

gain much of its truth through the efforts of others.

The continual change of point of attack by the adversaries of the Bible, its loose and careless interpretation by advocates, its peculiar adaptation to the needs of each generation, together with other reasons, call for clear interpretation of its truths by those who are competent.

We can therefore see the necessity of spreading our literature if we would do all we can to advance what we believe to be the truth. As it has been in the secular history of the world, so is it in the kingdom of Christ. We must advance our cause largely through the distribution of literature. Our first duty is to put in the hands of the dying the Word of Life. Then we should seek to aid them as far as possible to a true understanding of it.

In the Maritime Provinces we have been very backward in this work. The brethren would profit greatly if they would more faithfully read and study the works of our leading writers. They would, I think, be better able to meet much of the false teaching of the day. We have done very little toward spreading our literature among outsiders. This branch of work needs our attention as much as any other. Our Literature Committee need all the aid, financial and otherwise, that they can obtain. Time lost now not only effects our generation, but succeeding ones also. This is a time of religious enquiry. We should take advantage of it.

#### HALIFAX AND PICTOU AND THE AMERICAN H. M. BOARD.

T. H. BLENNIS

A recent letter from Bro. Benj. L. Smith, Corresponding Secretary of the American Home Missionary Society, hints at the neglect of some of our provincial churches in the matter of taking collections for the American Home Mission work. I have been informed that at our Annual Meeting a few years ago, it was decided to take a yearly collection in the provincial churches for this especial work. This decision has only been carried out in part. Halifax and Pictou are now receiving aid from the American Board, without which, owing to peculiar circumstances, combining difficulties of the fields of labor, and unnecessary and groundless currents of opposition, neither place would be able to sustain regular preaching. Both of these important fields have been greatly strengthened, and the brethren of these churches are grateful and appreciative. Through the support given to these fields they are slowly but surely reaching that position when they will be self sustaining in a short time. The brethren in the United States have shown a willingness to help us, and a concern for us, that we ought to appreciate and reciprocate. It is certainly an encouraging feature of our work in the provinces to see a growing interest in missions in general, but as Spurgeon

once said, "thus far we have only given for missions our cheese-parings and candle-ends." Self-sacrifice was the essence of Christ's life, and is also of the Christian's life.

Christianity in its spirit and genius is a missionary religion, and God's plan is that every Christian should have a hand in this work. This is the high calling of the church, and it is great gain to the church that finds it out. Missionary activity helps tone up a body of Christians to doctrinal soundness. An idle church may have a formal orthodoxy, but you can hardly call its faith a living faith. A missionary church has the advantage of knowing that it is laboring aggressively instead of only defensively. The best reply that we can give to those who deny the plea we make, is to push that plea to the front and prove its truthfulness by our evangelizing efforts. Better than "Paley's Evidences" and "Butler's Analogy" are missionary zeal and evangelistic success. One word concerning the North street church of Halifax. We have preached, labored and practised arduously to broaden and deepen the spirit of missions at home and abroad in this church the last year. We have to an encouraging extent succeeded, and when that day comes, and may the Lord hasten it, when the Halifax Christian Church can call its home its own, these provinces will hear from this body in no uncertain way. For a short time yet these brethren in Halifax and Pictou ought to have the fostering concern of the churches at home, and the aid now being received from the United States. It is not "money and effort wasted," such a thought even ought to be a slander on the character of even the most immature Christian. I have promised Bro. Smith to lay this matter before you, gentle reader. I have written. Let every church take the May collection for the American Home Mission Society. Our honor, our gratitude, our expectations of success, in some fields at least, demand this of us.

#### LET THE BRETHEREN ON P. E. I. CO-OPERATE.

R. W. STEVENSON.

I am persuaded that all the brethren on P. E. Island are anxious for the rapid growth of the cause of Christ on the Island. There is something fascinating about a growing institution. A rapid healthy growth in any department of life is pleasing. This is certainly true of the cause of Christ. When we read of the splendid increase of the brotherhood in the United States we are pleased to be identified with such a movement. People readily turn towards everything prosperous. We prefer to be with the living rather than with the dead. Where there is no growth there is something decidedly wrong.

The cause of Christ we most surely represent. Our work has been, and still is, to reproduce the primitive Church of Christ in this age of denominational and sectarian strife. Our growth in the Maritime Pro-

vinces has been slow. It has not been in keeping with the character of our work. We have something for the world that will do good. We have, in the work in which we are engaged, the solution of many, if not all, the difficult problems of the age.

The cause for this slowness is the want of co-operation in the work. Each church has been satisfied with keeping up worship on Lord's days, and made no effort to strengthen the work and increase the borders of Zion. In many places the work has been at a standstill. Things are little better than they were years ago. Some are disposed to blame the preachers for this unhappy condition of things. Those fault-finders are generally obstructionists. They do little but find fault. They are generally the first to grumble and the last to help. They are of those "who say and do not." Instead of finding fault because things are not always done as we think they should be done, let us one and all give ourselves to the work of making the cause of Christ grow on P. E. Island.

There should be co-operation with the churches of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. We should have a union of the churches in the Maritime Provinces. The Baptists, Methodists and other denominations have their maritime union of the churches. I also think it would be a good thing if we had a union of all the churches in Canada,—at least have convention of all the Canadian churches once every three or four years.

The denominations find this union a good thing, or they would not continue it. May we not learn a lesson from them? See how the work is systematized in the different states of the union. What advantage would be derived from a union of all the Maritime Provinces? There would be very many. There would be some system in our work. An effort would be made to help the weak churches. Work would be started in places where our cause is not represented. There would be a centralization of our work. We would have the most capable and experienced persons to help execute the work. Weak churches could be materially helped. Old churches aroused to greater activity. New fields opened up. The work undertaken with a united brotherhood at the back of it would make it an assured success. Fortified in this way new work cannot readily be broken down. Men soon became interested in such a work. The union of the Maritime Provinces would bring us into touch, so far as our work is concerned, with the whole of the brotherhood. We shall have vastly better annual meetings. The majority of the brethren are ignorant of the power for good these splendidly successful meetings are. Such an one as was had with the church at West Gore, N. S., in 1896—an annual meeting where men—business men—came together and perfected plans for great things for Christ in the two provinces, and are instructed in "the faith once for all delivered to the saints." By union more money can be raised, more men brought into the fields which are white and ready for the reaper, and more and better revival meetings held. Brethren, the cause of Christ will grow most surely and grandly if we stop our pitiful cry of poverty and inability to do. Let us shake off the dust and cob-webs that have been weighing us down and making us sick and