

The Christian.

ST. JOHN, N. B., - AUGUST, 1894.

EDITORIAL.

RECAPITULATION.

In the February number of THE CHRISTIAN at the request of a highly valued friend, we began a series of articles on "first principles" for the benefit of young persons coming into the church as well as for anxious enquirers for salvation. As Disciples of Christ we are very anxious to hold and advocate his faith and teaching, and nothing else, and would especially urge our readers as wise men to judge what we say by the oracles of God. The man who has Jesus' sayings and does them he likens to the wise man who builds his house upon a rock so sure that neither winds nor floods can molest; while the man who hears and does not is like him who built upon the sand, to have his house and hopes all overthrown in bitter disappointment. Will the reader review the ground herein set forth and enquire afresh. Is it true and safe for time and eternity? If anything is advanced contrary to Jesus' teaching by all means let it go.

At the present time much is said and written upon the blessedness of Christian union, and those who love God would greatly rejoice in being united with others who believe in and love the Saviour. If we are of the number would it not be very sad to hold on to anything needlessly that prevents this union? And even should our efforts to unite with others fail we are solemnly bound by our allegiance to the King immortal to hold, as far as we can know it, his truth and nothing but his truth in religion and to be open to conviction from those who think us wrong.

In the articles mentioned the first question considered is, how an anxious inquirer comes to Jesus and gains the assurance of his gracious pardon. It is affirmed that the heartfelt belief that the Son of God died for his sins is what convinces the sinner of his guilt and leads him to hate sin and love the Saviour. And this belief prompts him to ask: Lord what wilt thou have me to do?—instead of asking for the prayers of Christians. When he, in full trust in Jesus, does what he tells him to do he has Christ's promise assuring him that he is saved and giving him joy and peace in the Holy Spirit. Now if Christ's last commission in Mark 16: 15, 16, is plain and positive on this point, how can we turn away from it and teach a different doctrine?

The next question asked is what name the saved body—the body of Christ—should wear. The Disciples affirm that it is the name Jesus gave the saved that they should be satisfied with and wear. Jesus called them his disciples. They were afterward called Christians first at Antioch. Is it wrong to bear this name? And must we in order to be right seek another name and that one not named by Christ or his apostles in order to keep us separate from others who love the Lord and make division and strife as they were doing in Corinth till the apostle showed them the carnality and evil of that course. How can it be wrong to accept the name Jesus gave, or to strive and pray for his grace to enable us to honor that name by walking in his footsteps. That name will retain its glory long after all other names have passed into a deserved oblivion.

We next notice the creed of the church or the great 'ruth men are to receive in order to be saved, viz: *That Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God.* This creed is short and simple yet awfully sublime. It has a person who is both human and divine in its centre, and a present and eternal salvation for its recipients. Can we put any other creed before it? It is

the rock on which the Church of Christ is built. Let us rather hold it fast.

We come next to repentance, which is so important that without it all men must perish; so plain that God commands all men everywhere to repent. It is treated as a heartfelt determination to turn from in to God. This every one whom God commands to repent can do, which will be fully proved in the day of judgment.

The first day of the week next claims attention. As Jesus met his disciples week after week on the first day his rising day, and no other day of the week is noticed in any way by him or them after his resurrection, we cannot ignore that day nor refuse to commemorate his resurrection because Moses commanded the Jewish fathers to keep the seventh day of the week holy. The same God who spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets hath in these last times spoken to us by his Son and we are bound to hear him. We cannot surrender to friend or foe the previous privilege of meeting together to commemorate the Lord's death and the Lord's resurrection on his rising day. Those who can see no sufficient reason for observing the first day of the week and still claim to be saved by Jesus' death and resurrection are to be pitied. The death that the saved commemorate on the first day of the week on earth will be the main topic of converse on the other side and their song of praise to God and to the Lamb will be the glad song of eternity.

The more we examine the principles held and advocated by the Disciples of Christ the deeper are our convictions of their truth and justice and the stronger our impressions that they will gain the favor of true and intelligent friends of Jesus.

These principles are spreading with amazing rapidity in other lands and they will spread in our own. If we prove faithful to the Lord and to the word of his grace our hearts shall rejoice in the triumphs of the gospel around us. But if its progress is impeded by our worldliness, selfishness or indifference, God will employ more faithful servants to advance his cause. It must go forward. "Take heed" says our captain "that the light that is in thee be not darkness. If the light that is in thee be darkness how great is that darkness." No darkness is so fatal to the midnight mariner as that of a light-house without a light. God has given us light but it is through good works that others will see it and glorify our Father in heaven.

The annual meeting at Summerside, P. E. I., has come and gone. Brethren and sisters from different parts of the Island attended. Besides the pleasure of meeting those whom we in time past have known and loved in the Lord, and witnessing the joy of resident members in making visitors comfortable and happy, our joy was increased in meeting happy faces of brethren and sisters from abroad. Among these was our intelligent young sister Wallace of Shubenacadie, sister Wallace of Halifax, and sister Morrison of St. John, attended the meeting in the interest of Foreign Missions, and had several meetings with the women and the children. Those who were most in company of these sisters spoke warmly of their zeal for the Master and their influence for good. May they have the approval and blessing of Him whom they love and serve. It was good to press the hand of our old and genial friend, Bro. Stockford, of St. John.

The preachers present were Bro. Weaver, who has faithfully labored at Montague and East Point for the last two years, and is about to leave the Island for a time, and Bro. Emery, so well and favorably known, both on the Island and off of it.

The preachers from abroad were A. McLean, Neil McLeod, and H. W. Stewart, all Island boys. We say but little about them, as they are known personally or by report to the readers of the CHRISTIAN. We heard each of them discourse upon Jesus

and His religion. They were in good health, and seemed as determined as ever to spend and be spent in the service of the Redeemer.—D. C.

THE P. E. ISLAND ASSOCIATION.

Time has wrought many changes in the composition of the churches on the Island, and perhaps this is never more apparent than during the annual meeting. There are those who ten and twenty years ago used to take such a prominent part in these gatherings, those without whom a meeting seemed to be incomplete. The most of them have joined the church above and a younger generation is occupying their places. Even one short year makes its changes. Some who were present a year ago were missed this year, and so it will be at the next meeting.

This year the association was held with the church in Summerside, commencing on the Saturday before the second Lord's day in July. The Summerside church is at present without a regular preacher, Bro. Harding having left that field, but it made ample preparation for the anticipated assembling of brethren and sisters from all the Island churches and from abroad, and no one present was allowed to feel as an unwelcome stranger. For hospitality and warm hearted greetings commend us to the church in Summerside. They consider it a pleasure to be inconvenienced if thereby some one else is benefited. But their resources are so ample that it takes an immense crowd to overtax them.

This year the association was happy in having present two of the Island preachers from the United States, Bro. A. McLean, whose soul is on fire with love for a dying world and a living Christ, and who is toiling day and night so that that world may at least hear of the Christ; and Bro. M. McLeod, the well beloved pastor of the Church of Christ in Evansville. The association is indebted to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia for furnishing them with two such good workers as Sister D. A. Morrison of St. John and Sister H. Wallace of Halifax. Other visitors from abroad were Bro. Stockford from St. John and Sister Wallace from Shubenacadie.

The association opened on Saturday evening when a social meeting was held, over which that faithful shepherd, Bro. D. Crawford, presided. He is still active in the Lord's service and hopes to be for many years to come. He has given his life to the work on the Island and none are more anxious than he that great prosperity may attend the churches here. Increasing years do not burn out his zeal.

The rising sun of the Lord's day ushered in a delightful day. It could not have been more beautiful. With cheerful hearts the worshippers directed their steps to the house of the Lord, and when the hour for the opening hymn came the house was well filled. The association sermon was preached by Bro. Henry W. Stewart of St. John. He chose as his text "your zeal hath provoked very many" (2 Cor. 9: 2), and tried to show how zeal does kindle zeal, and also that there is an emulation that is commendable and should be stirred up. Not until churches and individuals provoke each other to love and good works need we expect them to develop their latent powers. What church will set the pace?

After the singing of a hymn the disciples "sat around the sacred board, as members of one common Lord" to partake of the bread and wine in memory of their Saviour's death and his coming again. Bro. O. B. Emery presided, and in a touching address pointed us to the suffering Son of God hanging on the cross. Then in a solemn stillness a large number held communion with their Lord; and being drawn nearer to him they were drawn nearer to each other.