proved to be quite interesting. The Congregational speaker urged the tearing down of the walls and fences of denominationalism: the Episcopalian was hopeful of the gradual coming together of the families of the church of Christ; the Methodist pronounced for strict adherence to essentials with liberty in non-essentials; Universalists, Unitarians, and unsond Congregationalists could not come into the union he desired; the Baptist believed the time would come when the Baptists would cease to make difficulty on ecclesiastical points; the Unitarian said there could be no Christian union without recognizing his sect and every other sect; the Universalist believed union must come on the basis of Universalism; the Free Baptist was not afraid of denominationalism, union must be in the heart.

If our International Lessons, Congress of Churches, Chautauqua Assemblies and general agitation of this great question do not hasten this much desired union of God's people, we are very much mistaken and will be much disappointed. Let there be the fullest sympathy, the heartiest possible co-operation, the kindest fraternal feelings one for the other, and a burning zeal for the promotion of the Master's cause and the day which is already streaking with golden bars the eastern sky, will flush the world with its glorious dawning.—*C. P. W. in Guide.*

JESUS' HEALINGS.

Because of this bodily benefit His fame went throughout Syria. Read Matt. 4: 23, and form for yourself a picture of the travelling hospital that followed Jesus wherever He went. Picture to yourself the coming so full of disease and pain, and the going away so well and strong. It was not the preaching so much as the healing by Jesus, that made Him the most popular man of his day in Galilee. It would be the same were he on earth to-day. If he were here, and could go through every hospital ward and empty it of all its patients in ten minutes, sending them out well and strong, what a perfect furor he would create! His fame would spread by telegraph, not throughout Syria, but throughout the whole world. From every land a stream of diseased emigrants would set in, and the world's sick would rush for Him. If He would establish a successful "anti-poverty society," and

guarantee every man, woman and child five thousand dollars a year no tongue or pen could describe the scenes that would follow. Until the masses had become accustomed to such an income, they would almost die of Him. Then, however, when again their requirements had outgrown their income, they would clamor as they now do for a new gradation at say, ten thousand dollars, and would turn on Him if He declined to satisfy their demand. But stop and think! To-day, which is of more value to this world, Jesus healings of the body or his preaching of the gospel? Where lies the real hope of man, in physical and sinful immortality or in spiritual regeneration? Just suppose that Jesus had conferred endless physical life on some man of to-day, so that he were still living (as a supernaturally hale and hearty, would that have been as great a gift as the one He actually gave those who believed in Him,—that is, eternal life? Merely to ask this question is to answer it. But this is exactly the offer He made in His times, and makes to-day. Yet many who ravenously rushed after healing, or after loaves and fishes, never so much as asked for "the gift of God." And thousands to-day who pray are earnest in saying, "Give us this day our daily bread," and yet never honestly pray, "Forgive us our debts." Human nature remains the same from age to age, and while we condemn the men of those days for their earthly and sensual lives, we ourselves repeat them continually. The best—oh, yes! by far the best—part of Jesus' work he stands ready to repeat again to-day. He is the soul's physician now as he was then. And yet, now as then, men who would leap at the hope of bodily healing, recoil from any spiritual recovery. Nay, they even deny practically that they need spiritual health. They are quite satisfied with themselves spiritually, and soon resent the suggestion that all is not right with them. "Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" (Jer. 8: 22.) Simply because she refuses to acknowledge that she needs any physician, and so declines to go to him for healing.—*A. F. Schaeffler, D. D.*

HOW TO GET A SHARE OF HEAVEN'S BREAD.

*I will rain bread from heaven for you: and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day.* (Ex. 16: 4). Even when God opens the windows of heaven to supply the needs of his children, he insists that they shall work for all that they get of it. God didn't tell the people to lie flat on their backs with open mouths, that the manna might be rained directly down their throats. Nor did he heap up the manna so that they could fill their baskets without an effort. They must get up early, and go out about their tents, and pick up the manna bit by bit until they had enough to last the day through. There is no other way of getting our share of any bread from heaven. If we want Bible food for ourselves or others, we must "go and gather a day's portion every day." It takes some time to get enough together for a sermon, or a Sunday-school lesson or "an off-hand talk" in prayer-meeting—with any nourishment in it; and even that will not answer for the day to come, if we attempt to keep it over when we might gather a fresh supply. If we want heaven-sent strength or wisdom or prosperity in our family or our business, we must expect to work for it. We have a right to look to heaven for more daily bread than the wilderness itself could supply; but we have no right to look to heaven to save us from the trouble and toil of going out to pick up a day's portion of that bread day by day.—*H. Clay Trumbull.*

SIX KINDS OF TOLERANCE.

Phillips Brooks says there are six varieties of tolerance. The tolerance, firstly, of pure indifference, of aimless good nature—the man who believes nothing, can tolerate anything; secondly, of the policy of allowing error because it would do more harm than good to try to root it out; thirdly, of helplessness, which is that of persecuted minorities; fourthly, of human respect, or the recognition of man's right to his own thought; fifthly, of spiritual sympathy, inspired by a sense of the value of spiritual oneness, and lastly, the tolerance of the enlarged view of truth, combined with cordial and entire faith in God. The first three kinds have something base about them; the last three are all noble. "True tolerance," says Dr. Brooks, "consists in the love of truth and the love of man brought to perfection by the love of God. The love of truth alone grows cruel. The love of man alone grows weak. When truth and man are loved within the love of God, they meet and blend in tolerance." This is a fine and noble description of this great moral quality, and the greatest of these varieties is the tolerance that tolerates intolerance in order to make it tolerant.—*F. F. Haley in Guide.*

THE SECRET OF JOY.

Suppose that a person should invite you to his house, and on your arrival you should find the window shutters closed, and the house looking as if prepared for a funeral. You would hardly regard yourself as a welcome guest, or that your coming gave your host any pleasure. If on the other hand, you were greeted with open doors and lighted apartments, a hospitable feast and smiling faces, you would feel yourself instantly at home. Now in every sincere, healthy Christian Jesus Christ lives. "No I," said the sunny-hearted old Paul, "but Christ liveth in me." That was the secret of his happiness. Outwardly, the homeless, persecuted apostle had a hard lot; but a more joyous man did not tread the globe. Never a whimper, never a whine of complaint, escapes his lips. "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice." Such was the jubilant message which he sent from Nero's guard-house, with a chain clanking from his wrist.

Ought every Christian to be happy? Yes; and may be so always, provided that he seeks in the right quarters for his joys. Paul was too wise to command us to rejoice in money, for wealth is a shifting sand bank; or in health, for it is a variable possession; or in the society of household and children, who may be snatched away at any time. Our joy, to be solid, must rest on something immovable. There is but one such permanent, unchangeable possession, and that is a loving Saviour dwelling perpetually in our souls,—a Saviour served every day.

A healthy and a holy joy is not an exalted rapture. Mind nor body could not stand the strain of a continual ecstasy. I have observed that those people who live on moods and frames, who are shouting to-day, are very liable to be groaning or scolding to-morrow. A strong bow soon loses its tension. Even spiritual exhilarations are apt to be followed by reactions of depression. Just as soon as we hang our happiness, even our religious satisfaction, on circumstances or surroundings, we go up, or we go down, with the tide. The thermometer of our joy is at the mercy of outside atmospheres. But if an indwelling, strengthening, comforting, gladdening Saviour be always in the core of the heart, then we can expect to "rejoice evermore."

"Do you expect me to rejoice when either a reverse or a rogue sweeps away my property?" Yes; because poverty, though it may strip us of a thousand comforts, does not strip away Christ. "Am I to rejoice when the coffin is borne away from my door with some darling of my heart in it?" Yes; the all-wise Holy Spirit considered even such severe throes of anguish when he commands us to "rejoice always." And simply because death does not carry Christ away. Nay; we may have a more full and soul-filling sweetness of his presence when we are treading the valleys of the "death-shade." "Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing,"—that was the apostle's experience. It was when the fig-tree had no blossoms, and the vines no fruit, and the stall no herds, that the olden prophet exclaimed, "I will rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation."

Good friends, you may be sure of this, that God never sent a trial so bitter that a genuine, Christ-filled Christian could not suck some honey out of it. God does not expect us to be callous under trial, or ask us to make merry at a funeral. But away down deep under the tempest of trial, he offers to implant in us a calm, sober satisfaction,—a serene sense that whatever he does is right; a sweet sense also of Christ's presence, and a delight in the smile of his countenance. This joy underlies the griefs of life and the disappointments, just as there is a profound peace in the depths of the Atlantic, while hurricanes are tossing its surface into foam.

Our happiness arises from what we are, not where we are. If we take Christ at his word when he says "I am with you always," then we can rejoice in him always. That kind of joy is more than a privilege; it is a duty. Our Master commands us to rejoice evermore; to be wretched, therefore, is a sin. It dishonors our Lord, as every act of disobedience does. Spiritual joy is a sign of heart-health. Spiritual depression is an evidence of disease. When a baby moans and frets and cries, the mother says, "Something is wrong; this child is not well." Must not our loving Master, who is wiser and gentler than all mothers, regard us as disordered and out of harmony with him, when we become sulky or morose, complaining or wretched? We all expect to be happy when we reach heaven. Why not now? Why parse heaven in the future tense so perversely? It is a state, a condition of soul as well as a locality. The possession of Christ is the beginning of heaven, and the more we

have of him here, the more we shall have of him up yonder. Those who open every door and window of the heart to him, will find the same light and joy streaming in which shall constitute the bliss of the New Jerusalem. Wherefore, "again I say rejoice."

BRIGHT THOUGHTS

Much danger makes great hearts most resolute. *Marston.*  
Heaven will permit no man to secure happiness by crime. *Athon.*  
The usual torture of complaint is to excite contempt more than pity. *Johnson.*  
A good man is kinder to his enemy than bad men are to their friends. *Bishop Hall.*  
How wise we are in thought! How weak in practice! Our very virtue, like our will, is nothing. *Shelby.*  
Poor and content is rich, and rich enough, but riches, fineness, is as poor as winter to him that ever tears he shall be poor. *Shakespeare.*  
Silence does not always mark wisdom. *Cole-ridge.*  
Few advise how to make money, many how to spend it. *G. Douglas.*  
A proud man never shows his pride so much as when he is civil. *Greville.*  
He who is most slow in making a promise is the most faithful in the performance of it. *Rossian.*  
More helpful than all wisdom is one draught of simple human pity that will not forsake us. *George Eliot.*  
Speaking much is a sign of vanity, for he that is lavish in words is a niggard in deed. *St. Walter Raleigh.*  
I look upon indolence as a sort of suicide; for the man is efficiently destroyed, though the appetite of the brute may survive. *Chesleyfield.*

A HAPPY DISCRIMINATION.

The Disciples of Christ in California, Pa., where the writer is now engaged in a meeting, were some years ago holding a prayer-meeting in the town of Greenfield, which is a little distance farther down the river. They had invited some members of the Methodist Church, who lived in Merchanttown, just across the river, to assist them. They came—and as the meeting was progressing, several persons having offered prayer, the leader called for Scripture recitations. Quite a number were given by Disciples who were then present; whereupon a Methodist man arose and said he would give a recitation, but not from Scripture. He continued to speak, and among other things said that he thought the time could be more profitably spent in praying than in reciting and reading Scripture.

When his speech was ended a Scotch brother arose and said an important subject had just been mentioned, viz., how they could most profitably spend the time they might remain together? whether in praying or singing exclusively, or in reading and reciting and setting forth the Scriptures in connection therewith. To this he added that as it respects the idea that it should be praying and singing rather than in reading and reciting the Word of God he had this to say,—"In prayer we talk to God; but in the Scriptures God talks to us. In view of this it seems strange that we should in a meeting like this spend all our time in talking to God and not allow Him by His word to talk to us."

It is useless to inform the reader that no more speeches were made on the subject. That one HAPPY DISCRIMINATION had the happy effect of setting that question happily at rest.—*Selected.*

It is a shame for a rich Christian man to be like a Christian box that receives all and nothing can be got out till it is broken to pieces; or like unto a drowning man's hand that holds whatsoever it gets.

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