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# The Canadian Evangelist.

"GO . . . SPEAK . . . TO THE PEOPLE ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LIFE."

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## THE Canadian Evangelist

is devoted to the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ, and pleads for the union of all believers in the Lord Jesus in harmony with his own prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, and on the basis set forth by the Apostle Paul in the following terms: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."—Eph. iv. 1-6.

### Union on the Mission Field.

CHAS. E. GARST.

The missionary, being far from his church environment, and in the midst of the heathen, frequently finds occasion to emphasize that before he regarded lightly, and to regard lightly what was before of greater importance to him. The sectarian on the distant field expatiates on the advantages of the true religion over the false, and thinks very little of the "hobby" of his own clique; it is only in competition with others that such things are brought to the front. After being catechized daily about the different sects by enquirers, he grows tired of explaining and excusing, rather expecting to keep the pagan on the defensive, and is even after driven to advocate union, where he had not thought of such a thing before. For this reason, on the foreign field we find preachers—who as a class think they have settled all truth and are not to be preached to but are to preach—more accessible to reason than elsewhere. The heathen says: "Settle what the truth is among yourselves and then teach us." The evangelists try to make out that the differences do not amount to much, whereupon the heathen wants to know why such large-hearted and learned people are kept apart by trifles. The respondent is in a dilemma; if the differences are slight they should not be a bar to union; if they are weighty, then the sects are in bad condition to teach the religion of the one true God to the heathen.

The sectarian missionary teaches the great principles and lets his denominational views be spread by his practice. He perhaps sprinkles his converts and never says anything about it; the converts never commune unless their spiritual father be present, from his practice, naturally thinking if he isn't there to administer to them the emblems they are to go hungry! These things are virtually taught as traditions; no attempt is made to base them on the Scriptures, nor does the convert expect them to be based there. In this way sectarian churches are being planted all over the world. A plea for union on the field finds often a hearty response. The environment is favorable. Judson was brought to immersion by studying the Bible to

meet the arguments of the Baptists; he had always taken it for granted that sprinkling and infant membership were right—that being his church tradition—but when he sought to find it in the Book it was not there!!! Such tenets are best propagated by silence, but what is true is best propagated by teaching. If we are silent our children might easily grow up sectarian, should the partizan try to teach his doctrine from the Scriptures his children might reject the traditions. There have been many cases similar to Judson's. The short experience the Disciples have had in missions gives encouraging results in direct work among the heathen, among missionaries and native evangelists. Bro. Moore, in London, has taught a number of preachers "the way of the Lord more perfectly." Bro. Shishmanian has done the same in Turkey. Bro. Holck has done the same in Scandinavia. Bro. Jackson and Bro. Mitchell joined the reformation from other communions in India. Bros. Ware and Molland, both good Chinese scholars—and from a money point of view worth ten thousand dollars apiece—both first joined the work in China.

In Japan one foreign teacher was immersed, as a result of tracts; among native evangelists, we have proselyted several who have or are now working with us; as the reader may be anxious to know where they are from, I will give their names and former connections: from the Greek Church, Matsuda; from the Methodists, Nakada, now studying in Kentucky University; from the Presbyterian Church, Saito; from the Methodists, Imai, Takeshita and Miura; from the Catholics, Izumi (he never amounted to much till he joined us); from the Baptists, Nakano, now in the responsible position of pastor at Akita. The Baptists get a number of additions, who would more gladly join the reformation did they only know of it.

The small effort made by us to convert the world is a cause of shame, for, by all the principles that give us our *raison d'être*, we are bound to push out and proclaim the Gospel call.

If we do enter on the work in earnest, the little that has been done will show what we may expect, that is a strong power for union on the Bible alone, in all countries. Probably half the missionaries in China are immersionists, which means a great deal; there is also a strong force here in Japan. We may look for great results on the mission field the same as at home. Creeds are nearly in a state of "innocuous desuetude." The union that is "to make the world believe" is now at hand. Let us help on the glorious cause; we can share in it, even lead it if we will.

Brethren, look out on a heathen world, then look in and consider the joy the Gospel gives, and pass the blessings on; you have been entrusted with it by your Divine Lord; be faithful and a crown of life filled with bright shining stars shall be your everlasting reward. Shonai, Japan.

A gem is not polished without rubbing, nor is a man perfected without trials.—Chinese.

### The Order of Confirmation.

To the Editor of THE CANADIAN EVANGELIST

DEAR SIR,—Presuming upon the kindly tone of your paper and Mr. Sheppard's contribution on the above subject, I have been prompted to write a few lines, which, perhaps, you may kindly insert in defence of the above service.

Putting aside the laying on of hands for other purposes it is acknowledged to be connected with blessing in Holy Scripture (Gen. xlviii. 14; Matt. xix. 13, etc.) and also with the New Testament gift of spiritual grace (Acts viii. 17; xix. 6; and probably Heb. vi. 2). We find, indeed, those upon whom hands were laid—"speaking with tongues and prophesying" after the rite. Now, even supposing this involves a miraculous manifestation of the work of the Spirit, yet there is no reason for supposing that the imposition of hands was designed for the bestowal of such extraordinary manifestations; it seems rather the recognized symbol of the gift of spiritual blessing quite independent of the manner in which His work might influence those who received His influence. In some cases extraordinary manifestations followed prayer and preaching, as well as the laying on of hands. The early church retained the rite as a complement of baptism. It is still used in close connection with baptism by the eastern Christians; in the western church they were separated (as to time) from the 12th or 13th century, and very wisely. But there would be a question as to the nature of what is called "speaking with tongues and prophesying." There is nothing necessarily extraordinary in "prophesying" for it in all probability means an exhortation or address, and a careful reading of 1 Cor. xiv. seems to leave the impression that the "speaking with a tongue" does not mean speaking foreign languages, but simply ecstatic utterance. If so we can quite understand St. Paul's low estimation of this gift, for he would rather speak "five words with the understanding than ten thousand in a tongue." (Of course "unknown" is not in the original Greek.)

To confound ecstatic emotion with the true blessing is to forget St. Paul's warning "Brethren, become not children in your minds." The former certainly, sometimes at least, accompanied the latter in the Apostolic church, but that the laying on of hands was simply the outward sign of the former and not pre-eminently of the latter is to think of the premature Christians as childish. The idea of confirming the baptismal vows by the candidate is quite a modern idea, an addition to the main Scriptural idea which is that the faithful candidate receives at the prayers of the faithful through the laying on of hands a spiritual blessing from God.

As to the power of the church to make this addition to the Apostolic rite I have no doubt, and for the following reasons: When the Passover was instituted various forms and practices were enjoined by God; they were to eat it "with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, their staves in their hands and in haste"; the eat-

ing of unleavened bread and the lamb is alone commanded. But by the time of our Lord certain circumstances and additions were made in a set service, the Great Hallel was sung, the posture had been altered from standing to the recumbent posture, and there was a formal drinking from four cups—the fourth the cup of blessing. Now our Saviour conformed and endorsed these alterations and additions; He even took the cup introduced by man, and made it the symbol of His blood in the New Sacrament which was to take the place of the Old. I believe the church of the New Dispensation has no less power than the church of the Old. I also believe she has this power, although none to alter or meddle with any spiritual truth or to teach anything as necessary to salvation but what can be proved from Holy Scripture. Had there been anything of the captious spirit there would have been matter enough for disputation in these alterations and additions in the matter of the Passover. It might have been argued with some show of justice "that these innovations were not in keeping with the original character of the ordinance. The drinking of wine and the recumbent posture, betokening security and gladness, scarcely suited the commemoration of events which had been marked by hurry and alarm," and so on *ad infinitum*. Our blessed Lord conforms to innocent customs and practices of His church for which it would have been absolutely impossible to produce scriptural warrant, and against which it would have been a very easy matter to heap up specious objections. To say that we must find chapter and verse for everything the church orders seems to me to be treating Holy Scripture in a way it has warned us not to treat it. "The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life." No society of Christians does actually follow in these matters the "letter" of Holy Scripture, and the attempt to prove they do leads in many cases to the most extraordinary perversions of God's Word. I know, sir, you will agree with me in this at least. As to conversion I do not find the word used in its modern technical sense in the Bible; it is used in a general sense. Every man regenerate or unregenerate who turns from wrong to right, either in doctrine or way of life, is converted according to the scriptural use of the word.

Yours very faithfully,  
Wm. BRYAN.  
Mount Forest, Feb. 11, 1891.

A dream which President Lincoln related to one of his friends has a homely significance for many another "common fellow." Lincoln dreamed that he was passing, on some public occasion, between ranks of people, when he heard one man say to another, as he pointed him out: "He's a common-looking fellow, isn't he?" "Well, my friend," replied Lincoln in his dream, turning to the man whose remark he had overheard, "God likes us common looking fellows, or else he wouldn't have made so many of us."

### [EDITORIAL] The Saviour's Mission.

It is certain that many people not Christians in this so-called Christian land do not understand the reason why God sent His Son into the world, and there is reason to fear that there are professing Christians whose understanding of the same matter is very indefinite. And we may go further and say that there are Christians who in theory do understand the Saviour's mission, but in personal practice they really do not. And still, again, there are those who, though they did once clearly comprehend and feelingly appreciate the object before the Lord Jesus in giving Himself up, have now little or no realization of it with reference to themselves or others.

Yet it requires no great acquaintance with the New Testament to be able to find many plain declarations on the subject. One will proceed but a little distance in the perusal of the first book of the New Testament before coming to the instruction of the angel to Joseph, "and thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins." And so in the last book of the New Testament in the fifth verse of the first chapter we have the beginning of a fine doxology. "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood" And in brief we may say that the same great and all-inclusive object is set forth at large throughout the New Testament. So whatever lack of apprehension there may be, or whatever misapprehension, the New Testament is not responsible for it.

Now it goes with the saying that a person cannot become a Christian, nor continue to be a Christian, unless he have a proper conception of the necessity of his becoming and continuing to be a Christian. He must understand that the necessity grows out of the fact that he is a sinner—a sinner who cannot save himself—and is lost unless saved by the Lord Jesus Christ. The person who "joins the church" for the society, or to please friends, or for other such reasons, has not begun to be a Christian. And the person who will not "join the church" because of the society, or because it will displease friends, or for other such reasons does not realize his need of being saved from his sins. And in a similar manner the person having made a profession of Christianity, who in the words of the apostle Peter (2 Peter i. 9) "hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins," is not living a Christian life.

We ask any unconverted man who may read these lines to fix his mind upon the fact that "the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost," and to study the Gospel from the standpoint, that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." And we beg Christians to remember that He "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works," and therefore that "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world."

Plenty of time is given us in life to do all that God intended we should do.