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TORONTO, FEBRUARY 1st, 1892.

Foreign Missions.

Our readers will observe that we endeavor to keep them posted in regard to the work of our brethren in the foreign field. We trust that the information we publish is carefully perused by all. At present we desire to draw attention to the fact that the first Lord's day in March is the day on which the churches are asked to make up a special collection for foreign missions. Only one collection is requested now in the year. It is therefore desirable that one should be liberal and that the brethren and sisters should, if possible, contribute all they feel able to do for that work during the year at the time the collection is made. If it is not done at the special time, it may not be done at all. And every Christian should not be indifferent as to whether he does his duty in the matter of sending the Gospel to the heathen. The congregations of Disciples in Ontario, as we have been happy to point out many times, are very generally in the habit of making an offering to foreign missions. Churches do not usually retrograde in this respect; but rather it is common for the contributions to increase from year to year. Whether they do or not depends chiefly on the way in which the subject is presented to them. And hence the responsibility that rests upon the elders and preachers to place the great question before the churches in an earnest and sympathetic way. Those who neglect to do so, not only hinder the good cause, but rob themselves of the joy of furthering the work of the Lord. One of the privileges of being allowed to address a congregation is that it furnishes the opportunity of urging the Christians to give according to their ability for the proclamation of the Gospel. It is a very serious thing to refrain from pressing upon the followers of Jesus their solemn obligation to deny themselves for the sake of His cause. And let us say it is not the way for a preacher to gain and hold the respect of the congregation. It is not necessary that the preacher should browbeat the church; and make himself generally odious by his manner of presenting the case. Let him give the people information in regard to what is being done and what is proposed to be done, and then make a manly and earnest appeal to them to do their duty, and they will respect him all the more for it. We would suggest that the preachers prepare themselves to inform the minds and stir the hearts of the people on this great and inspiring theme, the evangelization of the whole world. Cheerful and generous collections will follow as a natural consequence.

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Eternal Life.

With reference to the article on the above subject which appeared on page three of last number, we have a word or two to say. The writer has fallen into a common error in supposing that "eternal life" and "endless life" are equivalent expressions. A careful examination of all the passages of the New Testament which contain the expression "eternal life" will suggest that the phrase denotes a certain kind of life, as well as an endless life. And, indeed, that it does not necessarily imply never-ending; that in fact a person may have eternal life to-day, and not have it to-morrow. The true Christian enjoys eternal life now. In proof of this, turn to John v. 24, which our correspondent quotes in part only; let us quote the Revised Version: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth Him that sent Me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life." Note the words omitted by our friend, "but hath passed out of death into life." That would seem to settle the matter beyond question. But we are referred to 1 John v. 11, 12, to prove that this passage was not intended to teach that eternal life is now possessed by the believer. Again, we read from the Revised Version, "And the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life;" and verse 18, "These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God." The expression, "this life is in His Son," is relied upon to sustain the position of the writer. The life is "laid up and hid in Christ" at present; it is not now possessed by the believer; so it is argued. But the words, "this life is in His Son," declare the fact that it is solely through Jesus Christ the Son of God that eternal life is received; He it is that gives eternal life (John x. 28). Another scripture relied upon by our friend is Col. iii. 8. The reading of the Authorized Version has apparently misled him; instead of "For ye are dead," etc., the Revised Version correctly has "For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God;" that is, the life which they were living, subsequent to the death they had died (See Col. ii. 20, R.V.), was hid with Christ in God; but though it was hid with Christ in God it was life actually enjoyed, not prospectively possessed. "Hid with Christ in God" points to "the things that are above" of verses 1 and 2, which things are illustrated in the following part of the chapter, beginning with verse 10.

But what about the passages quoted by our correspondent which speak of the faithful receiving eternal life after the resurrection on the day of judgment? They do indeed appear very clearly and conclusively, when considered by themselves, to support the position we are combatting. And right here let us remark that the mistake of our friend and those who agree with him seems to us to rest, first, upon an unscriptural conception of what constitutes a man, and second, upon a partial view of the Scriptures bearing on the subject. What we hold in regard to these passages is, first, that they set forth the truth that the eternal life will not be completely manifested in, and perfectly enjoyed by, the believer's spirit until the resurrection, and second, that eternal life will be conferred upon his body at that time. We have not time to elaborate this at present. We request interested readers to consider our position.

A Question for the "Canadian Baptist."

We give below a portion of our interview with Rev. C. F. Aked, of Pembroke Chapel, Liverpool, copied from the *Christian Commonwealth*, and we respectfully ask the editor of the *Canadian Baptist* what he thinks of Mr. Aked's presentation of the Baptist position.

IS PEMBROKE A BAPTIST CHURCH?
"Yours is not, I believe, a distinctively Baptist church?"
"We should hold very strongly that it is. The chapel was built upon open communion principles. Under the title deeds, baptized and unbaptized have equal rights of membership. Some of my deacons have not been baptized. But we belong to the Baptist Union and to the local associations of Baptist churches. We support the Baptist institutions, and in all matters ecclesiastic and denominational are most emphatically Baptists. But so far from admitting that our open fellowship rules would rob us of our 'distinctive' Baptist position, we hold and teach that ours is the real Baptist position, while that of our close communion friends is a repudiation of Baptist principles. A Baptist church, which refuses to admit an unbaptized person to church fellowship on the grounds of his non-baptism, is disloyal to the traditions of the denomination to which it belongs and false to the historic principles out of which the denomination has grown. The idea that a Baptist church is primarily a church teaching doctrines concerning baptism is an ignorant delusion, the existence of which is not creditable to us as teachers. It is historically false to suppose that the Baptist position grew out of a certain conception of baptism. Precisely the contrary is true. Our conception of baptism has grown out of our position in the development of theological thought. The Baptist denomination would but afford an exaggerated illustration of contemptible egotism if the distinctive feature were an assertion of the distinctive rite. No. My dear sir, our position grows out of our assertion of human liberty, of the right of free choice on the part of a free man, and of individual freedom of approach to God."

"But is not baptism the very reason for the existence of the Baptist denomination as a Baptist denomination at all?"

BAPTISM A DETAIL.

"Certainly it is not. You might as well try to make my St. Bernard walk on her front paws as set up a denomination on an ordinance. To make a pyramid stand on its point would be a sane endeavor compared with the effort to found a denomination upon a rite. Baptism is only a detail."

"A detail! What do you mean by that?"
"I mean that the Baptist position is the assertion of the right of the free man to come in deliberate freeness of choice to Christ for pardon and salvation. No godfather or godmother can make the approach for him; no government can forbid him; and no priest can open the way for him. Not in his unconscious infancy can he be forced into the Kingdom of Heaven, not by passively becoming the subject of a sacred ceremony can he receive the germ of a life Divine, and not by help of the sacerdotal office can the grace be given him. This necessarily shuts out the whole mass of teaching centring round infant baptism, and demands that if baptism is to be practised at all it must be in the person of an adult believer. The Baptist, if true to himself, will brook the dictates of no Pope in Christendom, nor in things spiritual obey the word of any lord but Christ. Either, therefore, the individual must choose to be baptized, or he must not be baptized at all."

"Then, if your view is historically correct, how does it come about that the denomination which was called into existence for the assertion of human liberty is known by a word expressive of the 'detail' as you call it?"
"Easily answered. The people called Baptists were nicknamed in ridicule 'Ana-Baptists' by their opponents. The popular mind fastened upon the one very notable function of 'baptizing again,' and called these radicals of the reformation by a word

embodying the multitude's sense of the ridiculous. A quarter of an inch is not much, but it makes considerable difference at the end of a man's nose. And many a man's purity and bravery have been forgotten while his big nose has been remembered. Baptism has been remembered. Baptism has been the big nose, the leading feature which half blind people have just had vision enough to see."

"Then, in your judgment, what is baptism, and what is it for?"

"Baptism is a pledge of loyalty to Christ. It is a declaration to yourself, to the world, and to God that henceforth you belong to Christ. It is the symbol of an old life ended, the promise of a new life begun."

"Then do you urge the importance of baptism in your preaching?"

"Yes, very frequently and very earnestly. But we admit, as I tell you, to church membership, those who will not comply. For we should hold that our talk about liberty was mere cant if we imposed disabilities upon a man because, in pursuance of the Christian liberty we claim, he had arrived at a conclusion different from our own."

A Ridiculous Custom.

A man is driving along a road on a cold day, he comes to a place where there is a wayside inn; he drives his team into the shed, ties them and blankets them, and then proceeding to the house, without ceremony he enters the sitting room where there is a good fire. When he is thoroughly warmed he is ready to continue his journey, but before doing so he feels he must pay for the accommodation he has received. And here comes the ridiculous custom. He does not ask the landlord how much he owes him, or hand him what he knows to be the regular charge, but he steps up to the bar and asks for a drink or a smoke, for which he pays five cents, and when he has done so he considers he is not beholden to the landlord at all. But if he is a sociable and generous fellow he may ask the landlord to have a drink or a smoke with him; the landlord will not be so unfriendly as to refuse, whereupon the traveller will lay down ten cents and go his way. Unless indeed the landlord should say, "Now it is my treat, what will you have?" The traveller being kind-hearted would not hurt the landlord's feelings by refusing, and so having taken another drink or a smoke he betakes himself to the shed, unties his team and proceeds on his way. Unless indeed to make certain that the landlord would not suffer loss he should propose to treat the landlord and himself once more. And it is known that this interchange of courtesies has sometimes continued so long that the traveller would not pursue his journey until he had somewhat recovered from the effects of so much sociability.

But suppose the traveller spends just five cents, does he pay for what he has received? What has he received? His team has had the benefit of the shed and himself of the fire and he has had a drink or a smoke, all for five cents. If there is any profit in the transaction to the landlord, sheds, and houses, and fires, and drinks and smokes, must be very cheap at wholesale rates. And what makes it still more curious the person who uses neither shed nor fire must pay five cents for a drink, which makes it look as though there is no charge for the accommodation but only for the drink; then it would follow that there must be a large profit on the drink to enable the hotelkeeper to supply the accommodation free. But we need not follow this up further, those of our readers for whom this is intended will understand our meaning.

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In the last paragraph of Bro. Shepard's article on page three of last number, for "receiving" read "reviewing" as it stood in the manuscript.

So far we have only received one answer to Bro. Lediard's question. Our brethren are pondering over the matter probably, and we may have some replies for the February 15th number. It would be a good idea to have a conference through THE EVANGELIST on the subject. Brethren, let us hear from you.

Now that Mr. Abbott has reconstructed his Cabinet, perhaps he may find time to have that Royal Commission appointed which is to look into the liquor traffic and consider the question of its prohibition. In the meantime let us all try to get along without whiskey, beer, etc. That would be a good way to stop the liquor traffic if all the people would stop drinking the stuff. What a waste of money is that spent in intoxicating drinks!

As announced in this paper, Bro. F. E. Lieigs, one of our brethren who has spent a number of years as a missionary in China, has arranged to visit as many of the churches as he can conveniently reach in the time at his disposal. He will, no doubt, be very cordially received by the churches. He is an interesting speaker; he tells his story in an intelligible and impressive way. Every effort should be put forth to make the most of his visit by advertising the meetings, and so securing large audiences to hear him.

A long article on "Church Finance" will be found elsewhere. "Church Finance" may well be called a vexed or a vexing question in many churches, and it will continue to be so until some sensible system of raising money is introduced and faithfully operated. There is something amusing in the perplexity of deacons who wonder why it is so hard to collect money for church purposes. If money were found difficult to gather for secular concerns, it would readily occur to the same good brethren to enquire whether there were not something wrong with the system in vogue; but in church matters it is very common to go along complaining, the few often bearing the burden of the many and no effort made to improve the method of collecting.

Many people seem to imagine that with money and method the conversion of the world would be easy. I feel sure we need more zeal and consecration. The *Watchman* puts it about right in the following:—
"Money alone will not make any kind of religious work successful. Wherever you find a spiritually prosperous church, an aggressive missionary enterprise, the problem of city evangelization, or of reaching the neglected classes in the country on a way toward solution, you find that some men and women have been putting their brains, their efforts, their sympathies, their prayers into it.—*Gospel Advocate*."

Whenever we hear of a person saying that a certain religious enterprise will succeed if money will ensure it, we always make the mental comment, "Money won't do it." Money and method are important, but it is needful that money and method should be used by men and women "led with the love of God and their fellowmen in order to make religious work truly successful. Moreover a great deal of good is done without the use of much money and with very little thought of method. And further it is well to admit that there is danger that the money and the method may assume undue proportions in the mind of the giver.