

THE ALTON REVIVAL .....	Page 9
THE ONTARIO AND QUEBEC CONVENTION .....	" 13
THE WESTERN RECORDER ON PROF. J. G. BROWN .....	" 15
THE VIRGIN BIRTH .....	" 16

# The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED WEEKLY

IN THE INTEREST OF EVANGELICAL TRUTH, AND SENT FOR \$2.00 PER YEAR (UNDER COST) POSTPAID, TO ANY ADDRESS, 5c PER SINGLE COPY. TO NEW SUBSCRIBERS DURING 1926 \$1.00 FOR ONE YEAR. RENEWALS \$2.00.

T. T. SHIELDS, *Pastor and Editor.*

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."—Romans 1:16.

Address correspondence: THE GOSPEL WITNESS, 130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto.

Vol. 5. No. 17.

TORONTO, SEPT. 2nd, 1926

Whole No. 227

## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

### A PRAYER FOR EVERYBODY.

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Jarvis St. Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, August 29th, 1926.  
(Stenographically Reported.)

"O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy."—Habakkuk 3:2.



LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy"—particularly these words, "O Lord, revive thy work". I was minded to speak to you this morning upon the relation of faith and works; to endeavour to show you that where true faith is begotten in the soul by the Holy Spirit it always issues in godly conduct and Christlike character; that good works are but the fruit of faith. But as I sought assurance from the Lord

that that was the message for the hour, my mind was, I believe, very definitely directed to the subject of revival, after the prayer meeting last night. I shall speak to you, therefore, of this ancient prayer this morning, "O Lord, revive thy work."

#### I.

I shall begin by saying that it is A PRAYER APPROPRIATE TO THE SAINTS OF GOD IN GENERAL. I think there is not one of us here this morning who does not need to pray, "O Lord, revive thy work." There will come a day when we shall not need to pray after this fashion; by-and-by we shall be entirely freed from sin,—not merely freed from any commission of sin, but freed from any tendency in that direction, freed, indeed, from all possibility of thinking a thought alien to the Spirit of God; some day we shall be delivered from "the old man", some day we shall have new bodies that will be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body; and, as we saw in our class this morning, we shall be made whole; we shall be complete in Him. We are complete potentially now, but then we shall be actually complete, and shall be without fault before the throne of God. We shall cease to be fault-finders: we shall be able to find no fault with anybody or anything around us—and no one will be able to find fault with us. What a

great day that will be!—and best of all, the Lord Himself will find no fault with us, for we shall be before the throne of His absolute holiness, and even in the white light of His presence we shall be esteemed absolutely “without fault.” What a great prospect that is which stretches out before the believer! Sometimes we sing,—

“There is a land mine eye hath seen  
In visions of enraptured thought  
So bright that all that spreads between  
Is with its radiant glory fraught.

“A land upon whose blissful shore  
There rests no shadow, falls no stain;  
Where those who meet shall part no more,  
And those long parted meet again.”

What a great day that will be when we reach our desired haven, and find ourselves at last among “the spirits of just men made perfect”! And I have no doubt that so far as the true believer is concerned, that is the ultimate destiny of everyone who has been born again; in whom God the Holy Ghost has begun a work, He will carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ,—I say, that will be a great land, a great state, a great day, when we shall find ourselves without fault.

But that day is not to-day, and now we have need to pray, all of us, “O Lord, revive thy work.” Sometimes the need of revival is apparent, is *outwardly apparent*. Even among the saints who have named the name of Christ there are many who seem sometimes to lose their appetite for spiritual things, for the means of grace, for all Christian effort; they fail in the performance of their Christian duty; and sometimes alas! even the Lord’s own children fall into outward sin, they get into bad company, they are found walking in the counsel of the ungodly, standing in the way of sinners, and sitting in the seat of the scornful.

I wonder if any of you young people have thus been overtaken, have thus been surprised into evil ways? You who have professed faith in Christ, have you been where you ought not to have been? Have words fallen from your lips that Christian lips ought never to utter? Have you been found seeking your delights where men of the world, and women of the world, find pleasure? Have you been openly denying your Lord? and are you saying this morning,—

“Where is the blessedness I knew  
When first I saw the Lord?  
Where is the soul-refreshing view  
Of Jesus and His word?”

If any of you have lost the joy of your salvation, the power to testify of Christ, I beg of you that you will take the verse of our text this morning and make it the earnest prayer of your heart for yourself, “O Lord, revive thy work.”

Then *sometimes the need of revival is entirely known to God only*. There may be no outward lapse, there may be no open inconsistency, there may be no flagrant wrong-doing whatever, character and conduct may be as blameless as ever; and yet there may be a failing spiritual appetite notwithstanding, a want of communion with the Well-Beloved, a neglect of private prayer, a neglect of the study of the Word of God, a neglect of all the duties of personal soul-culture. In such case, although there may be no outward appearance of failure, my dear friends, that will come unless there be an inward revival. If any of you this morning have not seen the face of the Lord to-day, if any of you have lost sight of the Beloved, and have had to exclaim, “My beloved hath withdrawn himself and is gone”, if you have not been on speaking terms with Jesus Christ this morning, will you begin right there in the pew, as I speak to you, and let this prayer go up from your heart?—“O Lord, revive thy work; bring back to me my spiritual appetite, my passion for Christ, my love for the souls of men, my desire for His glory, my hunger and thirst after righteousness—bring it back! O Lord, revive thy work!”

But look now for a moment at *the import of this prayer*; for I have not time to pursue that thought further, but if any individual believer here this morning is aware that there is in his or her life a need for spiritual revival, if anyone is saying, How shall we pray? What shall we pray? How shall we get back again?—listen to this prophet's prayer, "O Lord, revive thy work." He does not pray, "Lord, help me to work", but *he prays that God Himself will begin to work again*. If you are a Christian, God has already begun to work in your heart, for "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them". And if you have really been born again, if you are really a child of God, then God Who is the Creator of all worlds, has begun to do something in your heart and life. The prayer here is that God would revive *His* work, that He would resume His work in your soul. If love has become stagnant and stationary, if you have ceased to grow up into Christ in all things, if you have ceased to run with patience the race that is set before you, if you have come to a standstill in your Christian life, if the only progress you make at all is made with your lips, in outward profession, if there be no real fellowship with God, no real walk with Him, no real commerce with the skies, then it is because the Spirit of God has been grieved away. Is the wall left unfinished? Is the temple incomplete? Is the Holy Ghost not disciplining you, and teaching you, and searching you, and burning you by His blessed Word, leading you on to higher and nobler things? If that be so, it is because, in some measure, and for some reason, the Holy Spirit has been grieved until He has ceased to operate in your life; and the work of God in your heart is at a standstill, dwarfed, stunted, dishonouring to God, because the Spirit of God is not active in the life. Oh, if that be so, shall we not pray this simple prayer, "Come back to Thy temple, O Spirit of God; revive Thy work."

How does He work? *He always works through the Word*. The Word is the sword of the Spirit, and it is indeed "sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

*The work of revival is always God's work*. If we are to be what we ought to be, if love is to be rekindled in our hearts, if power is to be given us for service, if we are to follow on to know the Lord, if grace and peace are to be multiplied to us through the knowledge of God, and of Christ Jesus our Lord, it will be because God Himself is at work in our lives. He is working in you "both to will and to do of his good pleasure"—you remember that great word, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Salvation is God's free gift. The Word of God denies the right of proprietorship in everything, to every one of us, excepting in this: salvation is ours, there is one thing you may call your own. Your house, legally, may be yours, and yet death may take you from it; your wife, your children, may be yours, but God has a prior right in them. You may have other possessions of which you say, "This is mine", and yet it is true that we brought nothing into this world—and it is certain we shall take nothing out. We came without property; we shall go away without property save this, that we shall have our own salvation. It is our estate, deeded to us by the last will and testament of our gracious Saviour; it is a farm of immeasurable dimensions, and the title to it is yours for ever. But you must work it out, you must cultivate it, you must develop it. Why? Because it is "God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure".

It may be there are some here this morning who have ceased to work out their own salvation, because God has ceased to work in; the Spirit has been grieved, and we do well to pray, "O Lord, revive thy work; come back to the garden that is overgrown with weeds and briars, come back to the fields that are barren, to the life that is unfruitful. O Lord, revive thy work." He is the great Master, and only as He dwells within us continually shall we be fruitful to the praise and honour of His name.

*Revival must always begin with prayer*. Our text is a prayer for revival. You say, "I do not know where to begin." Begin here, "O Lord, revive thy work." This prophet said, "O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid." May God help us to hear His voice this morning, and be afraid! And if it be so, it should be the first instinct of our hearts to cry; "O Lord, revive thy work"

just that. You need not make up your prayer, here is a prayer already made; and if we make it the prayer of our hearts this morning, and we pray with all sincerity, God will help us. "But I do not feel like praying"—that is why you ought to pray. "I have not prayed this morning, I have not prayed for a long time." Well, begin this morning. "But," you say, "I have so much to do before I am ready to pray." You have nothing to do before you pray; you should pray that God will begin to do; and as God begins to do, He will revive His work, and memory will be quickened; you will think of duties neglected, of sins committed; memory will be on the alert, and you will find a procession of things going through your mind that will keep you busy for weeks and months to come. He will convict your conscience, purify your heart, strengthen your will; and you will find that the whole man will begin to throb with divine energy if you will but pray, "O Lord, revive thy work."

"Well, but", you say, "must I do nothing but pray?" Begin to pray, and God will look after the rest. Did you never hear a little child pray?—I have. It is not a very pleasant prayer, it cries until all the neighbours wonder what has happened to it. I heard Brother Rader once tell about one of his children. He had said to his wife, man-fashion, that he would look after the baby, so that she might go out for a while. She was not out very long before he had his hands entirely full—the child began to cry. He did everything he could; he almost tore the house to pieces trying to divert its attention, trying to engage its thoughts, trying to stop its crying. At last, in sheer desperation, he put the child down on the bed and rushed into a neighbour's house and said, "Come and help me. My wife has gone out, and I don't know what is the matter with the baby." The woman came in and said, "You poor stupid man—the child is hungry, just plain hungry." That child was praying, just crying out for what it needed; but he did not understand. (But the neighbour mother understood just as soon as she came.)

Did you ever get into a situation where you did not know how to pray, nor how to work? Did you ever get to a place where you only knew that life was empty and barren, that there was an aching void this world could never fill—and then you began to cry? Never mind how you pray. This morning in the class they started to sing a long-metre hymn to a common-metre tune. Brother Penney slipped for once. He has all the tunes that were ever written in his mind, but just for once he played a common-metre tune to a long-metre hymn. And I said, "Never mind. Billy Bray once said, 'Anyone can sing a long-metre hymn to a long-metre tune, but it takes a real singer to sing a long-metre hymn to a common-metre tune,—just run a tuck in it.'" There are some people who imagine that God is very concerned about the phraseology of our prayers. We had a brother who used to come to our prayer meetings, who prayed for fifteen minutes at a time. Someone told me that he once saw him sitting in the public library going over volumes of public prayers—evidently compiling his prayer for the next prayer meeting. I had to write several letters to that brother telling him that we did not want such prayers. No, my friends, our God understands our need; and if you will only pray, I do not think it matters very much how you pray so long as you let your heart cry out to God, "O Lord, revive thy work"—I do not know how it will come, I do not know where it will begin, but I cast myself upon the wisdom of God, upon the grace of God; only let God come back and begin His work again in me this morning."

Will you pray that prayer this morning,—every believer? Is anyone here this morning who says, "I do not need to pray that prayer"? Then let us all pray for him, because he needs ever so many people to pray for him! How little we have served the Lord, how imperfectly, how wretchedly we have failed of the possibilities of life! Do we not all need to pray, "O Lord, revive thy work"?

When shall we begin to pray—to-night at the six o'clock prayer meeting? That would be to wait too long. I will tell you what we can do, we will just be a little irregular and pause now for a few minutes' silent prayer in the midst of the sermon, that every one of us may with sincerity send up that cry to God, first for ourselves, "O Lord, revive thy work."

(After a few moments of silence.)

Shall we bow: O Lord our God, hear our cry, the cry of men and women,

and boys and girls, who do not know how to pray, who do not know what they need except that they need God. Come to us in all Thy fulness this morning, and revive Thy work in every heart. For Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

II

Then, further, this is A PRAYER THAT IS APPROPRIATE TO EVERY CHRISTIAN CHURCH—every church: "O Lord, revive thy work." We ought to begin to pray that prayer for this church. It would not be humility, it would be gross ingratitude were we to fail to recognize that God "hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." Oh, He has wrought marvellously in this place, and we have seen the arm of the Lord made bare. Never shall I forget to my dying day, never shall I forget in the eternities beyond, what I saw happen in this church once. I will not tell you all the details of it—some of you older members remember, but the most of you have come into our fellowship since; but I saw the arm of the Lord made bare. I had read that scriptural phrase, but I did not know what it meant. But it seemed to me that right on this side of the church I saw the bare arm of Omnipotence reach out and strike, until opposition crumbled, and the enemy was routed, and God was glorified. Notwithstanding, my brethren, there is no church in America, no church on this Continent, in greater danger than we are; for there is no church anywhere that the devil would like to disturb more than this. Oh, were we to fall in our testimony; how God would be dishonoured!

Blessed be His name, the voice of prayer is not silent! We had not quite as many last night as usual. It was a warm night, beside which I suppose many were preoccupied with Exhibition visitors, while many more are still away on vacation; but if the room was not so crowded with people, it was full of the Divine Presence. The blessing of the Lord was there, and much prayer ascended for God's power to rest upon this service, and upon all His servants around the wide, wide world. I am glad the voice of prayer is not silent in our midst as a church; nor are conversions infrequent, week by week, and almost day by day, people are being saved. Notwithstanding, you and I ought, as members of this church, to pray, "O Lord, revive thy work." And I want to lay that upon your hearts this morning once again as our chief business, the business of prayer. Preaching is relatively unimportant—important in itself, but useless unless accompanied by divine power. It is not in human power to revive God's work: God has to do that; He only can quicken dead souls, and out of the valley that is full of bones, bring forth a marching army. That is God's work; and we are foolish to suppose that anyone but God can do it, or that anyone can be used in doing it if they live apart from God. Prayer is our main business: a church that has great intercessors may afford to have a very indifferent sort of preacher—I do not mean spiritually indifferent, but a poor preacher, such as this church undoubtedly has. It is not our learning, it is not our logic, it is not our intellectual powers, certainly not our eloquence, that God needs: what He needs is our hearts; and if we could only become, in a deeper sense than we ever have been as yet, a praying church that ceases not day nor night to cry unto God for a great spiritual awakening, there is nothing we could not do!

I said the voice of prayer has not ceased—but have any of you found your delight in the place of prayer diminishing? Are you less frequently found among those who gather together for prayer? (I am speaking particularly to the members of this church for the moment.) Oh, with these new converts that have come into our membership, we ought to have an ever-increasing number of intercessors. Are they increasing as they ought to increase? If not, shall we not pray that they may do so? Shall we not pray that every man and woman, every boy and girl, who comes into this church shall be one of God's remembrancers? I was thrilled this morning when I ran up to the Junior Department just for a minute, when I saw a little boy—I do not know how old he is—but I was rejoiced to see that great company of young people bowed in prayer while, by the Superintendent's request, I presume, this little lad of about twelve or thirteen years was leading the assembly in prayer, praying down God's blessing. And I said, "Praise the Lord for a boy that knows how to pray, and pray publicly." But, my dear friends, I say to every member of this church, you ought to be a cell in the church's lungs, you ought to be helping us to bring down the very atmosphere of heaven into this place.

A great many strangers come into this church, and I am always grateful when they say, as they often do, "Before we heard a hymn, before we heard a word from the pulpit, we have had to say, 'God is in this place.'" I do not care what is said about this preacher, or about this church, if people will only be compelled to say that the tabernacle of God is with men, and He does dwell with them. I do not desire that people should come here and say, "They have a great organization, a fine choir, a great many earnest people—I wish we had that where I go to church"; but if people will come into this church and say, "It was not the preacher, it was not the singing, it was not the organization: it was God Who blessed my soul, and if God can bless me there, there is no reason why He cannot bless me everywhere", I shall rejoice indeed. We sometimes sing,—

"For Thou within no walls confined,  
Inhabitest the humblest mind;  
Such ever bring Thee where they come,  
And going, take Thee to their home."

May this be true of everyone of us!

And so I exhort you, I beg of you, I beseech you, in Christ's name, to make this your prayer continually for this church, "O Lord, revive thy work." I have heard some of you singing,

"O for a thousand tongues to sing  
My great Redeemer's praise,  
The glories of my God and King,  
The triumphs of His grace!"

Well, that would be fine if you were to use them all to sing the great Redeemer's praise—but we could use the one tongue we have more than we do. There is no use to pray for a thousand tongues if you are only using the one you have five per cent. of its possibilities for Christ. If you cannot have a thousand tongues, use the one you have in a thousand ways—not every way, I do not mean that—I mean, to sing the great Redeemer's praise, to witness for Him, to tell to others what a dear Saviour you have found. So, as the summer is nearing its close and we are coming to another season—I am not going to ask you to make resolutions, either individually or as a church, I am not going to ask you to make some great effort in this or that direction: I want you to begin at the place where we only can begin effectively, at the Mercy seat, first of all for ourselves, and then for the church, "O Lord, revive thy work"; and when the revival really comes into your heart and mine, into the membership of this church, there will be work enough to do.

Why will people spend their time talking about ways and means when it is the power of God they need? Someone told me yesterday about a church that has a new pastor. It is a great thing to have a new pastor—new, very new! This particular church has had many new pastors within my knowledge of it—but they do not remain new very long! But they have a new pastor; and do you know what they have done? They have got a great electric sign outside the church so that everyone will know where it is. I have no objection to electric signs; but it is not the electricity which shines from the outside that will determine a church's success, but the divine power within. You may put all the signs you like outside, if the divine electricity does not energize the lives of the members, making every one of them an electric sign, proclaiming the power of the gospel to save, you might just as well shut your doors.

"O Lord, revive thy work." What is His work? His work is convicting sinners. There are not many people being convicted of sin just now, someone says. Well, my brother, get down on your knees and ask God to do it, for no one else can do it: it is not your work, it is not mine, it is not the deacons'; that is God's work, and if it is to be done we have got to go to Him and say, "Revive thy work". Only God can make all things new.

### III.

Once more: This is A PRAYER APPROPRIATE TO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN GENERAL—everywhere. I hope we shall not be so narrow and selfish as to pray

only for our own work. I was so glad to have some brother last night—a very common thing—from another church, speak of their work, and when all the requests for prayer were in and presented before the Lord; it seemed to me that the earth was girdled, that the interests represented encircled the whole world. We ought to be praying for other churches. Someone came to me the other day telling me of a church that is nearly empty. I am sorry to hear of churches being empty; I wish all the houses of prayer were crowded to the doors; I wish I could see every church, of every name, in this city so filled with people that there was not room to contain them—I mean filled in response to the attraction of the presence of Jesus Christ. And if you know of any church where the work is declining, that ought to be cause for you to pray, "O Lord, revive thy work."

I am not censorious, I am not critical—I felt constrained to begin with a word of cheer, and that is why I read that last chapter of the Book. Let no one say that this preacher is a pessimist, I could not be for a moment. I am sure we are on the winning side, I am sure that Jesus Christ shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the church of Christ. Jesus Christ shall win, He is bound to be triumphant; and I want to be there when He wins, I want to share in His glorious triumph. But, dear friends, we have fallen upon evil days. I can tell you of churches not a mile from where we meet to-day that have no prayer meetings, think of it, a church without prayer!—just like that company that Ezekiel saw when bone came to his bone, and flesh to his flesh, and skin came upon them; but he said, "There was no breath in them", they were still dead after all the preaching, and it was not until the prophet cried, "Thus saith the Lord God: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live", that they stood up an exceeding great army. I do not care what eloquence you have in the pulpit, what wealth may be represented in the pew, or what social influence, if you please—the church that does not pray is a lumberer of the ground, it has no right to meet in the name of the Lord. Our business is to call down Heaven's power into human lives, yet here are churches all around us, some of which do not pray at all; and some of them, even in the best season, scarcely have a baker's dozen in a prayer meeting. Is there not reason to pray, "O Lord, revive thy work"?

And when men use the pulpit to deny and discredit this holy Word, when the doctrines of the gospel are scorned, and Jesus Christ is wounded in the house of His friends, is there not reason for us to pray that God will revive His work? Therefore, dear friends, in the face of a great task I call you to a recognition of a great Power that is equal to the task: as we lay hold of God He can turn back the tide of unbelief.

I was reading recently "The Leaven of the Saducees", by Ernest Gordon, son of the late Dr. A. J. Gordon. If you have not read that book, get it and read it, especially if you are down-hearted. "Why," some of you will say, "that is a terrible book, it is a terrible indictment of Modernism." Yes, it is. It goes back to the beginning of the nineteenth century and shows us that conditions in New England, and all through the States, were as bad, or, if possible, worse than they are to-day, when infidelity was rampant, and carefully-planned organizations actually stole the houses of God and theological institutions, and prostituted them to the cause of Unitarianism. And yet, by God's grace, revival came at last. I believe my friend, Dr. Riley, is correct when he says we are bound to win; that if we are in the last great apostasy, the Lord is on the way and He will be here soon, and in that case it will not be very long before we share in His glorious triumph; but that if we are not, we may still have a great and glorious world-sweeping revival. ("Hallelujah!") I do not see why not. Did you ever see God save a soul in this place? Oh, we have seen Him do it many, many times. If He can save one soul, He can save a hundred; and if a hundred, then a thousand; and if a thousand, a million. I was standing by Niagara only on Thursday last with Brother Robertson, who went there to see it for the second time; and as we saw that great volume of water tumbling over there, I said, "That has been going on for ages and ages, it was doing that, perhaps a little further down the river, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea. What a picture of Infinity it is, with that great torrent pouring itself over there, with the reservoir of the Great Lakes behind it; and all along the

"banks, power-houses, being built!" Why have they built their power-houses there? Because they had to have that power. And I said, "It reminds me of the text, 'Our sufficiency is of God'. What a picture, no exhaustion at all!" He can revive His work in our hearts, and, if it pleases Him, in this church, and in all other churches, until once again we shall hear and see multitudes in the valley of decision, enquiring their way to Zion with their faces thitherward.

Is there an unconverted man here this morning? Will you pray, "O Lord, quicken this dead soul of mine"—that is all; simply pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner", and you will be saved. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved." Call on Him, and you have God's word for it that you will be saved where you are sitting.

And if there are any of the Lord's children who have not prayed for a long time, pray now; and so let us have here ere we go home a foretaste of a great and glorious revival that shall be glorifying to our Lord.

Let us bow in prayer: O Lord our God, if Thou hast spoken to us this morning—and we believe Thou hast and our hearts have answered—we pray that Thou wilt from this forward carry on Thy work. Suffer nothing to come into our lives that will interrupt the operation of the Spirit of God. We pray for any unconverted man or woman, that he or she may have grace ere we close this service to make confession of his faith before men. Use this service in Thine own way to bring honour to Thy great name. For Jesus's sake, Amen.

#### REV. W. M. ROBERTSON RETURNS TO ENGLAND.

It has been the privilege of Jarvis Street Church to enjoy the ministry of many distinguished visiting preachers, but we know of none whose ministry has been more richly blessed than that of the Rev. W. M. Robertson, of Toxteth Tabernacle, Liverpool. Mr. Robertson has preached in what is perhaps the most difficult season of the year, when some churches are actually closed or when they are closed for part of the day. For several years now Jarvis Street has enjoyed full congregations all the year round. Mr. Robertson has preached to a full church every Sunday he has been here, while large congregations have assembled at the week-night services.

Mr. Robertson is essentially a biblical preacher; his sermons are not essays with a biblical text attached, but are expositions of the Word itself. His messages are delivered with great spiritual unction, and while direct and pointed, they are always rich in their spiritual suggestiveness. People who wait on Mr. Robertson's ministry will be sure to get a good meal every time they hear him, as well as a full lunch basket to take home with them. Mr. Robertson's preaching is the sort of preaching that must produce preachers; it magnifies the Lord, and the Word of the Lord; and it is impossible to hear him without feeling that the Bible is a treasury of vast and varied wealth.

Mr. Robertson will always be a welcome visitor to Jarvis Street: he cannot come too often, nor stay too long. *The Gospel Witness* wishes him God-speed. We think we ought to inform our readers that it is not our fault that this paper has not carried a weekly sermon of Mr. Robertson. We hope he will send us an occasional contribution for our pages when he gets home.

#### THE GOSPEL WITNESS.

We report with gratitude the receipt of two special contributions for *The Gospel Witness*, one, a thank-offering for restoration to health, of \$50.00, and a love-offering of \$84.00. *The Gospel Witness* Fund is always in need, and we record these gifts with gratitude and as a reminder to our readers. The Convention is coming on, and probably special issues will be necessary and, in some cases, the ordinary issues will have to be enlarged; so that we shall be grateful for the help of all our friends. We have endeavoured to carry the load without much groaning, but we believe many will help us when they know our need.



## MORE ABOUT THE ALTON REVIVAL.



Photograph by Ashley & Crippen, Toronto.

### PASTOR JAMES MCGINLAY.

Under Mr. McGinlay's preaching the Alton Revival began and has continued until now. Mr. McGinlay missioned Alton in company with his friend and fellow-student, Pastor W. G. Brown, B.A., of Orangeville, July, 1925. It was at Mr. Brown's invitation Mr. McGinlay went to Alton. In three weeks, in a village of 400 population, where religion had been almost held in contempt, about 130 professed conversion. A Baptist church was organized in September, 1925, and on the 19th of July, 1926, one year to the day from the time these young preachers began their mission in Alton, work on the new church building was begun. The church now has a membership of seventy, all of whom have been baptized during the past year.

This church has been self-supporting from its birth. Mr. McGinlay has received invitations from many parts of the country, but he and his friend Brown believe they are called of God to evangelize the country round about and are therefore staying at home cultivating their own vineyards.

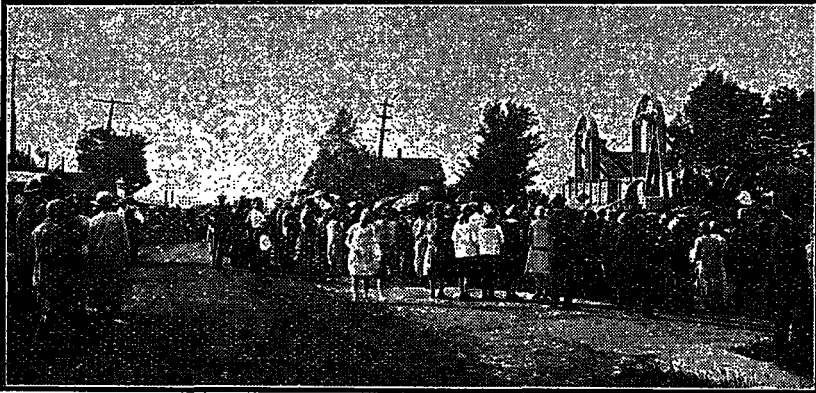
We have been delighted with the response of many of our readers to our appeal for help for the Alton Baptist Church Building Fund. We have not, as yet, received a large amount, the total being \$720.00. Many of our readers have been away on vacation and probably were not in a position, when they read our appeal, to respond. We publish herewith photographs taken at the laying of the corner-stone of the new church at Alton. We remind our readers that Alton is a village of only four hundred people, and that until August, 1925, so far as we know, there was not a single Baptist in Alton: now there is a flourishing church with a Sunday evening congregation often larger than the entire population of the village. We could fill an entire issue of *The Witness* with stories of the marvellous transformations which have been effected through the preaching of the old-fashioned gospel in this place: whole families have been saved, and the characters of some of the most flagrant sinners of the neighbourhood have been entirely transformed.

The revival has spread to Orangeville, and about eighty have professed conversion there. Sunday, August 22nd, the Editor of *The Witness* preached in the open air at Alton to about five hundred people, and baptized fifteen; went on to Orangeville, six or seven miles distant, and preached in the evening to a crowded house, and baptized thirteen more. Pastor McGinlay visits Orangeville every Thursday to help his friend and colleague, Pastor W. G.

Brown, and gives an address to the Orangeville converts. The ground floor of the Orangeville church is practically filled on these occasions.

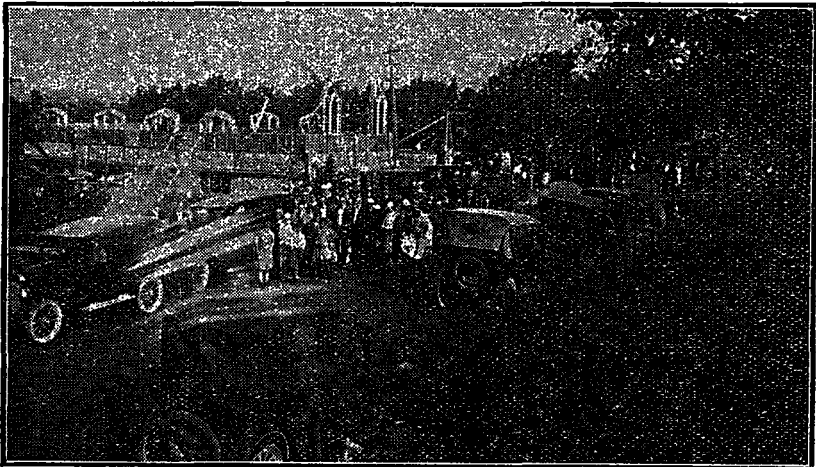
Many of the villages roundabout, where there are religious houses called churches that are destitute of spiritual life, are asking these young men to go out and preach the gospel to them, and this they are doing so far as time and strength permit.

A large part of the work of the Alton church has been done by the people



**MAIN STREET, ALTON, ONT., LOOKING NORTH,**

showing a part of the crowd assembled to witness the laying of the corner stone of the Alton Baptist Church, Saturday afternoon, August 14, 1926. To the left of the picture a long line of cars may be seen. Somewhere among them are the great 'buses which carried about one hundred people from Jarvis St. Church, Toronto—about fifty miles.



**MAIN STREET, ALTON, ONT., LOOKING SOUTH.**

Another view of the crowd at the corner-stone laying showing more cars stretching away to the south. This picture shows the walls and window-frames of the new church. The church is to be of solid stone construction. The stone has been provided free, the only cost being that of hauling it to the ground.

themselves, and this little group have given largely of their money too. A church which, in Toronto, would cost from twenty to thirty thousand dollars at least, is likely to be completed in Alton for eight thousand dollars.

We ask our readers carefully to examine these photographs to see the



#### THE ALTON BAPTIST CHURCH.

Front View—Observe the reverent attitude of the crowd—at least five hundred, bowed in prayer as prayer is being offered by the Rev. W. M. Robertson, Pastor of Toxteth Tabernacle, Liverpool.



#### CROWD ASSEMBLED AROUND THE SPEAKERS' PLATFORM.

Pastor McGinlay may be distinguished standing under the tripod erected for lowering the corner-stone. One of the men standing on the wall of the new church building, only a couple of months ago, was a noted bootlegger and general bad man of the community. He was converted in the recent Orangeville revival. Now he is not ashamed to be seen, but is one of the most interested and enthusiastic participants in this service. He, with his wife and son, were baptized by the Editor of The Witness, Sunday, August 22, 1926. This is a typical case. Talk about "social service"! A gospel preacher, preaching in the power of the Holy Ghost, can accomplish what an army of policemen would fail to do.

interest which they manifest, and to consider whether they will have some part in erecting this church to the glory of God. We hope to see it finished and ready for occupation before the snow flies, and it would be a glorious thing if it could be dedicated absolutely free of debt. We know that among our readers we have many people of considerable wealth, some who could easily give a thousand dollars to this worthy cause, and perhaps some who could give much more. But the great majority would be able to give only smaller amounts. We have been glad to receive such small amounts as one dollar, but it takes a great many one-dollar bills to put up a building like this. We beg our readers therefore to consider what is the utmost they can do in this great interest, and send it to *The Gospel Witness* immediately.

#### To the Members of Jarvis Street Church.

Up to the present time we have asked Jarvis Street members to save up their money for Alton. We now make a direct appeal to Jarvis Street: we ask every member to apply all that we have said in the foregoing paragraphs to himself or herself. We have decided not to write a special letter to the members, but to make our appeal in this way. Sunday next, September 5th, special envelopes will be in all the pews, and we should like every member, who can possibly do so, to bring an offering for Alton, to put it in the envelope and on the plate. We should be glad to have your name, but if you prefer to give anonymously you may, of course, do so. But if you cannot bring your offering on Sunday, take an envelope home with you and send it into the office whenever it may be convenient, but as soon as possible.

We earnestly hope that we shall have a great offering from Jarvis Street for the Alton church. Let us show what Jarvis Street can do for this great Home Mission enterprise.

#### IN JARVIS ST. LAST SUNDAY.

Jarvis St. spared Mr. Robertson to Winnipeg last Sunday and the Pastor resumed his ministry and preached morning and evening in the church auditorium, and after the evening service he preached in the open air to a great throng, besides teaching his class of 351 at 9.45. An aggregate of between five and six thousand, by a most conservative estimate, attended all services. At the evening service nine were baptized, and a good number were converted.

#### GOOD NEWS!—WHO'S COMING?

Sunday, Sept. 12, our great friend, Rev. J. W. Kemp, of Auckland, New Zealand, formerly of Charlotte Chapel, Edinburgh, will preach at all services. Mr. Kemp will speak also Tuesday evening, Sept. 14th. Mr. Kemp is an able and fervent preacher who is sure to be met by great congregations. Dr. Shields will conduct all services and will teach his class that day at 9.45.

### THE GOSPEL WITNESS

One Dollar per year to all new subscribers during 1926. (Regular subscription, \$2.00 per year). This paper contains weekly a sermon by the Editor, an exposition of the Whole Bible Sunday School Course, and Editorial matter dealing especially with the battle between Fundamentalism and Modernism. (\$1.50 in Toronto).

#### SPECIAL OFFER.

A Volume of Sermons by Dr. Shields entitled "The Adventures of a Modern Young Man," being a series of eight sermons on Luke 15, The Prodigal and his Brother, will be sent with *The Gospel Witness* for one year for One Dollar and a Half.

Send your subscription to:

THE GOSPEL WITNESS - 130 Gerrard St. East, Toronto 2, Canada.

## Editorial.

### THE ONTARIO AND QUEBEC CONVENTION AT THE CROSS-ROADS.

The Baptist Convention, which will meet in the First Avenue Church, Toronto, October 15th to 21st, will be a momentous gathering. The issue before the Convention will be just as fundamental to the Christian faith as was that which occasioned the calling of the first great Christian council at Jerusalem in apostolic days, the record of which is contained in the fifteenth chapter of Acts,—indeed, if possible, the issue is of still greater importance than that which in apostolic days threatened the unity of the church. We shall endeavour to put that issue before the people through the columns of *The Gospel Witness* between now and Convention time. The purpose of this article is to remind our Ontario and Quebec Baptist readers of the importance of taking steps to see that the churches to which they belong are fully represented at the Convention. Education day will be Tuesday, October 19th.

And first of all, it should be remembered that the issue before us will be determined, not by mere sympathy, but by votes. It will do no good for brethren to send letters and say, "We are in full sympathy", and then make no effort to have the vote of their church cast at the Convention. The Convention will be composed of representatives of the churches, and the only way by which McMaster University, or those opposed to her present policy, can judge of the Convention's attitude is by the votes cast. Last year the question came before the people without their having had opportunity to become informed of the issues in advance. Since then we have had nearly a year's discussion, and we believe thousands more of our people understand the issue now than at last Convention time. We would therefore urge every Ontario and Quebec reader of *The Gospel Witness* who is a member of a Baptist church, whether in an official position or not, to do his or her utmost to see to it that their church is represented by a full complement of delegates.

In the second place: we suggest that care should be taken to see that the right delegates are appointed. We believe the delegates should, as far as possible, represent the sentiments of the church. We question the wisdom of instructing delegates in advance, for if that were done generally, discussion at the Convention would be useless, and all that would be necessary would be to record the vote. If there are in our Convention churches of modernist sympathies, it would be just as well that those sympathies should be fully expressed. Two cannot walk together except they be agreed; and if the majority of our Baptist churches are really in agreement with Professor Marshall's theological position, it would be a kindness to those who are not, for such churches to give a clear expression to their views.

We do not want a division in the Convention. We believe that our denominational task requires the co-operation of all who share like precious faith; but if the majority of the churches propose to endeavour to fulfil the Baptist mission in this country by means of Professor Marshall's gospel, and such methods as the iniquitous muzzling resolution of the Home Mission Board exemplified, we can only express the conviction that there are thousands of Baptists in Ontario and Quebec who will have neither part nor lot in such a programme. *The Gospel Witness* does not believe that our Baptist people generally, could they be informed of the facts, would support McMaster University in her present course.

While we have had one year in which to give information, we are by no means persuaded that we should consider the forthcoming Convention as

decisive. During the year *The Canadian Baptist* has conducted a campaign of misrepresentation which shows that we are fighting a conscienceless foe. The Baptist Bible Union has been organized but a few months, and if the Convention vote should favour McMaster University—a contingency which we regard as being almost impossible—it seems to us that it would be the duty of all orthodox Baptists to remain in their churches and to stay by their guns, and determine that the coming year shall witness an intensive campaign of information which will carry this issue back to every individual church, and to every member of every church. So far as the Presbyterian Church was concerned, the Church Union question was ultimately decided by a congregational vote; and if, and when, we have before us an expression of the conviction of every individual church in the Convention, we should be ready to accept that verdict as final, and govern ourselves accordingly. But without such an expression we can only assume that the rank and file of our people are still orthodox, and address ourselves to the task of giving them information. Therefore *The Gospel Witness* would like to put itself on record, at the outset, as being opposed to any split in the Convention, or to any proposal to withdraw from the Convention: we propose to stay in the Convention and contend for the faith until the last church, and the last member in every church, shall have been heard from.

For this reason we suggest that delegates should be appointed which will fairly represent the sentiment of the church to which they belong. And in this connection we venture to sound a warning note. In some instances that we know of, only the pastor and a few members favour McMaster. They may be expected to have delegates appointed from the group of McMaster sympathizers, in which case the church as a whole would be misrepresented by the vote. The same principle may hold in the other direction, and there may be a few churches where the majority favour McMaster and the minority do not. We think it would be fair that such a church should be represented by delegates representing the sentiment of the majority. Only by this means can the vote be expressive of the church's conviction, and we respectfully suggest that, without instructing delegates one way or the other, delegates should be appointed who represent the opinion of the majority in the church, with the understanding that they should be free to exercise their best judgment in the light of the discussion of the issue at the Convention.

#### Proxy Delegates.

Once more: we call attention to the privilege of proxy representation. We think it desirable that churches should be represented by their own members; but the principle of proxy delegates was introduced into the Convention by McMaster University itself at the Guelph Convention, and it was by the assistance of a large proxy vote McMaster University was established in Toronto rather than in Woodstock. We believe churches ought to endeavour to pay the expenses of their own delegates, but where that is impossible we suggest that churches appoint proxy delegates. There are many churches in Toronto who will be glad to supply delegates to those churches who are opposed to the present course of McMaster, and who desire to have their opposition registered by vote. We have known of cases where churches have sent their credential forms, asking that the names of proxies should be filled in, but this is an irregular method of procedure. Churches requiring proxy delegates should have the names of those proxies before them, and should definitely appoint them as their representatives. We therefore hereby frankly and openly request all churches who stand for the old faith, who believe the Bible to be the inspired and infallible Word of God, and who believe that salvation can come only through the shed blood of God's eternal Son and by means of regeneration by the Holy Ghost—we ask all such who cannot send delegates to write *The Gospel Witness*, and from such churches as are opposed to the present course of McMaster University, names will be sent of persons who would be glad to serve as their delegates. The basis of representation is two delegates for the first hundred members or fraction thereof, and one for every subsequent hundred or major fraction thereof. Will every church, therefore, needing proxy delegates please send in their request, and we will gladly send them names of proxies who will act as their delegates. Do it now!

## THE WESTERN RECORDER INVITES PROF. J. G. BROWN TO PROVE HIS STATEMENT.

The Editor of this paper is everywhere represented by the McMaster advocates as a false alarmist who is always seeing red. We have been called "liar" and many other not very complimentary names for saying that McMaster University was hospitably disposed toward Modernism.

Professor Marshall's appointment and retention alone ought to be sufficient proof of our contention; but we have also Dean Farmer's defense of Prof. Marshall, and his plea for the adoption of an "inclusive policy" in education also.

And now it is Prof. J. G. Brown. We were minded to comment on Dr. Brown's article ourselves, but we are saved the trouble by these comments from the able pen of Dr. Victor I. Masters:

### IMPLIES THAT DR. BROADUS LEANED TOWARD LIBERALISM.

In the course of his address at a religious summer assembly in Canada, Professor J. G. Brown of McMaster University is quoted in *The Canadian Baptist* as saying in part: "While the great mass of Baptists in the United States and Canada have remained unaffected in their attitude toward the Bible and its teaching by the prevailing current of the times, Baptist scholarship has not escaped its influences. Some of the great Baptist theologians on this continent, such as Dr. W. R. Harper and W. N. Clarke, have been classed as Liberals, while others like John A. Broadus, H. C. Wesson, Alvah Hovey, G. W. Northrup, A. H. Strong and Calvin Goodspeed would be classed as Conservatives. It is remarkable, however, that many of them later in life and after a careful study of all the facts greatly modified their whole attitude toward the problems raised by criticism and science." While there is no direct charge here that any individual of the last group became liberal, Dr. Brown affirms that "many" of those mentioned in the group developed later liberalistic tendencies. And the name of Dr. John A. Broadus is placed first. This is disquieting, to say the least. We ask Professor Brown to use the columns of the *Western Recorder* to present any proof that he has that Dr. John A. Broadus ever leaned in the least toward the liberal interpretation of the Bible. We are also definitely under the impression that the Professor is in error in the implication as it refers to most of the other gentlemen he mentions. We offer him the columns of the *Western Recorder* in this connection that he may present any facts in his possession which may warrant the statement which he made.

Dr. Brown invokes the spirits of dead men to support his implication that if a man lives long enough he will outgrow his faith in the Bible as the absolutely infallible Word of God. Dr. Masters invites him to use the columns of *The Western Recorder* to prove his case. We promise our readers that we shall carefully scrutinize the pages of *The Western Recorder* for Dr. Brown's reply. When it appears we will reproduce it. Incidentally, we may inform Dr. Brown that we had nothing to do with Dr. Masters' article. When any criticism is passed upon McMaster by any one living anywhere in the world, it is always attributed by the Bloor St. West infallibles to the inspiration of "Shields." This time we deny it before the charge is made to save ink. Come on, Dr. Brown, let us hear from you.

This interesting incident leads us to suggest that every professor in McMaster print his lectures in *The Canadian Baptist*. Were they to do so, our Canadian Baptists would soon learn the measure of the McMaster apostles of accuracy. We fear they will continue to hand out their half-baked learning for students who cannot answer to digest.

Meanwhile, we remind Dr. J. G. Brown that Dr. Masters' name is "Victor."

## ABOUT THE VIRGIN BIRTH.

In *The Gospel Witness* of June 5th, 1924, commenting on Dr. James A. Francis' key-note speech at the Northern Baptist Convention in Milwaukee, we wrote, in part, as follows:

"There was a time when Dr. James A. Francis was looked upon as loyal to the faith of Christ. From this Convention forward, he will be known as the subtle enemy of Fundamentalism. The spirit of his key-note sermon will not be lost upon those who stand for the historic Baptist position. When a man with the Book of inspiration before him enquires whether he is to interpret Christ through the medium of a first century Jew, or through the medium of a twentieth century Gentile, thus by implication denying the unique character of the inspiration of Scripture, he has taken a long step on the Modernist road. . . . Dr. Francis has not yet gone to such lengths in open speech as Dr. Woelfkin and others; but he is well over the crest of the toboggan slide; and one need not be a prophet to predict where he will shortly arrive."

*The Canadian Baptist* of August 19th publishes an address by Dr. James A. Francis delivered before the B.Y.P.U. Convention in Los Angeles. We publish one paragraph from this address:

"Let us turn now to the story. *A child is born in an obscure village of obscure parents.* He is brought up in another obscure village. He works in a carpenter shop until he is thirty and then for three brief years is an itinerant preacher, proclaiming a message and living a life. He never writes a book. He never holds an office. He never raises an army. He never has a family. He never owns a home. He never goes to college. He never travels 200 miles from the place where he was born. He gathers a little group of friends about him and teaches them *his way of life.* While still a young man the tide of popular feeling turns against him. The band of followers forsakes him. One denies him; another betrays him. He is turned over to his enemies. He goes through the mockery of a trial; he is nailed on a cross between two thieves and when dead is laid in a borrowed grave by the kindness of a friend. Such are the facts of his human life." (The emphasis in the above paragraph is ours.)

Dr. Francis describes our Lord as "a child born in an obscure village of obscure parents", and concludes the paragraph by saying, "Such are the facts of his human life." But the Scripture says, "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God"; "And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli." The teaching of the Word of God is that Jesus Christ had but one human parent; and the wonder of His life, and the miracle of His power in the life of the individual believer, and of His influence upon human history, is explained by that fact.

*The Gospel Witness* is charged with sounding the fire alarm when there is no fire, and of being unnecessarily concerned about the tendencies of the religious world of to-day, but the man who speaks of the Lord Jesus as having been "born of obscure parents" was brought across the continent to be the special speaker at our Foreign Mission Jubilee a year or so ago. Dr. Francis is one of the most amiable gentlemen we know. We have travelled thousands of miles with him and have found him a most delightful companion, of a most gracious spirit, and the very embodiment of unselfishness—all of which makes him the more dangerous when uttering such sayings as these.

### THE S.S. LESSON.

We publish no lesson this week as the last Sunday in the quarter will be examination day.