

# THE HOME MISSION JOURNAL

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WHOLE No. 119

## The Dangers in Decision Day

By A. L. Vail

"Decision Day" is a new applicant for Baptist favor. A large number of such applicants have arisen in recent years. Most of them originate in Pedobaptist connections; but since we are a very accommodating sort of people, and a little thin skinned under the charge of bigotry, we are more or less inclined to fall into line with any new thing that comes along looking as if it might be useful without involving any very serious risk. The Baptists who pride themselves on being broad-minded and progressive, are ready to ask, "What harm is there in 'Decision Day' any way?" To answer that question, in part at least, is the present purpose.

The idea of the institution is this: A day once a year is set apart for a concerted and special effort in Sunday schools to induce the children to "decide for Christ." Pressure (of what quality and how urgent depending on the manipulators of the effort) is brought to bear on the children in the mass to induce them to indicate in some way, usually a very easy way, that they "decide for Christ." What harm is there in that? We answer in two ways, considering the method first individually, as standing by itself; second collectively, in its associations.

I. View it Individually, as an isolated action, in a Baptist school and atmosphere, separate from the interpretations placed on it by the use and understandings elsewhere. So viewed, it seems to me open to serious objection because of several perils involved in it.

1. The peril of the Time Limit. One day is set apart for this appeal, one day out of the whole year; if not exclusively so, then conspicuously so; and the tendency will be toward the exclusive interpretation, and the omission of such appeal at other times. This day is announced and anticipated with this special distinction. It is "Decision Day," and others therefore are not decision days in any serious sense, if at all. But there is only one legitimate time word in Christian evangelism—"Now!" One has no right to set any day anywhere in the future for any one to decide to accept or reject Christ. Whoever does that, in a Sunday school as certainly as elsewhere, insults the Lord and imperils the soul. What is needed with the young no less than the old, is to understand that it is exceedingly perilous to trifle with God, and that putting off the acceptance of His grace is trifling with Him; that God is sovereign in this whole field; that we are saved by grace, and that grace is under no obligations to us; that God has a right to reject us tomorrow if we reject Him to day; that if we put Him off till our "decision day," He may put us off forever. "Decision Day" as I understand it to be commonly conceived, is equivalent to placing God in the attitude of subordination, waiting for us to set the time at which we will "decide" what we will do with Him. But He is sovereign. To Him belongs the leadership in methods and times of human salvation. We cannot consistently adopt any method of evangelism that impairs God's insistence on immediate attention. That the "Decision Day" method is such, in its tendency and almost inevitable effect, seems to me evident.

2. The peril of Magnetic Deception. It is great even with adults; here was perhaps the greatest evil in a certain kind of old time revival that comparatively dealt with adults and did not seek children. But the peril is intensified with the young. The idea captures the imagination. Childhood is impulsive and gregarious; it is responsive to the sway of the crowd, and thinks that the way the crowd goes must be the right way. Other things equal, youth needs for this reason to be dealt with religiously in special solitude and quiet, in order to be dealt with safely. Have we not seen it? A skillful manager can induce a company of children to rise in response to almost any proposal; and the more of them he has in hand, the more easily he can manage them. That is always true? Yes, but with one day set apart for concerted movement, not only locally but universally, the danger is immensely in-

creased. Have we not had enough mischief of this kind of thing, without adopting a method that puts a premium on it?

The peril of Vital Error. This has relation to the origin and quality of the saved life. It involves error in relation to all fundamental truths, sin, repentance, faith, and their kindred in the doctrinal kingdom; but space forbids the treatment of them, and the reader can catch the bearings for himself as we unfold briefly the central doctrine in this view, that of the origin and quality of the spiritual life, on which all else depends. The point is this: A day is set apart in which children are to "decide" their relations to Christ; we are thinking of it as in the Baptist atmosphere, where there is a fair degree of correctness in the general understandings abroad; still that way of putting it will almost certainly give the impression that the making of a Christian is in the simple willing of the person himself; it is all a question of his decision; he can decide the whole issue somewhat as he can decide what kind of candy he will have; if he rises or holds up his hand, that makes him a Christian; his "decision" is all, for God as well as himself. The peril herein is peculiarly the peril of youth with its limited experience, its comparative innocence and its abounding self confidence. The scheme is constructed to ignore the Holy Spirit as the initial power and authority, and to repudiate the birth from above as the essential basis for the effectiveness of the human will.

The "Decision Day" method belongs rather with Presbyterianism. The Presbyterian (the Reformed) system is logically adapted to "Decision Day," for the "children of the church," at least. Its idea is that the child of church members is, by virtue of natural birth, in the church, and in the kingdom of Heaven, at least to the extent of giving superior standing before God, so that all he has to do, on reaching discretion, is to assume that he is right with God and go ahead on his decision to this effect, without such experiences as Baptists think essential to the beginning of the Christian life in every one. "Decision Day" is also quite well fitted to "Campbellism," according to what seems to be the prevalent belief in that body. The faith required being that of intellectual assent, and the divine favor being locked up in baptism, more or less, then the assent followed by baptism covers the whole ground. But Baptists believe that faith in Christ is not only more but different from faith in Caesar, and that baptism is a nullity unless it is preceded by this superior faith, which is so superior that it is impossible without a renewing work of the Spirit of God before it.

The radical differences between those systems and our own makes a profound peril for us precisely at the point where the adaptation to them appears in "Decision Day." So much for the individual view.

II. The Collective View. We think now of "Decision Day" as one in a collection of manifestations, all of a kind, supporting each other, and the tendency of the whole away from the Baptist position. This has been suggested in the reference to the fitness of "Decision Day" to two denominations for the very reasons making its unfitness for us; but the present view is still wider, taking in more elements. The whole reason for the existence of Baptists as a separate people is in their conceptions of the spiritual life; and the constant peril for ourselves, as well as for others in relation to us, is that we shall forget or fail to appreciate that fundamental difference. And the closer the fellowship between others and ourselves in the things nearer the surface, where we are really more alike, the greater this danger is. If the general conditions are unfavorable to that life for which we distinctly stand, our peril is so far increased, because we are thereby unfitted to guard against the subtle influence of the error offered to us, consciously or unconsciously, by our esteemed neighbors.

Now, a considerable number of forces have been working together in this country in recent years against spiritual religion. All evangelical denominations have been affected, the Baptists included. I know that some of our optimistic

brethren think this is "pessimism;" but they are respectfully notified that it is the way of error, especially in a domain of truth, to patiently percolate under the surface and suddenly burst the levee, after which the flood runs itself, needing no help, not even from the devil. That is going on now—in the Baptist denomination, and it is working South. This movement expresses itself in a certain class of symptoms, in the realm, speaking generally, of "ritualism." That Baptists have, within our memory, taken up the concert recitation of the Lord's Prayer" in the public congregation, "responsive reading" likewise, the observance of Easter, in some cases Good Friday," and even "Passion Week," and such like things—what does it mean? Is it accidental? These things all come from the same quarter, in which ritualism predominates and the spiritual life is low. There is no accident in that. There is profound meaning in that. The meaning at bottom is that Baptists are seeking substitutes for spirituality, and they are finding them just where others have found them for the same purpose. "Decision Day" comes intertwined with this whole group of the expressions of a declining spiritual life, and supported by all of them. There is the breadth of the danger of it. It is an expression of our lowering conception of sin and salvation; it stands for the displacing of regeneration by education in dealing with the young, for slack views of sin and consequent trimming down of our conviction of the change needed in human nature and the necessity of the Holy Spirit working a supernatural renewal as the basis of the Christian life. It is the loss of spiritual power and of the sense of spiritual need, answering its own unrest by putting the human decision in the place of the divine renovation. It is the thin edge of that conception in all this field that Episcopalians express in "confirmation." It is a handy contrivance for those who want the thing but not the name. Now, most Baptists don't mean it in the way I have been working it out, and many of them don't mean it at all; but that is what it means, and that is what they will get if they keep on long enough in the way that some of them have started.—*Western Recorder.*

We are very thankful to the many friends who have sent in payments for "THE HOME MISSION JOURNAL" of late. But there are some who are in arrears yet, that we would like to hear from. We are very much encouraged by the many appreciative words that accompany many of these remittances. It is our purpose and endeavor to make the little paper as useful and helpful to the families that receive it as is within our ability to do. And we would be pleased to receive original articles from any of our brethren and sisters upon religious subjects at any time, as well as items of religious news. We hope that all those whose year's subscriptions end with July will continue the paper, as many already have done. But if any wish to discontinue it they will please send in such notice with full payment, and not leave their paper in the post office *refused*, as some have, without either paying for it or notifying us that they wanted it stopped. No paper can be refused or stopped until it is paid for, and if those who move away and change their address will notify us, we will send the paper to them at their new home, and it will save themselves and us a good deal of trouble and inconvenience. Some have gone away and have not let us know of their removal, nor have settled their account for the paper, and we are at a loss to know where to send their paper, nor where to send the bill for payment. This is rather a shabby way of doing. We regard all our subscriptions as permanent until notified to stop the paper, and payment is made. Some friends have ordered a few copies of the paper to be sent to some families that are too poor to pay for it. We would be pleased to have others do the same. It would be a charitable and useful act for any one who would send a dollar, or two dollars for this purpose. We will see that any sum coming to us for this object will be faithfully applied. Such benefactors can designate their beneficiaries, or leave it to us to do it.

## The Home Mission Journal.

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Rosecroft.

### CHAPTER VIII.

It was nearly four o'clock in the afternoon of a beautiful June day. Miss Hathaway and Eliza were both seated in a train bound for Berwick, the little lady a good deal fatigued from her exertions of the past fortnight, and the long journey from Colorado. She had remained there some days longer than she had intended, consulting Mr. Fullerton's lawyers, and replenishing her adopted daughter's shabby wardrobe. Mrs. Honeywell, who was amiability itself now in her manner both to Miss Diantha and to Eliza, confided to the former, that when she got home she would hunt up some pretty summer and winter gowns and other articles that she had laid aside, and that would make over very nicely for the young girl.

"You know I never wear my clothes long. I get so tired of them; and everything I sent would be pretty and fresh-looking, not old duds, such as Minerva would be likely to pick out for the poor girl. I declare it was abominable the way she talked to her, and to threaten her with the Reform School—so harsh and unlady-like! But we know Minerva's temper of old, Diantha, and that she can say things that are positively brutal, sometimes."

"Minerva means well, Gertrude," said her charitable sister, "and she can be very generous sometimes. She and Eliza, or Elsie, as I want to call her now, are both such decided characters that they seem to rub up against each other, but I hope to see them friends in time. And I'm much obliged to you for offering to help me about her clothes, sister; it would be a real assistance, and everything you sent would be pretty and serviceable, I'm sure. And I'll let her know from whom the things come, and that her aunt Gertrude remembers her affectionately."

"Well, I'm convinced that the poor child has a heart, and I hope and trust she'll turn out well. And I'll send on a package of things very soon," added Mrs. Honeywell, who was naturally good-natured, and who liked to give well when it involved no great self-sacrifice. And so you mean to call her Elsie, for Aunt Grace's child, I suppose."

"Yes, the dear little girl who died before I was born; how often Aunt Grace has talked to me about her! Of course, I wanted to find out first how Eliza felt about changing her name, but she seemed quite delighted—"

"Well, it's a much prettier name, and sounds enough like Eliza not to make the change too striking," interrupted Mrs. Honeywell.

"Miss Frump says she's a good scholar, and if she's educated for a teacher, I trust she'll take care of you in your old age, Diantha, and be a real comfort to you."

Partly, because she felt really softened toward Mrs. Honeywell for the sympathetic interest she now expressed both for herself and Rags, and still more because she wished to please the beloved Aunt Diantha, Eliza, or Elsie, as we must call her now, responded to the widow's advances, awkwardly, it is true, and without much effusion. But Mrs. Honeywell, determined to be gracious, found no fault, and only congratulated herself inwardly that she was not to have the training of that "awkward, homely close-mouthed girl!"

"But Diantha has unlimited patience," she thought to herself, "and living with her and school training may improve the child very much. It's no business of mine, anyway. Thank goodness, I don't feel called upon to manage everybody else's affairs besides my own, like sister Shell-drake, and that's one reason, I suppose, people like me better."

But if Elsie had softened somewhat toward Mrs. Honeywell, she still felt the greatest aversion for Mrs. Shell-drake; yet not wishing to distress Miss Hathaway by making any more scenes, she kept out of her aggressive aunt's way as much as possible. It was fortunate that urgent business called Mrs. Shell-drake home some days earlier than her sisters. She was highly indignant that Elsie had taken herself off somewhere, the morning of her departure, and expressed her feelings in no measured terms.

"Wanted to escape saying good-bye to me! A pretty way to treat her own mother's aunt, and all because I gave her good advice and proposed the best arrangements possible for her and you, too, Diantha! If she had behaved herself prettily to me, I might in time have done something handsome for the girl, but now I wash my hands of her! As for you, Diantha, you'll repent of your foolish indulgence some day, and the way you've wasted money upon a headstrong, bad-tempered girl, who will only despise you for your weakness. Five dollars or more, for instance you're going to pay out to transport that ugly little dog to your home! Like as not, he'll go mad on the way, shut up in a cattle-car or something of that sort, and spread hydrophobia far and wide!"

"Now, sister, don't you worry; I shall see that he's taken excellent care of," said Miss Diantha, a twinkle of amusement in her gentle eyes, but Mrs. Shell-drake broke in upon her sarcastically.

"Ah, yes, I dare say you've engaged a special compartment in a palace car for Master Rags, and will fee a colored waiter to look after him! I wouldn't be surprised at anything."

"La, sister Minerva, how you do go on!" exclaimed Mrs. Honeywell. "You've got hydrophobia on the brain, I verily believe! If Diantha wants to take the dog, it's her affair, not ours, and as she lives in a country town, and has a garden, he may not be so much trouble to her after after all. Indeed, he may be useful to guard the house."

But Mrs. Shell-drake cut her short.

"A pretty thing it is, Gertrude, for you to take Diantha's part against me and to encourage her in her foolishness! And to talk about hydrophobia on the brain! A nice speech that from a woman who only two days ago jumped upon a chair, screaming so that the whole house could hear her, and all on account of this very dog, who is going to make himself so useful now! Well, I wash my hands of the whole business! When Diantha has squandered all her money, and ruined Eliza with her over-indulgence, she will see that I was right. The girl should be treated kindly, of course, but brought up in the strictest way."

"Let us see what love will do for her, Minerva," replied her gentle sister. "The poor child does not seem to have known much of it, so far. And it's the greatest thing in the world, remember."

Mrs. Honeywell, with her two nieces, left Denver the same day as Miss Diantha and Elsie, but traveled in a different direction, to her home in San Francisco. She kissed her sister and niece affectionately at parting, but gave them a rather indefinite invitation to visit her some time, thankful in her heart that the expense and the long distance would probably keep Miss Hathaway from undertaking the journey for years at least.

Gertrude and Gladys were overjoyed at the prospect of going to their aunt's beautiful home, and felt as if they liked their half-sister better than they used to. After all, she was not so dreadful as people had made her out—Aunt Gertrude did not think so; and then how nice she looked in her new clothes! She could never be pretty like them, but new black and white check suit, so prettily made, her white sailor hat, trimmed with a ribbon that matched her suit, the neat gloves and boots, and her black hair nicely brushed and worn in two long braids behind, tied with black ribbon, all this certainly made a great difference in her looks. And her face wasn't cross as it used to be—this was the only way the little girls could describe the subtle change in Elsie's expression. It had grown softer, sweeter with every day, and especially since Mrs. Shell-drake's departure, and there was a new light of hope in the beautiful brown eyes. Yet there were actually tears in them as she bent down to kiss Gerty and Gladys at parting. Though they had seemed indifferent to her, they had never been positively unkind, like Maud, and

there was a strange yearning in her heart over these little half-sisters, whom, perhaps, she might never meet again.

"Good-bye, Gerty and Gladys. Try not to quite forget me, and write to me sometimes."

"Yes, we will, we will, Eliza," they answered in concert touched by those tears in her eyes, and embracing her warmly. "and you must come to see us very soon! And write us a letter, do, and tell us all about 'Rosecroft,' and how Rags likes its, and—"

"There, there we shall miss our train, if I allow any more leave-taking!" interposed their aunt in a half-laughing, half-chiding voice. "Pray look after them, Mademoiselle, can't you, while I direct Helen about my trunks."

The French governess, whom Mrs. Honeywell had retained for the children, took charge of them with bland smiles and admonitions, while Helen, the lady's maid, discoursed with her mistress. Mrs. Honeywell found time for only one more smile and hasty good-bye, then disappeared with her little party, Gertrude and Gladys kissing their hands and waving their handkerchiefs to the last. Rags, meanwhile, whom Elsie found most difficult to keep within bounds this morning, leaped about her in a good-natured frenzy, barking and straining at the straps by which she held him. Elsie stood silent a moment, gazing after her sisters with a lump in her throat, and a dull aching in her heart. A soft hand touched her arm.

"Dear child it was hard for you to part with your little sisters; but I've invited them and your aunt Gertrude to visit us at Rosecroft, and they may sometime—"

Miss Diantha's voice faltered. As Elsie looked into the sweet face, over which some tears had fallen, her quick intuitions and warm heart told her what was the matter. Her aunt had a secret grief she forebore to speak of, though, as usual, she had sympathy to share for others.

"Mrs. Honeywell has hurt her feelings, the selfish, cold-hearted woman!" she reflected. "Giving us that invitation in such a way, as if she were dreadfully afraid we would accept it, and hurrying off so at the last! Oh, I can't like her for all her soft wa! Poor Aunt Diantha!"

These reflections flashed through Elsie's mind in a twinkling; as she looked with a new feeling of tender protection at the fragile little woman beside her, a full half head shorter than herself. She spoke out with a warm impulsiveness that seemed natural to her now with this beloved aunt.

"Dear Aunt Diantha," in a half-whispered tone, "I did feel the parting from Gerty and Gladys, though they never have seemed to care anything about me till lately. But oh, I have you—and Rags, thanks to your kindness—and what can I want more! If only I can be a comfort to you!"

"You are a comfort to me, already, my dear Elsie, a great comfort!" replied Miss Diantha. She passed her handkerchief across her eyes as she spoke, but was smiling again as she went on.

"Come now, we must bestir ourselves, buy our tickets, and a range for little Rags' passage. How excited he is!" looking somewhat anxiously at the dog.

"Oh, he's always so when anything's going on. Don't worry, auntie. Rags! be quiet, sir, or I shall have to punish you!"

(To be Continued.)

The Christian home is the mightiest instrument in the work of regenerating and elevating the human race.—*M. C. Peters, D. D.*

### A Prayer.

In all I think, or speak, or do,  
Whatever way my steps are bent,  
God shape and keep me strong and true;  
Courageous, cheerful and content.

God Help me! help me to suppress  
All longing for what cannot be,  
And grant me means wherewith to bless  
Whoever may have need of me.

—*W. D. Russell, in the Independent.*



Office and Character.

By W. Quay Roselle, Ph. D.

**N**OT office but character constitutes greatness. A little man in a big office is little still; and no outward restriction can narrow the greatness of a rich personality. Every event of life is a treasure-freighted message of God to him who is ready for it, and a sentence of death to him who is not. The recurring events in the march of time are character's revealers. With some, events are always right; with others, they are always wrong. The difference is not in the events but in the people. Thus the same event may produce directly opposite effects on different persons. When the bridegroom came the wise virgins were filled with joy, the foolish with confusion and shame. Five filled the office of light-bearer, and were blessed; the other five did not fill the office and it crushed them. Let the lamps stand for the offices and opportunities of character by which the offices are filled and the opportunities embraced. The lamps were the same; the oil made the difference.

So it is with life itself. One man never has good neighbors; another never has bad ones. The neighbors are the same; the difference is in the two men. So one says of the world that it is a disappointing and unprofitable thing; another testifies that it is joyous and beneficent. Really every man makes his own world. When the good God made His world He saw that it was very good. Whether the world we make shall be good or bad, depends on whether we are good or bad. What we see in the world is a reflection of ourselves. If I want to see myself I shall look not inward but outward. The surest token of a man's own worthiness is to esteem others worthy. I shall know I am a child of the Kingdom when I love my neighbor.

Henry Thoreau never went far from home and yet he was a traveler. He says in Walden, "I have traveled many years in Concord." He lived all his life in the quiet village of Concord, Massachusetts. He built a shanty in the woods and lived there two years. He heard the brook sing and listened to the mountain's eloquent speech, and wrote down what they said. He was in daily communion with nature and talked face to face with God. God came to Concord and spoke these wonderful things and Thoreau reported them. After all, a great thinker is just a reporter of God's speech. God did not come stealthily to Thoreau; He came with torch and shouting, but the hundreds could not enter in with Him because they had no oil in their lamps.

At election time our thoughts turn naturally to citizenship. The principle we are discussing has an impressive application here. We all have the lamps, but not all have the oil. The heart qualities essential to true citizenship are often absent. Patriotism, loyalty, lively civic interest—these are the qualities which constitute true citizenship, and they are Christian graces, as well. Every civic duty is a Christian duty, and a real Christian will always be a good citizen. Every time you vote you either do the Father's will or you strike a blow at the Kingdom of God. We should not pray, "Thy Kingdom come," on Sunday and vote, "Thy Kingdom go," on Tuesday. Every man ought prayerfully to cast his ballot. Instead of a lot of hard-faced ward minions about the polling places seeking to influence the voting with rum, there ought to be groups of Christian men conducting prayer-meetings for divine guidance in duty's solemn discharge. The Roman judge declared Christ to be a faultless citizen, and His spirit will make good citizens anywhere.

What damage the man can do who is in the citizen's office without the citizen's heart! The ignorant negro vote of the South and the ignorant foreign vote of the North are equally destructive. There are but two solutions to the problem—break the lamp or fill it with oil. In the South they break the lamp; but the other is the better way.

Only the man who has the citizen's spirit gets the full benefit of his office. Such a man will always rejoice in his country and thank God for his goodness. He rejoices in the opportunity his government affords him to contribute out of his life to all other persons, and in the blessings he is privileged to share which have been contributed

by all of his fellow citizens. He sees that society is more nearly a brotherhood than many suppose, and that all the equal privileges for which socialists contend are to be had not by changing institutions, but by changing men.

The man in the office without the citizen's character is often found to be fierce in scornful condemnation of his country. He can see no good it brings for what it costs him. This unfruitful discontent ranges all the way from the common scold to the blatant anarchist.

What makes the difference? One has oil in his lamp and the other has not.

A LETTER FROM REV. S. D. ERVINE.

A recent note from this afflicted brother speaks for itself. We hardly see how any one can read it without being moved with feelings of the deepest sympathy with our dear brother and his family.

He writes thus:

San Jacinto, California, July 11th, 1903.

"My dear brother:

I am glad to hear of the good work of the Lord prospering at home. News from you cheers my spirit and calls up many of the former scenes of my life, carrying me over the labors of the past, when we co-operated in the Lord's work, both of a local and missionary character. I vote the recent report of the Western Association and think of the old brethren whose lives and labors have been so largely given to the cause of the Master within its boundaries. Oh, how my heart yearned to be at that association, and enjoy once more sitting together with my brethren in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Mrs. E. and I have talked recently much of the old associations of home, but alas! how diminished now is the number of both ministers and laymen with whom I first met in that body. Bros. Macdonald Howard, Cahill, Bleakney, Hayward, McIntyre, King and a few others remain, but most of the number have taken a seat higher in the King's royal chambers; yea, they have gone but a little ahead of us. Soon all will be over with us, and in the likeness of our perfect Lord and Saviour we shall yet see Him in the fulness of His excellent glory and be ever with Him. Oh, how very of my soul cries out after God, and I think how happy I should be if only I could resume the Lord's work. But this I know can never be. Still I can pray for those who are actively engaged in the field, while I may yet hope to serve Him in the "Sweet by and bye," without weariness or suffering.

I often think of the home mission work in New Brunswick and pray for it. I have observed the reports concerning the scarcity of men. There seems to be a dearth. There are lots of so-called ministers in California, but they seem to be looking too much for the "mighty dollar." It would be a boon to the Lord's work among the people everywhere if the old-fashioned call which forces men to say "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel," got hold of God's servants, until, instead of asking where is the most money to be got for the least work, they would cry "Lord, what will thou have me to do? and "Where Will thou have me to go? and then when directed, to say "Here am I, send me! I believe if this spirit were manifested more money would flow into the Lord's treasury, and before a decade should have passed away the number of real laborers would be greatly increased.

As to ourselves, truly we have been tried as by fire. Our younger boy has had a serious time. In the early spring we had a specialist examine his injured knee. He pronounced it a trouble to be tuberculosis, and advised that it be operated on at once. Two weeks later he, in company with the local doctor, came to our home and performed the operation. This lasted two hours and a quarter. They found the knee in a much worse condition than they anticipated. It was an awful ordeal for the dear little fellow to pass through. It seemed for a time to be doing well but three weeks later inflammation set in, and for several days we despaired of his recovery. At last, however, we got the inflammation under control and he now appears to be doing better.

Scarcely had he got straightened up when Mrs. Ervine collapsed, and for several days we had

grave fears for her, but with a skilled physician, careful nursing, and best of all, the blessing of God, she is about again. In the midst of it I by some means contracted a severe cold. A bilious attack came on, and I was prostrated. I am still unable to do more than the light chores about the house. Lots to do, but no strength to do it. For all, God is to us more than life. He is our all and in all. Hitherto He hath helped us and in Him we trust. All must yet work out right for His glory and our good. May God bless all my brethren, and make their way prosperous.

With Christian regards to all,

Very sincerely yours,

S. D. ERVINE.

Religious News.

We are happy to state that our Roll Call Fund has grown wonderfully since we last reported. We had reached nearly \$84 when the pastor received a letter from our good friend, Robert G. Mann, Esq., containing a draft for \$100. Mr. Mann has repeatedly helped our church in the most generous fashion. At our recent quarterly business meeting unanimously adopted a resolution expressive of our gratitude to him. We expect that our Roll Call Fund will now reach \$200. This amount will be devoted to removing an adverse balance on our church expense account, making some needed additions to the parsonage, and also insuring the same property for the next three years.

My last communication to SECOND FALLS, the *Messenger and Visitor* seems to have been lost, so I

will recapitulate a little. After the Second Falls church was burnt down by forest fires it was decided to go ahead and rebuild as soon as possible. A committee to raise funds was appointed, also a building committee to choose a plan. The plan has been chosen and the foundation is already finished. Regarding funds the people at Second Falls subscribed liberally themselves, then St. George 1st came nobly to their aid with a subscription of \$200. Daniel Gillmor, Esq., generally gave \$100. Altogether \$888.00 have been subscribed. In response to a circular, asking for \$1.00, sent to the 400 churches of the Maritime Provinces 33 have responded. Most of these 33 churches are little struggling interests like our own. With their subscriptions they have sent words of encouragement no less appreciated than their money.

M. E. FLETCHER, pastor.

We have just entered upon MEW MARYLAND the work with the New AND NASHWAAK, Maryland, Nashwaak, and Glencoe churches. We have

found a very kind people. When we reached the parsonage at New Maryland we found that the carpenters had been at work making improvements for the accommodation of the pastor and his family and on our arrival the ladies had the table all spread and after our journey we were in a good condition to appreciate the kindness of the ladies. On Sunday, the 5th, good congregations gathered at the forenoon and afternoon services. The pastor referred to the relationship into which they had entered, of the responsibilities resting upon them and of the duties of the church toward the pastor, and of the pastor toward the church. On Sunday, the 12th, we spent the day with the Nashwaak church preaching forenoon and evening. In the forenoon a large congregation gathered at the church when the pastor took for his text, Ps. 20: 5. "In the name of our God we will set up our banners." After the sermon Bro. Whitfield White was received as a

candidate for baptism and church membership, at the close of the service a large congregation gathered at the shore to witness the ordinance of baptism. Bro. White is a resident of the place, the head of a family, and we trust he will be a great help to the church. It was the 42nd anniversary of the baptism of the father of the candidate, who was present to witness the scene and rejoice with his son. In the evening the pastor preached on the New Birth and gave the hand of fellowship to Bro. White. At the close of the service a young lady from Marysville expressed a desire to lead a Christian life.

C. N. SABLES.

**NEWCASTLE,  
NORTH CO.**

Rev. A. F. Brown has resigned here and accepted the charge of the Harvey church. This field has called Rev. I.

N. Thorne of Elgier and it is hoped he will accept.

**ST. MARYS,  
KENT CO.**

Bro. F. A. Bower, student of Acadia, is now actively laboring on this field. Just at present there is some difficulty owing to quarantine regulations, but it is hoped ere long this will be over.

Rev. John Williams supplies this field, including Shediac. His labors are highly appreciated among the people, and his pulpit services fully equal to those of his earlier years. With years of experience this brother has come to be one of our wisest and best pastors. The cause at Shediac is greatly in need of an improved house of worship as a means of attracting the people to our services. A week night prayer meeting has been established.

**LUTES MOUNTAIN.**

Bro. Elias Auger is now stationed here and at Grand Falls. He also includes

Pricburg and reports good congregations. Bro. Auger is a student from the Gordon Training School, Boston, and speaks both French and English. He has recently made a tour to St. Francis and visited the upper stations.

**ST. LEONARDS.**

Our congregations here are large, house full every fine Sabbath, attention grand, interest good. We expect to baptize two and more that came out some few months ago here. We are expecting Bro. Hayward, the missionary, with us at different parts of our field. I trust that God will bless us together in his work and pray for us.

H. D. WORDEN.

**ROLLING DAM,  
CHAR. CO.**

Perhaps a word or two from this field would come acceptable. The Lord's work is on the advancing line from

lower to a higher standard of service in Christian living. Earnestness and anxiety are manifested and love for sinners to see them saved. And thank God six have decided to follow Jesus. We expect to baptize two on next Sabbath and the others will follow later on.

**OAK BAY,  
CHAR. CO.**

H. D. WORDEN.

Rev. W. J. Bleakney is at present at Malden, Mass., confined to his home with neuralgia of the stomach. The doctor has been doing his utmost to keep the trouble away from the region of the heart, and so far succeeded. Bro. Bleakney has not been out of the house for two months. May he be mercifully preserved to yet serve the Master in the vineyard.

**The Ruined Home**

A Burst of Eloquence from the late J. B. Gough.

Shortly after the American Government had passed a prohibitory law in re the English Sparrow because it had become an nuisance, but refused to prohibit the damnable liquor business.

"Only a few years ago, there was a home in New Haven. In that home was a happy, bright-eyed, intelligent, rosy-checked Christian wife and mother, in the prime of her womanhood, full of hope for the future. Her husband was a manly man, affectionate, generous, noble and true. In our country's darkest hour, when it needed a man, he bravely marched forth under the old flag, offering himself as a sacrifice, in defense of the life of his Nation. In that home were innocent children, who filled the air with their sweet songs, and presented a picture of joyous happiness which can never be forgotten. That husband and father to-day is a drunken bloated, miserable, mental, moral and physical wreck, down in the gutter penniless and friendless.

The rose has left the cheek of that poor wife and mother. Her eyes are sunken and blinded with tears. No longer does she occupy that once happy home; the joyous songs of her once happy darlings are heard no more. To-day, in a remote tenement she is found with her little ones, thinly clad, hungry and penniless; and as the winter storms drift through the open walls, they hover over the embers of a fire that is almost gone. With every ray of earthly hope gone, the dark clouds of despair settle thick around them. Oh! with what submissive faith that heart-broken mother turns unto God and says, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done."

It was not the English sparrow that destroyed this home. But it was our Government's legalized, law protected, lathered, petted and petulated hell born liquor culture. (Tremendous applause and cries of, "True! 'Shame on the Government," etc.) When we come to the judgment bar of God, the man who stood at the saloon counter and dealt out the liquor that destroyed that home will be no more guilty than the man who stood at the ballot box and gave sanction thereto by his vote. (Cries: "That's so!")

Then let the fiat go forth, that by the grace of God, and the will of American freeman, this nationalized, home-destroying liquor culture must go. (Prolonged applause and cheers.)

Will you stand by that home and by our country, and be true to God or will you continue to dodge and evade? Shall this nation be held for Christ, or shall it go out into darkness through the failure of the church to do its duty? Let Christians unite as strongly against the liquor power as the saloons stand for themselves, and the saloon would go. (Very loud and prolonged applause.)

It is fanciful, perhaps, yet the fancy is pleasant, that our guardian angels may be those who have gone from our midst and who once walked with us here. Who knows that in some still hour of evening the absent and unforgotten loved one may not glide in and sit by our side? In some stress of trial and temptation Jesus may send our own to strengthen us in the crisis. However this may be, if they do not come, we shall go to them, and their Lord and ours will be with us at the last; for has he not promised, "I will come again and receive you unto myself."

The coronation of the future life, whatever else its joys and satisfactions may be, will be that its service and its rest alike shall bring us into the presence of the Lord, not as here in dim vision, but in the fullest light. Surely we may leave to him every detail of the blessed life. If we are with him, and our loved ones are with him, there will be no flaw, no rift within the lute, no disappointment. The child we lost years ago, may have grown strangely beautiful in the heavenly garden, but there will be something fanciful, and love will spring to welcome love. Striving in the earthly life for likeness to Christ, eye praying for the grace of his indwelling, we are gradually made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light; the robes we are to wear, it may be, are in process of making now. Though we hear no whisper from the other land, it may easily be, that where there are none of our limitations, they sometimes know our struggles and our hopes, and are glad as we are received day by day in the image of their Lord and ours.

**Married.**

McDonald London.—At the home of the bride, on the 14th inst., by Rev. W. D. Manzor, George A. McDonald, to Mary E. London, all of St. Mary's.

Refuse-Keizer.—At the parsonage, Chester, N. S., by Pastor Rupert Osmond Morse, July 11, Kenneth Freeman Refuse, and Bertha Keizer, both of Gold River, Lunenburg County, N. S.

Craig Morgan.—At Hartland, July 14th, by Rev. J. D. Wetmore, Budd W. Craig, of Brighton, to Lottie A. Morgan, of Cloverdale, Charlotte County.

Moore Jewett.—At the home of the bride, Deacon Joseph Jewett, Prince William, York County, July 22nd, by Rev. F. S. Todd, Asa Lou Moore, and Lelia G. Jewett.

McFadyen McLaughlin.—At Charlottetown, July 22nd, by Rev. A. F. Browne, James Albert McFadyen, of St. Catherine's, and Priscilla S. McLaughlin, of Charlottetown.

Austin Clinch.—At Musquash, July 19th by Rev. I. R. Cowell, Benjamin F. Austin, of St. George, and Julia G. Clinch, of Musquash, St. John County.

Riley Sorrey.—At the residence of James Mannel, Esq., Georgetown, P. E. I., July 22nd, by Rev. E. D. Davidson, David William Riley, and Saphrona M. Sorrey, both of Lot Sixty-one.

Steeves Estabrooke.—At the residence of the bride's father, Lower Prince William, July 28th, by Rev. C. W. Sables, James O. Steeves, of Marysville, and Hellena M. Estabrooke, of Lower Prince William.

Lockwood McKinnon.—At Pleasantville, July 11, by Pastor J. E. Blakney, Harry D. Lockwood, to Edith M. McKinnon, both of Mill Village.

Alexander Morrissey.—At the Baptist parsonage, Petticoke, July 25th by the Rev. N. A. MacNeill, Thomas E. Alexander of Hammond, of Kings county, N. B., and Amelia Morrissey of Albert, Albert county, N. B.

Alward Bleakney.—At the Baptist parsonage, Petticoke, July 26th, by the Rev. N. A. McNeill, Nelson H. Alward of Lewis Mt., and Barbara E. Bleakney of North River, Westmorland Co., N. B.

Carmichael McAllister.—At the church, Range, N. B., July 20th, by Rev. Frank P. Dresser, John P. Carmichael, to Alma E. McAllister.

HOYT-MEISEREAU.—At the home of the bride's parents, Fredericton Junction, on the 22nd ult., by Rev. J. B. Daggut, Havelock Hoyt of Victoria Corner, Carleton County, to Miss Phoebe Meisereau.

WILSON LUTES.—At the residence of the bride's father, July 28th, by Rev. Gideon Swin, George E. Wilson and Miss Elsie M. Lutes, both of Lutz Mountain, Westmorland Co.

NICKERSON-GRAVES.—At the Baptist parsonage, Elgin, N. B., July 20th, by Rev. H. H. Saunders, Frederick A. Nickerson, of Annapolis Ridge, N. B., and Angeline M. Graves, of Goshen, Albert Co., N. B.

BRIGGS-ETHERINGTON.—At Codys, N. B., Aug. 5, by Rev. F. N. Atkinson, William E. Briggs, of Mac Donald's Corner, and Mary J. Etherington of Codys.

FIELD-ALLAN.—At Bayfield, West. Co., Mr. H. O. Field of Port Egin to Leona, daughter of Silas Allan, Esq. of Bayfield.

**Died.**

Weaver.—At Cumberland Bay, Queens Co., N. B., on July 17th Maggie Jane, beloved wife of Lemnard Weaver, daughter of Andrew B. and Helen Smyth, aged 22 years. Our sister was a member of the Church of Christ, a meek and lowly Christian. She left a baby only a few hours old behind her. May the Lord comfort and bless them in this their hour of trial.

BARTON.—At the Range, Q. Co., on 1st inst., of heart failure, Georgiana, wife of Capt. W. Orlbar Barton, in the 46th year of her age. Sister Barton was ever an exemplary Christian and most active in every good work. She professed religion in 1870 and was baptized by the late Elder G. W. Springer. Besides her husband she leaves two daughters and four sons, one of the latter being an infant of two weeks. In the community as well as in the church she will be much missed. We commend the sorrowing ones to the Great Comforter, who alone can fill the aching void.

TITUS.—At Newton, Mass., on 20th inst., Henry Titus, formerly a resident of Rothesay, N. B. Interment at Newton.

McMANN.—Mrs. Charles McMann fell peacefully asleep in Jesus at her home at Newcastle, Grand Lake on July 12th, leaving in sorrow a husband and several children with other relatives. She is nearly 74 years of age. May divine consolation comfort the mourners.