

IS IT A NEW DEPARTURE ?

When the Canada Holiness Association was organized, about twelve years ago, it was presumed to be in perfect accord with the holiness movement in the United States.

We had the honor of preaching the first sermon before the first convention, and in it we took the ground that whatever might be the puzzling questions raised about the doctrines connected with the modern holiness movement, it was not necessary to wait till they were all examined into and understood.

There was a short cut to the heart of the subject, we maintained, to wit: God commanded us to be holy. If not consciously obedient to this commandment, it was clearly taught that we might, could and should be. It was not necessary to know the full meaning of the command before we obeyed. It was sufficient to know that God understood what it meant to us in each individual case. Therefore, each one could go in perfect confidence to God and ask Him to make him holy according to His, God's, thought as to the meaning of this command to him. That provision was made for this definite prayer to be answered when the petitioner exercised faith for this particular result.

Thus we showed that this Gordian knot was cut, the puzzles got around, or relegated to the land of speculation, pure and simple, and the soul enabled to secure the blessing, or rather fact, of holiness of life, and learn as to its nature as the promises were day by day fulfilled.

This foundational position was accepted by all as both scriptural and reasonable, and so we addressed ourselves to the definite work of living holy lives ourselves and helping others into like faith:

As soon as possible, viz., in the second year of the Association's life, we attended one of the great holiness camp-meetings, under the auspices of the National Holiness Camp-Meeting Association, and led by the late Rev. J. S. Inskip. We were received kindly, nay, cordially, were even asked to preach, and the fact of our having started the EXPOSITOR was warmly commended.

The following summer, in preparing for our first camp-meeting, we did our utmost to secure some of the leaders of that movement to come and help us with their matured experience, expecting that if they came they would, virtually, take charge and direct the whole meeting.

Also, we secured an exchange with most of the holiness periodicals then published, and freely utilized their contents without the slightest suspicion that our writings would ever be put under a ban by them.

Thus it will be seen that we acted in all good faith in our attitude towards, and dealings with, the holiness movement in the States.

But it will be noticed that underneath all this we had laid a deeper foundation than simple loyalty to a holiness movement, even a determination to be taught of God concerning the what and how of holiness. And so, as all our labors were placed under the direct control and supervision of the Holy Spirit, we followed where He, and not they, might lead.

Following our Divine Guide we were convinced of the necessity of emphasizing more and more His distinctive work. And as time went on we were called upon to investigate, one after another, the questions left in a loose, unsatisfactory condition by all holiness writers, such as dress, mistakes, physical manifestations, righteous living, inbred sin and faith-cures. But as we proceeded with our investigations we found that said periodicals objected, and finally, after the two forces had come into close contact at Wesley Park, they all, without exception, repudiated our work as heretical in the extreme, and, indeed, were not very choice in the terms used to characterize it.

But when this attitude was definitely assumed by them we realized that a call was made upon us, not only to re-examine the foundations of our own faith, but to more closely scrutinize theirs. This examination we carried on openly, not only in our writings, but also in our public gatherings.

Whilst thus engaged, we felt it was right to take the writings and testimonies of those who were representative men.