

## Contributions.

## Help the Minister.

A. H. FINCH.

"Monday, May 18th, the subject at the young people's meeting, Portage la Prairie was "How can we help our minister in his work?" The following are some points of general interest brought out in the study of it. Pray for him. Don't scold him. Attend all the Church services. Be punctual. Be attentive. Talk His work up not down. Bring your Bible and hymn book to every service. Bring pencil and paper and note all good points for future use and study. If he has ideas that do not agree with yours, don't be continually harping on the fact before the outside world to his detriment; he is as apt to be right as you. If you are ashamed of him and do not care to invite others to hear him tell him so in plain terms, don't let him learn it second or third hand. If he tramps on your 'corns,' reform and do not blame him or call him hard names. Don't absent yourself for every slight cause; he attends rain or shine, sick or well. Be faithful to him always and everywhere; a General can dare but little if his troops are mutinous. Stand by him in any reform he may be trying to carry out in the community, and don't have him depend for all his moral support on members of other religious bodies. If he gives you work to do, do it cheerfully and gladly. If he does not any, or enough work, open your eyes to the work lying round you. Try and have some one with you to service every time, who is unaccustomed to attend. If his sermons help you, don't be afraid to tell him so. Never flatter him, 'flatteries are lies.' Speak kindly to him, and of him. Station to him to gain help for his hard places—not to detect his errors, he makes plenty—not to hunt for heresy, you can find plenty nearer home. Try and have as much sense as the barn-yard fowls—pick the grains of truth and leave the chaff. It is hard for him to shake hands with, and make welcome, all the strangers on both sides of the Church, please help him. Take a good Church paper or two (e.g. THE CANADIAN EVANGELIST), read it, and show it to your friends."

If there are any grains of thought in the above worth picking, pick them and leave the chaff. Did you ever see wheat grown without chaff? Is it too much to expect that each Christian should be the means under God of converting one soul every year? How long at that rate would it take to convert the world to Christ? The world has a population of, say, 1,400,000,000. The Disciples alone amount to nearly one million. Leave out all the drones, the kickers, the useless and unworthy ones, and we surely could depend on half a million workers to start with to-day. Then by doubling their numbers every year, twelve years hence, when the great American Christian Convention should meet in Portage la Prairie in June, 2002, and the reports should be read from Greenland and Patagonia, from India, China, and the far-off isles of the sea, it would be to the effect that every son and daughter of Adam's race, who had come to the years of understanding had turned to the Lord. Half a million doubled twelve times, come to the enormous number of 2,048,000,000, more than double the present adult population of the world. My brother, my sister, are you doing your share? How are you using your talents?

"If at the dawn of the early morning  
He should call us one by one,  
When to the Lord we restore our talents,  
Will He answer then 'well done'?"

## Prayer.

It is so natural for man to pray that no theory can prevent him. Not more natural is it for a child to cry for its mother than for man to call upon a Superior Being. The world is orphaned without God. From the first recorded instance of prayer when "man began to call upon the name of the Lord," until the present, the world has been always at prayer. At rosy morn, or sombre eve, or high noon day, at every hour of every day's cycle, through all the years and centuries somewhere, some one has been praying. There has not yet been found a nation or a people devoid of prayer and worship. Since prayer has been universal among those ignorant of the true God, how much more should it prevail among people who know "the only true God and Jesus Christ," whom he has sent, who have found "The Authc." every good and perfect gift," the One "in whom we live and move and have our being!"

Rightly, therefore, and of necessity, is prayer enjoined upon God's people. We shall consider four things concerning prayer:

I. The time for praying. The pious Moslem prays five times a day—(1) before sunrise; (2) at noon; (3) before sunset; (4) after sunset; (5) when night has shut in, and whosoever he may be, in his shop, or in the street, he steps aside, spreads out his cloak, takes off his shoes, and, with his face toward Mecca, performs his devotions. The Christian is exhorted to "pray always," and "in everything by prayer and supplication," to make his requests known to God. "I will therefore, that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands," said the great apostle. The Koran calls prayer the pillar of religion and the key of Paradise.

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,  
The Christian's native air,  
His watchword at the gates of heav'n,  
He enters heaven with prayer.

"Pray without ceasing" is not an intended hyperbole, as we have heard it explained; neither does it necessitate our always being upon our knees. But the Christian must live in an atmosphere of prayer. The prayerless soul is a Christless soul. "Prayer is better than sleep," said the False Prophet. "I have so much to do that I cannot get on without three hours a day of praying," said the bold Luther. Jesus found it necessary to pray, and sometimes "continued all night in prayer." (What Christian dare neglect this privilege?)

II. The character of our prayers. The secret of successful prayer is (1) faith. "Let him ask in faith, not wavering." "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." There must be a (2) realization of our helpless condition. "God be merciful to me a sinner," will often be the cry of the devout believer. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." Our prayers must be (3) fervent. "God respecteth not the arithmetic of our prayers—how many they are, nor the rhetoric of our prayers—how neat they are; nor the geometry of our prayers—how long they are; but the divinity of our prayers—how heartsprung they are." "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." "Being in agony He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood." "God requires deepfelt heart prayers, the welling up of desires from souls that feel their sin and their need of a Saviour, and that burn with love and zeal." We must be (4) persistent in our prayers. "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." "Because of her continual

coming I will avenger her," said the unjust judge. "And shall not God avenge his own elect which cry day and night unto him?" Among the Romans prayer must be repeated at least three times a day in order to insure success. Some Mohammedan prayers must be repeated forty times a day.

This does not encourage long prayers, but frequent ones. Rather multiply their number than increase their length. The prayers of the Bible are nearly all short ones. Present your promise to God as you would a cheque at the bank, receive the blessing and go your way. Do not stay around the bank all day. Our prayers must be (5) submissive. "Thy will, not mine, be done," must forever be the spirit of prayer. "We know not what to pray for as we ought." We know not what foolish things we ask sometimes, nor what an injury it would be to us if God would answer our prayers as we desire. "God sometimes answers bad prayers in his deepest anger." "Lord teach us to pray."

III. The object of our prayers. Seek spiritual blessings rather than temporal. Ask for such things as relate to character rather than to our condition. We need the grace of self-denial, humility, benevolence, purity, rather than health, or strength, riches or prosperity. Of the seven sentences in the prayer our Lord taught his disciples, only one has relation to man's temporal condition. "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." "If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God." But our prayers must not be selfish. He who has the spirit of Christ loves all mankind, and will pray for all men, that they may know the Lord. He will pray for himself, for his family, for his friends, converted and unconverted, for his own sake, for the sake of the church, for the success of the Gospel, "that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified."

IV. The effect of our prayer (1) upon ourselves. The man who prays belongs to two worlds, the prayerless man but to one. He who looks up to something higher than himself is made better. Nothing can make our souls as pure and strong; nothing can arm us so completely for life's conflicts as to be alone with infinite truth and infinite love. "Prayer will make a man cease from sin, or sin will entice a man to cease from praying." We cannot earnestly pray without being made better. The sense of God's presence, his authority and love, of our own obligations and unworthiness, will possess us, and we shall thus be made grateful, humble, resigned, and anxious for a better life. Like Cromwell's soldiers, we shall rise from our knees to go forward to victory. The men who have revolutionized society by their heroic deeds in the cause of God have been mighty through the inspiration of prayer. (2) As we pray for others our prayers will affect them. "I fear the prayers of John Knox more than any army of ten thousand men," said the unfortunate Mary of Scotland. Eternity alone will reveal the numbers of the redeemed who can attribute their salvation to the prayers of some loved one. Prayer moves the world, and orders the destinies of millions. (3) Our prayers also affect God. "The very essence of prayer is the belief that the divine is accessible to supplication, and the divine will capable of being moved thereby," says Argyle. "I have heard thy prayer. I have seen thy tears." "In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God. He heard my voice out of his holy temple, and my cry came before him even unto his ears. Then

the earth shook and trembled." God hears, God answers. How, we know not; when, we care not. He loves us with an everlasting love; He makes all things work together for our good; no good thing will He withhold from them that fear him. Somewhere, somehow, sometime, He will answer. God ways are right ways. God's time is the best time.

"When you pray be sure to direct your prayers to the care of the Redeemer, and then they will never miscarry."

E. R. B.

## The Church in Galt.

Letter from the Church of Christ at Galt to the Disciples of Christ, assembled in Convention, at Owen Sound, 6th June, 1890:

BELOVED BRETHREN.—We regret that we are unable to send you such encouraging information regarding the progress of the Church here as we would desire, and as undoubtedly would give you pleasure, in view of your interest in the advancement of our blessed Lord's Kingdom everywhere, but circumscribed as we are we have been unable to accomplish great things, but we can at least let you know that we have not ceased earnestly to contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints. No special effort has been put forth in the place during the past year, and we regret this when we see our sectarian friends adding continually to their congregations this way.

Our number remains unaltered from last year save for our aged sister Smith, who has gone to her rest.

From circumstances beyond our control the Sunday-School has slightly declined in attendance latterly. Competing with the sects for the children, we are in some respects at a serious disadvantage, but the teachers continue on in the work, never desisting.

When the time arrives that our brethren in the Province can make that concentrated effort in Galt which the importance of the place will warrant, we believe that there are many who can be reached and gathered into the fold, as the way has been broken and prepared to a considerable extent now.

Financially we are very poor, so that we may not presume to suggest or ask much for ourselves; that would be a tax on your funds. We do not wish just now, however, to build any meeting-house, plain or handsome, but prefer in the meantime to put up with such accommodation as we have, unsatisfactory though it may be, and rest content to see souls gathered into the Kingdom—living stones added to the spiritual temple. Could not our brethren afford to introduce to the Province, and sustain for a time an effort of such evangelists as Updike and Hawes, or others of the most eminent of our brethren in that line, so as to awaken the people and let them know that we are here at their doors with the primitive gospel? They do not realize it at present, and look upon us very much as being only a few odd "cranks" here and there, without any particular claim to their attention.

Could such an effort be made in the principle cities and towns, the Disciples of Christ might be brought into more prominence, and be correspondingly placed at advantage for obtaining unprejudiced consideration; and in such circumstance we would trust that you would deal liberally with Galt, in order that the Church here might be strengthened and more firmly established.

On behalf of the Church at Galt.

R. W. McDONNELL,

Secretary.

## Selections.

## God Holds the Key.

God holds the key of all unknown,  
And I am glad;  
If other hands should hold the key,  
Or if He trusted it to me,  
I might be sad.

What if to-morrow's cares were here,  
Without its rest?  
Rather would I unlock the day,  
And as the hours swing open, say,  
"Thy will is best."

The very dimness of my sight  
Makes me secure;  
For groping in my misty way,  
I feel His hand—I hear Him say,  
"My help is sure."

I can not read His future plan,  
But this I know,  
I have the smiling of His face,  
And all the refuge of His grace,  
While here below.

Enough, this covers all my want,  
And so I rest,  
For what I can not, He can see,  
And in His care I sure shall be  
For ever blest. —Anon.

## Presbyterian Creed Revision.

Many of our readers have been, no doubt, interested observers of the revision movement which has for some time past been agitating the minds of our Presbyterian brethren in the United States. We have briefly noted from time to time the progress of the movement. The meeting of the General Assembly, which was held the week before last had been looked forward to with a good deal of anxiety. The facts that the debates were carried on with exemplary Christian courtesy and good feeling, and that a course of action was agreed on with a good degree of unanimity, have been hailed with corresponding gratification and thankfulness. The Independent thinks this meeting may be known as "The Unanimous Assembly."

The first question raised, and one of the most difficult, was that of the powers of the General Assembly. Was it competent to revise the creed, or was that the prerogative of the Presbyteries? A Special Committee appointed to consider the question presented a kind of compromise report, providing that after the Assembly has passed on an overture as to its form and constitutionality, it shall be debated in the Presbyteries, and if approved by two-thirds of them shall be finally enacted by the General Assembly. The report was adopted with a good degree of unanimity. Thus, what many regarded as the critical point in the revision discussion, was safely passed.

Then came the revision question itself. It was found that one hundred and thirty-four Presbyteries had voted in favor of revision, and sixty-eight against it. Others had failed to vote. Practically two-thirds had given their voice in favor of revision.

The debate which followed was long and able. The Anti-revisionists did not pursue an obstructive course, but contented themselves with insisting that the revision should not impair the Calvinistic character of the Confession. Three motions were submitted, and at the close of the speeches in support of each a Special Committee was appointed to try to combine them, if possible, in such a manner as would be satisfactory to all parties. They succeeded beyond expectation. The exact situation is stated as follows, by Dr. Charles L. Thompson, Correspondent of the Independent:

"The General Assembly has decided that a committee of twenty-five, fifteen ministers and ten elders, shall proceed to formulate a revision of the Confession of Faith, and submit the result of the work to the next General Assembly. In this formulation there is no restriction put upon it, except that it shall propose no revision which