

The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF EVANGELICAL PRINCIPLES AND
IN DEFENSE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.

\$2.00 Per Year, Postpaid, to any address. 5c. Per Single Copy.

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

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Vol. 8. No. 42.

TORONTO, MARCH 6th, 1930.

Whole No. 407.

The Fruit of the Spirit is Love

By Dr. T. I. Stockley, Dean of Toronto Baptist Seminary.

Of all the Christian graces, love is queen. And beyond all the gifts of the Spirit, love lifts her radiant face supreme. It is the first-named of the rich cluster of fruit of the Spirit. And it is the highest round in the ladder of Christian grace. The first round in that ladder is faith, and the topmost one is love. (Second Peter, chapter one, verse six.) And yet if one can form a correct estimate of the condition of the professing Church to-day, love seems to be more conspicuous by its absence than by its presence. The extreme importance of genuine Christian love in the thought of God may be seen by the large place which He gives to it in His Word. In almost countless instances the Word of God calls us to regard its importance and to manifest its beauty.

The Church of Christ to-day is rent and torn asunder by a thousand evils, most of which could not even enter if love were allowed to reign. We are aware that there are some divisions which the great Head of the Church demands, because of false doctrine or immoral conduct. But even amongst those who sincerely believe the Word of God, there is a lamentable lack of Christian love. The love which the Church so sorely needs is not mere natural affection, or warm-heartedness, but something vastly loftier than that. Indeed it is the fruit of the Spirit, a love which grows out of the life of God implanted by the Spirit in the soul of man. Paul in writing to the Thessalonians says: "Ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another". And John, in his first epistle, says: "Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."

This love is no innate, self-generated principle. It is a divinely imparted and nurtured gift. The running brook depends upon the spring, and the warmth of the

earth depends upon the sun, but not more really than genuine Christian love depends upon God. The love that is kindled by the Holy Spirit is thus a heavenly flame, and it is as superior to human affection as heaven is loftier than the earth. This teaches us that vital union and communion with God are essential if we would have our hearts aglow with this divine fire. Or, to change the figure, we often keep too far away from God, and the heart closed too much against the flow of His great love to us. We should let the flood gates of the soul be lifted that the heavenly tide may sweep into our inner life, and then and only then will the returning current of our love to God and to His children be strong and full.

There are several metaphors used in Scripture to set forth this Christian love. In Galatians, chapter five, verse twenty-two, it is described as fruit growing out of a heaven-born life. It is the natural, spontaneous, outcome of the new life. "Works" are often forced, strained, artificial: love is fruit, the first fruit. It is the first called forth in response to the love of God, and gives a richness and flavour to all the other graces. In Colossians, chapter three, verse fourteen, Paul calls this love "the bond of perfectness"; that is, love is the silken sash or girdle which is placed over the other garments, and binds them into a unity. "The metaphor expresses the thought that love knits in a harmonious whole the graces which without it would be fragmentary and incomplete." If love is lacking, all the other good is nothing, it dissolves. In First Corinthians, chapter eight, verse one, we find that love is a solid builder. We are told that knowledge puffeth up, and he who is puffed up is empty. But love edifieth, that is, buildeth up. It builds with costly stones so that the work abides. One of the pitiable things in the professing church to-day is the destructive work, the tearing down. But love is constructive,

it builds up, giving strength and symmetry and beauty and progress.

In First Peter we read, "And above all things have fervent love among yourselves: for love shall cover the multitude of sins." Dr. Jowett says, "The significance of our English word 'fervent' scarcely unveils to us the contents of the Apostle's mind. The love has not so much to do with ardour as tenseness. The love has to be tense, stretched out, extended to the utmost limit of a grand comprehensiveness. There is love whose measure is that of an umbrella. There is love whose inclusiveness is that of a great marquee. And there is love whose comprehension is that of the immeasurable sky. The aim of the New Testament is the conversion of the umbrella into a tent, and the merging of the tent into the glorious canopy of the all-enfolding heavens.' Thus love makes a magnificent cover, for it covers a multitude of sins. Not the sins of the one who loves, but of the loved one. Love hides the sins of the loved one in a nameless grave.

There are certain qualities of this love which are described in various ways. It is to be love "without dissimulation"; that is, without hypocrisy. What a horrible thing is hypocritical love! One cannot but feel that a divine disgust must have swept through the Saviour's soul when, kissing Jesus profusely, Judas thus betrayed his Lord. One fears that even our exalted Lord must have a similar emotion to-day when loud outward professions of affection to Him are accompanied with cold, heartless conduct toward his brethren.

This love is given as a proof of discipleship, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." One fears that to judge by this standard the number of disciples needs greatly to be multiplied. Yet it is a divine command. Our Lord calls it a "new" command. As a command we dare not neglect it. Some persons are very particular about the important commands of baptism and the Lord's Supper, but this all-important one is as if it did not exist. But while it is a command, it is more. Paul says, "Be ye therefore imitators of God as dear children, and walk in love."

What an ennobling word is this! We are to copy infinite Goodness. What loftier ambition could we know? Aspiring minds should listen to this sublime call. "If we must needs be original, the most wonderful originality in this world would be for a man's character to be a precise copy of the character of God! In him there would be novelty indeed; for he would be like Him Whose name is 'Wonderful.'" This is why men were puzzled and amazed at the sight of the character of Jesus. This is the godlike life to which we are called, and nothing less is worthy of us. Again, this love is forgiving love. "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Ephesians, chapter four, verse thirty-two. What a contrast there is between this love and the hard, unkind, unforgiving spirit which controls the life of many who bear the name of our forgiving Saviour. Surely if we have known the forgiving love of God in our own experience we cannot be hard and unforgiving to others.

Yet another feature of this love is that it is ministering love. "By love serve one another." That word "serve" is a strong word, for it could be rendered as Coney-

beare and Howson render it, "enslave yourselves one to another by the bondage of love".- John also speaks in a very practical way of this ministry when he says, "Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." And that love should be so real and deep, says John, that "we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." To this wonderful positive, Paul adds a strong negative, when he says, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour." Oh, what can be said then of those professing Christians who do all they can to block the brother's pathway of blessing, and labour for his downfall.

Before we close we must refer to First Corinthians, chapter thirteen, which is the exquisite hymn of divine love. Someone has called it "the song of songs of the New Testament". Here love is personified, and is very beautiful, but is intensely searching. Love is set forth as the divinest proof of the fulness of the Holy Spirit. The gift of tongues, or knowledge, or faith, or self-sacrifice, should not be named for one moment in comparison with the sublime gift of love.

Many attributes are given us here. "Love suffereth." This love can suffer, and no wonder, for it springs from Him Who was the "Man of sorrows", and Who suffered beyond our utmost dream, for our sakes. It suffers "long", for it is patient both toward itself and others, and it does not grow irritable, and it is kind. Passively it endures, and actively it is kind, delighting to do the kind thing. "Love envieth not." "Envy", says one, "is pain at the sight of superior excellence in another, and is always a mark of blinding selfishness." It includes jealousy, pique, and an evil eye, and is one of the chronic sins of Christian workers. But love knows no jealousy. "Love vaunteth not itself", is not self-assertive, nor boastful, and makes no parade or swagger; gives itself no airs; is not conceited. Love is "not puffed up". Has no inflated arrogance; does not suffer from swollen head. "Doth not behave itself unseemly." Is never rude, but is easily courteous. There is no vulgar indecorum, but it has noble manners. "Christian manners," says one, "are the offspring of a Christian manner. The manners are external, but the manner is internal."

Love seeketh not her own", is never selfish. It would not have anything in the universe for itself alone. It never reminds a person of his own superiority at the expense of others. To do so would be to lose true manhood. The positive of this attitude is to be always seeking the good of others. "Is not easily provoked." The word "easily" has no place in the original. Love is not resentful; it does not take umbrage. It does not dress up deformed self in gaudy drapery and then grow peevish and angry when some imaginary wound is given to it.

"Thinketh no evil." Does not brood over wrongs, but "writes out personal wrongs in ashes or in water," refusing to retain them in his memory. "Rejoiceth not in iniquity." Love is never glad when others go wrong, and finds no pleasure in injustices done to others. It is a detestable thing when one can find any degree of pleasure, whether in another's sin or misfortune. Love does the opposite; it rejoices in the truth. It never exults in another's downfall. It delights to

take sides with the truth, and to believe the best. Love indeed has joy, but its gladdest hours are those when it can clasp hands with truth. "Love beareth all things." She endures wrongs and evils and knows how to be silent. "Believeth all things", having a trustful spirit; and takes the best and kindest views of men and circumstances as long as it is possible to do so. Love likes to believe that others may be better than they seem. Love is a heroic believer.

"Love hopeth all things". As it is full of trust, so it is full of hope. Does not grow sour and gloomy, but takes sunny and cheerful views of men and things wherever there is any possible ground for such hope. "Love

endureth all things." It does what our Lord said to Peter, forgives "seventy times seven" if there is any repentance. It makes us choose the divine thing. It has a balanced mind, and is free from agitation, and is patient and calm. "Love never fails." It never drops away, but abides forever.

What a heaven on earth church fellowship would be if all of us would obey the Saviour's word when He says, "That ye love one another as I have loved you." "That ye also love one another"! In Christ that love is as the sun shineth in his strength. Let the glory of that light be seen in us until men shall say that we have been with Jesus.

McMASTER'S NEW DEAN IN THEOLOGY— REV. JOHN MacNEILL, D.D.

Some days ago the press announced that Dr. John MacNeill, of Walmer Road Baptist Church, had been invited to become Dean in Theology at McMaster University in succession to the late Dr. J. H. Farmer. No public announcement had previously been made of Dr. Farmer's position having been filled, so we presume one of the professors must have been acting as Dean in the interim.

We remember attending a number of services held by the late Dr. Wilbur Chapman, who had formed the habit of saying of this or that service, "It was a most significant service". Of what it was significant, the hearer was usually left to guess. Dr. MacNeill's appointment, or rather, the invitation of the University extended to him to be Dean of Theology, is "most significant".

There may, however, be differences of opinion as to what this move really signifies. Dr. MacNeill must be given his due. When in his best form, having had ample time for preparation, and the stage being properly set for a fine display of oratorical pyrotechnics, there are few men who can surpass Dr. MacNeill. We have heard him on several occasions when he rose to great heights—when, indeed, he was most delightful to listen to. But he always reminded us, when at his best, of a high-class Victrola, or some other sort of gramophone. It was usually an echo. But notwithstanding, it was very fine.

Frankly, we are of the opinion that that is Dr. MacNeill's proper sphere. On the platform he can sometimes shine with real brilliance. Of course, he is like most other men of strongly developed oratorical instincts: lacking the proper circumstances he can be as flat as dish-water.

But why does Dr. MacNeill forsake the pulpit for the professor's chair? Surely the invitation would not be publicly announced had not Dr. MacNeill given the Governing Bodies of the University some assurance at least of the probability of his acceptance. It would be foolish to regard such a position as a promotion. Following the resignation of Dr. A. L. McCrimmon as Chancellor, Dr. MacNeill was offered the Chancellorship of McMaster University, which he declined. One wonders why he is now offered a lesser position?

Of course a wise man would be guided in his decision in such matters by his own sense of his fitness for the position. A teacher of theology should be a

man who has studied exactness, who has learned finely and accurately to distinguish between things that differ, to view truth relatively. He should be one also who has learned the precise value of words, and thus be able to make himself a master of accurate expression.

And, of course, beside all this, he should be a man of wide theological knowledge, whose mind is stored with a wealth of information. Indeed, a theological teacher should be a theological scholar in the truest and fullest sense of the word "scholarship". No one who has any acquaintance with Dr. MacNeill's style, who has any competency to judge of such matters, would ever accuse Dr. MacNeill of being a theologian. Few men endowed with the oratorical temperament have ever become, in any profound sense, scholars. The orator does not walk: he flies. Nor does he particularly care what is beneath him, so long as he is permitted to fly. He is temperamentally unfitted for the steady, constant, unremitting, persevering, plodding without which no man can be a scholar. Orators are born rather than made. Albeit, even wings grow stronger by discipline and practice. But scholars are both born and made.

Without intending to be uncomplimentary to Dr. MacNeill in any degree, we submit that he is utterly devoid of the qualities that would make him a teacher of theology. We thought Dr. MacNeill showed fine judgment in declining the Chancellorship of the University, because he is destitute of any genius for organization or of any skill as an administrator.

A teacher, furthermore, must be able to think on his feet. He must, indeed, be a thinker; and have learned to do his own thinking, so that when questions are asked of him he will be able, and also ready, to answer them. A professor in theology is not exactly like a cabinet minister. Notice is given the latter usually of his questions, and he takes time to answer. But a professor must be ready to answer questions at once, or he will not long command the respect of his students.

Now everybody knows that in this particular gift, Dr. MacNeill, great as he may be in other matters, is certainly deficient. He can never think on his feet. Even in the Conventions his speeches were prepared with care in advance, and when from the Convention platform he went into the country to speak on the

issue that has been before the Denomination now for some years, he repeated his Convention speech practically verbatim. In fact, we know some who can give these speeches just about as well as Dr. MacNeill can himself! Naturally, if you put the same record into the gramophone, you get the same tune on Tuesday and Wednesday that you heard on Sunday, or whenever it was last played.

Let no one charge us with discounting Dr. MacNeill, for we have said that he is a gramophone of the very highest class. The tune is well played, and evidently the record is without a scratch, for it repeats itself with absolute accuracy as often as the machine is wound up.

We wonder whether the Governing Bodies of McMaster University have considered the possibilities of the gramophone? Indeed, this suggestion opens wide possibilities for the whole enterprise of education. Why so many professors? Why not a few thoroughly trained scholars whose lectures can be given before the wax and multiplied indefinitely? Any university could afford to put in the very best gramophone that ever was made, for it would be far cheaper than a professor, and lectures could be ground out at the appointed hour without the slightest danger of a professor's being sick or in any way indisposed. Of course until that plan has been perfected, Dr. MacNeill may do very well.

But if like produces like, will gramophones produce gramophones? One thing is certain: McMaster University will never have occasion to be ashamed of its theological gramophone. We repeat: it is of the very highest class.

If McMaster University had opened a new department, say, the Department of Oratory, and had appointed Dr. MacNeill its Principal, we should have said, "Well done, McMaster". Some mannerisms peculiar to Dr. MacNeill might have needed correction, such as the rhythmic swaying of the body suggestive of the ticking of the metronome that keeps time for the little girl who is learning to play her scales. A little more variety in gesture might then have been advised. But on the whole, not much fault could have been found with Dr. MacNeill's appointment to a chair of Oratory,—providing, indeed, that his oratory is to him a science and not merely an empiric; in which latter case, however, he would have made an admirable example of the orator even though he were unskilled in the inculcation of the principles of oratory.

But we are dealing with facts as they are, and it is to the Deanship in Theology Dr. MacNeill has been invited.

Dr. MacNeill will have under him all the professors in the Theological Department. He will be responsible for the teaching of the Professor of Homiletics, or the science of preaching. We wonder what the ethical standards of that department will be? How far should a man be required to do his own work? It must be recognized that every preacher is more or less dependent upon other minds than his own for what he produces. If he be a Greek or Hebrew scholar he is at least indebted to the arduous labours of textual scholars who have preserved for him, by the providence of God, a pure text. Or if he uses a translation of Scripture, whether the authorized or some other version, he is dependent then upon the

scholarship of those who have put that translation in his hand. Where his illustrations are borrowed from history, or poetry, or biography, or from the physical sciences, he is indebted to those who have laboured in these spheres, and who have preserved and handed down the results of their labour.

Few millers grow the wheat they grind; and few bakers grind the flour they use in their bread. Not many tailors weave the cloth they make into clothes. Once of a day the good housewife not only made the clothes for the family, but she wove the homespun of which they were made. There are not many homespun suits worn nowadays. Neither do we suppose there are very many purely homespun sermons. Few ministers combine in themselves the work of the farmer, the miller, and the baker; or, the work of the shepherd, the weaver, and the tailor. We understand there are great departmental stores which manufacture nothing: they have clothing and other things manufactured for them and then they put their own name on them.

Some preachers do the same. But that is hardly fair, is it, to take the substance of a book, and here and there incorporate whole chapters verbatim, and to print the whole under the title of a sermon by Dr. Blank. Yes, very blank! Indeed, some might be tempted to put it, blankety blank! However, as Dean in Theology, Dr. MacNeill would probably, in the course of the years, have to deal with rather fine questions of literary or sermonic proprietorship. And he might sometimes be called upon to decide how far a preacher would be justified in attaching his own name to another man's sermon. Indeed, it is conceivable that at some faculty meeting the question of student discipline might come before the Faculty for consideration. If, for example, a student should be detected copying another student's notes, and the question should arise whether such a student were entitled, notwithstanding he had written a creditable paper, to receive a pass, or perhaps a degree. That would involve a very fine point in ethical judgment. We wonder, if, under such circumstances, Dr. MacNeill would feel any embarrassment in sitting as a member of such a tribunal?

Under the inspiration of such teaching, is it likely that McMaster University students would develop any great originality? Why should mediocrities originate anything when the product of the minds of the masters is available?

We wonder whether Dr. MacNeill's accession to McMaster University will result in special emphasis being laid upon memory work? That is an admirable study. Indeed, we rather think it has been reduced to somewhat of a science. After all, perhaps there is a valuable suggestion here. Why not specialize in memory training? There is probably not one chance in a million that McMaster University would ever produce a man of Spurgeon's ability. Why write poor sermons when Spurgeon's masterpieces are available? Ah, but we forget—Spurgeon is not greatly honoured in McMaster. Well, let us substitute Fosdick for Spurgeon, or some other of the Modernists. Such men have a natural brilliance which is not likely to be seen in McMaster except on very rare occasions. We think we can see a large field of labour for Dr. MacNeill in this department of memory-training, for then the students would not need to do much thinking. There are publishing-houses now which supply a weekly sermon ready-made, and the students might be taught to use these products judiciously.

In this connection we recognize that Dr. MacNeill has another striking aptitude: he is a man of fine discernment and unusual discrimination. He knows a good sermon when he sees one, and will be able to teach his students how to pick one out. No man of our acquaintance is so thoroughly trained in this rare art. He might also be able to offer suggestions to his students which would train them in the art of directing their hearers to the choice of other than sermon literature. Certain pulpits depend greatly upon the ignorance of the pew. Many a pulpit would be embarrassed if the people in the pews should form the habit so general in Spurgeon's day of reading sermons.

We can find confirmation of our assertion that Dr. MacNeill is specially skilled in choosing good sermons. Once upon a time, not so many years ago, certain meetings were being held in Toronto which brought a number of ministers to the city. There happened to be in the city on a certain Sunday a Methodist minister whose home was in another city which, we are inclined to believe, was not very far from Peterboro, Ontario; and, at the same time, there happened to be over the week-end in Toronto a Baptist minister from the same town. These two ministers, one a Methodist and one a Baptist, found themselves on Sunday evening in Walmer Road Church, when Dr. MacNeill was in the pulpit.

When the service was over these two ministers, with a third who was a Methodist, came out of church together. As we now recall the report of the incident, the Baptist minister, being rather proud of the whole service, remarked to his fellow-townsmen, the Methodist preacher, "What did you think of that?" To which the Methodist minister replied, "Ah, but that was glorious preaching." Whereupon the other Methodist preacher asked if they were in a hurry, and if they would have any objection to going down to the Methodist Book Room at the corner of Queen and John Streets. They agreed, this Baptist preacher and his Methodist brother, to go with Methodist preacher number two to the aforesaid book-room.

Methodist preacher number two had a key, and although it was Sunday night, he opened the door, and they walked in. They went to a shelf of books, and Methodist preacher number two took down a volume of sermons by Dr. W. L. Watkinson. Glancing over the contents he found the page he wanted, and turning to it, said to his brethren, "Read that." And behold, they found the sermon almost verbatim to which they had listened, and by which they had been thrilled in Walmer Road but an hour or less before.

We cite this in confirmation of our statement that Dr. MacNeill knows a good sermon when he sees it, for Dr. W. L. Watkinson was a great preacher. And surely it must have been a treat to hear his sermon, even though reproduced by an animated gramophone. If anyone should entertain doubts of the accuracy of this story, confirmation of it may be obtained by applying to Rev. J. R. Webb, Pastor of King Street Baptist Church, Kitchener, Ontario,—unless, indeed, Brother Webb, as sometimes happens with even splendid men, should have suffered a lapse of memory.

Of course it must be admitted that Dr. MacNeill is not without the authority of classical example for his well-known practice. Kipling tells the story thus:

"When 'Omer smote 'is bloomin' lyre,
He'd 'eard men sing by land an' sea;
An' what he thought 'e might require,
'E went an' took—the same as me!

"The market-girls an' fishermen,
The shepherds an' the sailors, too,
They 'eard old songs turn up again,
But kep' it quiet—same as you!

"They knew 'e stole; 'e knew they knowed.
They didn't tell, nor make a fuss,
But winked at 'Omer down the road,
An' 'e winked back—the same as us!"

We have never charged Dr. MacNeill with being a Modernist, although he has defended Modernism, and for some years has cast his vote in its favour. We wonder whether Dr. MacNeill has been chosen as Dean in Theology because of his special fitness to lend plausibility to the theory of the composite character of the Pentateuch? Of course our readers are familiar with the idea that the five books of Moses have been cleverly compiled of material derived from many pre-existent, and so far as we are able to understand, from prehistoric "sources"; and that all these materials have been wonderfully woven together by some mysterious, unnamed, redactor. Could we believe in the vagaries of theosophy, and the doctrine of reincarnation, it might be imagined that that redactor was reincarnate in the personality of the new Dean of Theology, for beyond question he is almost incomparable as a weaver of words and a compiler of ideas.

Perhaps our standards are altogether too old-fashioned. Perhaps they are, after all, impossible. We live in a day of cafeterias, and groceterias, and cleaneterias: therefore why not a preacheteria? Who knows that we may read a full-page advertisement one of these days: "PREACHETERIAS LIMITED; John MacNeill & Co., Originators and Proprietors." Of course such a company would have to be a limited liability affair, for the liability would have to be pretty wisely distributed in order to avoid the infringement of copyright laws. But seeing it has become the custom for people to live on canned goods and other ready-cooked and predigested foods, and to wear ready-made clothes, why should not a flourishing business be done in ready-made sermons?

One of the papers described the position to which Dr. MacNeill is invited as the "Principalship of Practical Theology". Certainly our friend is a very practical man. When discussing the problems of church government, and the relation of the individual church to Conventions, and the operations of Conventions with their various Boards, and the proper method of appointing a President, Dr. MacNeill will always have a striking illustration of the proper way to come to the Presidential Chair in his own appointment as President of the Baptist World Alliance. He will be able to tell his students what remotely-originating influences may contribute to a man's prominence, and how enmities and hatreds may fall out to the furtherance of some men's elevation to the Presidency. He can make plain that far away in the Southland, in a state called Texas, there was a man called Scarborough—Dr. L. R. Scarborough, to be exact—and that the pet aversion of the said Scarborough was one J. Frank Norris. He may then explain how a neighbour of his in the same city, a man whose name, by that time, will

perhaps be so obscure as to have been forgotten so that he will have to explain that he was called "Shields", happened to fall in with the man called Norris; and that because he became Norris' friend, automatically Scarborough became his bitter and implacable enemy; and that the said Scarborough, being a man of rather small calibre, and owing all his prominence to his official position, by some means, managed to find a place on the Nominating Committee of the Baptist World Alliance. Measuring other men by his own standards, the same Scarborough imagined it would inflict a crushing blow upon MacNeill's neighbour, and through him, upon his own personal enemy, Dr. J. Frank Norris, if the said MacNeill should be elevated to the Presidency of the said Alliance. When this idea had been formed, the aforementioned Scarborough, being never at a loss, by fair means or foul, to effect his purposes, utterly ignored the local committee entertaining the Baptist World Alliance in Toronto, asked no advice of any Canadian as to who might be the most representative man, but off his own bat, of his own suggestion, and by the grossest misrepresentation of fact, deluded the Nominating Committee and crammed MacNeill down their throats, and later brought him forward for the Presidency.

All this will be interesting to Dr. MacNeill's students; and we trust will supply them with an example of how not to seek honours of men.

Dr. MacNeill is very favourably disposed toward a union of all the denominations. He is on record as favouring the principle, but advocates caution and patience in its application.

We have recently had a further illustration of this attitude. It may be interesting to Baptists generally, but particularly to Southern Baptists. In Canada, three or four years ago, a so-called union of Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational denominations was effected, the body being called The United Church of Canada. Many Presbyterian churches,—if we mistake not, over a thousand,—did not join the Union, and the Presbyterian Church continued, though considerably diminished in numbers.

Among the Presbyterian churches in Toronto which voted for the Presbyterian Church as against the Union, was New St. Andrews Church on King Street, of which Rev. Stuart Parker is the minister. Within the last week or ten days that church has been celebrating its hundredth anniversary. One of the little *Gospel Witness* birds came to our window—or, more accurately, to our telephone—and told us that in connection with this celebration, Dr. John MacNeill had been invited to represent the Baptists; to which he replied that in view of the fact that its Pastor, Dr. Parker, had stood out so strongly against the Union, his (that is, Dr. MacNeill's) presence on his platform might be misconstrued. He therefore declined to participate in the anniversary services.

Of course, that is his right, for this is a free country. But when he gives as his reason for refusing to stand on a Presbyterian platform that that church dared to stand for the principles to which it was dedicated, refusing to be swallowed up by the Methodist whale, Dr. MacNeill shows that he knows little about Baptist liberty, and very little about British fair play. We congratulate the New St. Andrews Church on Dr. MacNeill's absence.

There may be other reasons than those we have enumerated for Dr. MacNeill's being invited to the Deanship.

On January eighth last we received a certain communication entitled, "Why Should Professor Marshall Go?" We did not, at that time, consider the prophecy a probable one. The little bird said, "Tweet! Tweet!", and he came in and left us a story; but the story of the little bird on that occasion seemed so improbable that we put it in our files instead of sharing it with our readers. But it is now evident that our little bird was a true prophet. This is what he says:

The writer does not claim to have any inside knowledge, or to have the gift of prophecy, but he ventures to suggest that those who keep their eyes open may discover that the reason for squeezing out Prof. Marshall is to be found in the management of the University itself. Let us watch."

Following is the communication received from one of our little birds whose name, truth to tell, in this instance, we do not know. Certainly McMaster's invitation to Dr. MacNeill serves to justify this little bird's prophecy. We would remind our readers once more that this little bird called on our office on the eighth of January last, before there had been any public mention of the invitation since extended to Dr. MacNeill.

WHY SHOULD PROF. MARSHALL GO?

Last week *The Gospel Witness* made an extended analysis of the calls that have come to Prof. Marshall. There are still some important questions that should be asked and answered, and I respectfully ask the privilege of looking at the matter from another angle.

The strong editorial of last week considered the situation from the points of view of the Professor, the Old Convention, and the churches in the Old Land, with just a slight glance at the University itself. It is about the latter that I would like to ask a few questions and perhaps make a few observations.

The question is this: Is there any reason in the University itself why Prof. Marshall should wish to leave Toronto?

McMASTER IN HAMILTON.

McMaster University will next year move to Hamilton. With new buildings on a new site, in a new environment and under a new patronage, the University ought to be an attractive institution. Just on the eve of this, Prof. Marshall may leave and fly away. Why? Furthermore there are days of material prosperity ahead for the university. The Hamilton citizens have given half a million dollars for the erection of a science building, and while the Board of Governors has not felt it wise, yet, to abandon the Baptist position respecting the use of state or municipal funds for church purposes, it will not only allow, but encourage, the City of Hamilton to expend city funds for the advantage of the University and its surroundings. McMaster will be a beautiful place. Why does Prof. Marshall wish to leave it now?

The City of Hamilton will wish to have a voice in the direction of the University for which it is doing so much, and for the sake of material gain the Board will find a way to do what is demanded. McMaster will be increasingly a city institution, and will enjoy corresponding material prosperity. From a worldly point of view, McMaster is just coming to its own. Why does the worthy Professor wish to leave it just at this time? There must be a reason, and the friends of the University should know it. Is the reason to be found behind the scenes in the institution itself?

Some of us are of the opinion that there are internal reasons for this restlessness which the Baptists of the old Convention should know, and it is perhaps the business of *The Gospel Witness* to help them to this knowledge. Perhaps if even those who are quite willing to have Prof. Marshall go for the sake of denominational peace and doctrinal security, knew all the facts of the case as some of the leaders on

the inside know them, they would prefer to have the things remain as they are rather than have a worse thing come upon them.

THE DEAN OF THEOLOGY.

The department of theology, while the smallest in the university, is really the whole reason for its existence. The headship of the department of theology is the most important place in the institution, yet since the passing of Dr. Farmer there has been no Dean of Theology. Why? Is it because there is no man in the Theological department who is counted fit for the position? Or is it because all the men of the department are of such equality of mediocrity that no one can be found able to lead or direct the others? Perhaps it is that the Board would like to name Prof. Marshall, but does not dare do so. Is this the reason why he thinks it well to go? Dr. McCrimmon is too old a man for the office, but Prof. Marshall is a young man whose scholarship has been broadly boasted, and really he is a pleasing gentleman, why is he not appointed? Is it that the Board of Governors knows that even now the people would not stand for such an action, and they dare not act as they wish? How does Prof. Marshall feel about being sidetracked by those who have claimed to be his friends? What part does this situation play in the gentleman's readiness to leave McMaster and Toronto and Canada?

Some of us think that we have not yet reached the depths of this cesspool of treachery. If we look further we may see some interesting things.

DR. MACNEILL AND THE DEANSHIP.

Walmer Road Church is going to be a different kind of place after the removal of the University to Hamilton. Not that many of the teaching staff attend that church, but the gradually dwindling congregation of Walmer Road Church is somewhat augmented by the students, and, of course, one or two of the professors attend there, too. But the prestige of the University will have departed, and the real value of the ministry of the church will appear. That will mean that there will be some slump in Walmer Road after next year. Moreover down town conditions are gradually creeping up to Bloor Street and it will not be very long before that church will have to face some real problems, and its pastor never has faced problems, and never will be able to do so, he doubtless would like to find a better resting-place for himself, even at the expense of the better man who has the prior claim. Is Dr. MacNeill slated for the Deanship?

It will be replied that Dr. MacNeill was once offered the Chancellorship and would not take it. That may be true, but the University had not been given over in large measure to a Municipal control, no person then thought that a man would be able to stand up before a group of several hundreds of Baptists and say without contradiction, "McMaster University is no longer a Baptist Institution", as was said by more than one speaker at the laying of the corner-stone in Hamilton a few weeks ago. Now there is prospect for an influential position for the Dean of Theology, and Dr. MacNeill might like to have it for himself. It would be rather rough treatment for such a man as Prof. Marshall, but then.

Some person might say that Dr. MacNeill has neither the scholarship nor the executive qualifications for the deanship. That we will admit, but his wide acquaintance with preachers, and the content of their sermons would enable him to prepare a few lectures on preaching, and in that way, get by.

Is it the plan of the Board of Governors to do this thing over the head of Prof. Marshall? If so, if his colleagues would treat him thus, then his self-respect would take him away, and he will have learned, at considerable cost to himself, the real character of his professed friends, and the selfishness of some of the devotees of that Bloor Street institution.

Coming events cast their shadows before. One wonders if there are not some signs of this method of rewarding a faithful follower while snubbing another, and the snub makes it the easier for that one to slip away where men of greater courage and better principle are to be found.

The writer does not claim to have any inside knowledge, or to have the gift of prophecy, but he ventures to suggest that those who keep their eyes open may discover that the reason for squeezing out Prof. Marshall is to be found in the management of the University in itself. Let us watch.

What a Little Bird Said!

We have all heard of the little bird who sometimes tells things that are not supposed to be generally known. Many such little birds come saying, "Tweet! Tweet!", at the window of the office of *The Gospel Witness* Editor. Of course, we do not admit black birds, or ravens, or crows; but just as the dove returned to the ark with an olive leaf plucked off, thereby bringing news of flood-conditions, so there are many good little birds that come to our office with something in their mouths. It is not always an olive leaf—or an olive branch. Sometimes the little bird is a homing pigeon returning with a message for the Editor.

No; you must not ask us where our homing birds live, nor in what trees they rest and sing their songs. But once upon a time in a certain tree one of our Fundamentalist birds was comfortably resting. No; we will not tell you where the tree was, nor what kind of tree it was, nor what sort of seat was under the tree—but there was a seat, and on that seat two interesting persons were sitting, engaged in conversation. One was Mr. ————, —we will call him Mr. Ex-Old Convention Official; the other was Mr. W. C. Senior. We first inserted the name of the Ex-Official, then it occurred to us it might be better to withhold it, for by so doing it may make it less easy for Mr. Senior to identify the seat, for doubtless he sits on many different seats and talks.

When our Fundamentalist bird heard the name "Shields", he listened the more intently, and Mr. Ex-Official said:

"According to T. T. Shields, I am a Modernist."

Our friend Mr. Ex-Official was in error here, for we have never called him a Modernist. If he is so classified by anyone, he has himself to blame. We remember Rev. C. J. Loney, of Hamilton, once putting the matter something like this: A certain man declares to his Conservative friends that politically he is a Conservative. He maintains his Conservative profession for perhaps three years and three hundred and sixty-four days—if that be the time between elections—but on election-day, notwithstanding his long profession of political Conservatism, he goes to the poll and votes Liberal. What is he—a Conservative or a Liberal? Are we to judge him by what he says, or by the way he votes?

We remember thinking that that was rather a striking way of putting the matter. Of course, anyone would answer that, whatever the man's profession, he voted to put the Liberal party into power. Of course there may be no politics in this. We may reverse the case, and suppose that a man talks Liberal and votes Conservative. But applying that principle to our friend Mr. Ex-Official, we have only to say that beyond peradventure, his vote has been cast in support of a rankly modernistic regime at McMaster University; and for practical purposes, at least, it is safer to classify a man by his vote than by his speech.

But following this, Mr. Senior spoke. We ought to say, however, before quoting him, that our little bird said his report of this conversation was correct; but he thought it would be wise that we should say, as the late Dr. Farmer would have said, that it was "substantially" correct. That is to say, he would not vouch

for every word; but that the following is the substance of what was said. Mr. Senior said:

"Did you see that article, Mr. Ex-Official, about waiting twenty years for a protest, and if it came, it would be like a child saying, 'Dada', for the first time? Such ridicule!"

To this Mr. Ex-Official replied:

"Do those articles bother _____ much?"

Now at this point our little bird said that he did not quite catch the name. Evidently therefore the article referred to was not in the little bird's mind, and for this reason he was unable to identify the person to whom Mr. Ex-Official referred.

But what the little bird did not catch, the Editor is able to supply. The article concerning which the Ex-Official enquired referred to Rev. C. H. Schutt, who had told not a few people that if McMaster University should appoint another professor of the same school as Professor Marshall the Denomination would hear from him! Replying to this we remarked that we did not think the Denomination would be much disturbed if they did; that we had waited for twenty years and had never heard one solitary word of protest from the lips of Mr. Schutt, and that if he should ever break the silence it would be like a child saying "dada" for the first time. We have not now had time to consult the article, but we remember that we wrote something of the sort, and that it referred to Mr. Schutt.

Mr. Ex-Official wanted to know whether these articles bother Mr. Schutt very much. Of course Mr. Schutt does not read *The Gospel Witness*! There are a great many people who do not read *The Gospel Witness* who, by some mysterious way, manage to discover all that is in it! But to Mr. Ex-Official's question Mr. Senior replied:

"Yes, he comes into my office; but I tell him not to bother his head about them."

No one need "bother his head" about what is not true. But what we have said about our friend Mr. Schutt is true to fact: through all the years of the controversy he has been as dumb as the proverbial oyster.

But the further conversation is of still greater interest. Mr. Ex-Official said to Mr. Senior:

"But we must get an orthodox man at McMaster."

To which Mr. Senior replied:

"Theology is not the important thing at McMaster."

Now we have it! We shall see presently why Mr. Ex-Official said that an orthodox man must be appointed to McMaster. It was certainly not fear of Rev. C. H. Schutt which dictated that remark. But Mr. Senior is usually an echo of the official voice. If there should be an upheaval in the Convention of Ontario and Quebec, and, by some miracle, an expression of opinion adverse to McMaster University should be registered, Mr. Senior would undoubtedly be found on the side of the majority before morning. He is a kind of reflector of official opinion. No doubt he had heard other people say, "Theology is not the important thing at McMaster."

Of course not. If it had been, Professor Marshall would never have been appointed,—and a good many

other professors would never have seen the inside of a McMaster class-room. Baptists may think they have a Baptist institution in McMaster, but they will wake up one of these days to discover that their lethargy has forfeited their educational inheritance to strangers.

But when Mr. Senior thus spoke, Mr. Ex-Official replied:

"But the people—the people—are not satisfied."

We did not need Mr. Ex-Official to tell us that. We hear that through the postman, and from all quarters of the Convention territory. The finances of the old Convention prove that the people are not satisfied. Some day when we have time, we are going to give a careful analysis from the year book. We have only cursorily examined the reports, but what we suspected we find to be true. The Treasurer has reported from time to time that the gifts from the churches have been maintained. They want it to appear that the churches are solidly behind McMaster University. The fact of the matter is that certain individuals have given large sums in order to maintain a semblance of financial health, and in order that it might not be seen that deficits were being made up by individuals, those individuals have given their large sums through the churches to which they belong.

One single example will suffice. Walmer Road reports a very large amount raised last year, and a large proportion given to denominational objects. Perhaps it is a good thing that something has stirred up Dr. MacNeill, because for many years Jarvis Street had practically to equal the giving of Walmer Road and Yorkminster (then Bloor Street) combined. But no one who has a thorough knowledge of the situation supposes that the large amount contributed to denominational objects by Walmer Road has been given by the rank and file of the membership: it has been made up by large gifts which cannot be repeated every year.

But there are other churches than Walmer Road. Mr. Ex-Official was right when he said, "The people are not satisfied." They are far from being satisfied. And when the University is moved to Hamilton, and the true state of affairs becomes apparent, their dissatisfaction will be greater still.

But what followed? The little bird in the tree heard Mr. Senior say:

"We must get something started. Johnston must do something at London. They want me to go to the Convention out west. I will take a little holiday first quietly before I go, then when I come back we must get things going."

We shall be sorry to deprive Mr. Senior of his holiday, but that "quiet little holiday" will be a confirmation of this conversation, and will prove that our little bird made an accurate report of what he heard. We greatly fear that Brother Senior may imperil his health by foregoing his holiday in order to discount our little bird's report. Pray, do not do so, Mr. Senior. Yours must be a very strenuous life; you must be weary trying to explain things away, and finding some new excuse for McMaster. Anyone who has to represent the denominational interests of the old Convention is likely to need a holiday. So please take your holiday notwithstanding. Although we cannot refrain from suggesting that it may be wise for other little birds to be on the lookout, so they may know when

Brother Senior slips quietly away for his vacation that he may get thoroughly rested in order to "get things going".

Then it may be well for Brother Mitchell and Brother McGinlay, and any others who live in the vicinity of London, to keep an eye upon Brother Johnston, Pastor of Talbot Street Church, because we have the word of a Senior for it that "Johnston must do something at London". We wonder what Brother Johnston ought to do? We wonder what is up at London? Or, what is down? Why should Brother Johnston, with his finely-waxed moustache and curly hair, be singled out and instructed to "get something done"? Are we to understand that Brother Johnston is doing nothing? Are the people running away from him to Brother Mitchell and to Brother McGinlay? And we wonder just what Brother Johnston can do? We have no doubt Brother Senior is right: Brother Johnston ought to do something. We all ought to do something! Everybody ought to be busy. But why should the Pastor of Talbot Street Church, London, be especially selected to meet this tremendous necessity of "doing something"?

Brother Senior has been invited to go to the Convention out West,—or are we to understand when he says, "They want me to go to the Convention out West"; that the desire has been expressed by officials of the Ontario and Quebec Convention? Whether he be invited to come, or requested to go, does not matter: let us watch the Convention out West to see whether Brother Senior turns up.

Of course our little bird did not inform us whether Mr. Senior intended to go to the Convention or not, whether that was to be part of his vacation; or whether, having had a vacation, he was afterwards to go out West to "start something" out there. Be that as it may, we shall all hold our breath until Brother Senior gets back from his quiet vacation, and try to be ready when he begins to "get something going".

But our little bird told us that, following this, the conversation drifted to things financial. The names of Mr. S. J. Moore and Mr. J. N. Shenstone were mentioned. Upon this, however, Mr. Senior remarked:

"Some of these gifts, though included in the reports, are conditional, and we have not received them yet."

Aha! Aha! We told you so. Now that is very naughty, to resort to a trick like that and say, We told you so. In our two articles on the departure of Professor Marshall, published January 2nd and 23rd, we implied that Professor Marshall was leaving, not so much because of the pull from Leicester, but because of some mysterious push from this side. Were certain of these larger gifts which Mr. Senior said were conditional, and which, while included in the reports, had not yet been made, conditioned upon Professor Marshall's leaving? Or was it a condition that he be not appointed Dean in Theology? Was another condition that someone, who at least had a semblance of orthodoxy, should be appointed to take his place?

How do we know some of these things? Ah, the little bird in the tree who brought us news of this interesting conversation is not the only little bird that perches roundabout *The Gospel Witness* office and says, "Tweet! Tweet! I will tell you something if you will

listen." We shall soon be telling *Gospel Witness* readers of what some other little birds have told us.

Some will enquire on what park-seat Mr. Ex-official and Mr. Senior were sitting in order that, in future, they may avoid the seat under that particular tree. Ah, but that would be useless, even if they could identify the seat; for our little birds are very wise and they seldom perch twice in the same tree. Nobody knows their name; nobody knows their colour; nobody knows their size—but they are *Gospel Witness* birds, and they are wonderfully wise. They could make their fortunes, or at least could receive large salaries, were they to enter the service of some great city daily. What scoops they would get! What surprises they would arrange for some people—indeed, we greatly fear their news would be so astounding and startling sometimes that they would be accused of being sensationalists. The fact is, nothing creates so great a sensation as the simple statement of the truth, especially when a lot of people are trying to cover the truth over and hide it under a bushel. Our *Gospel Witness* birds have an affinity for the truth, therefore the truth seeks them out and tells them what our *Gospel Witness* readers ought to know. Jack Miner's famous bird sanctuary cannot compare with ours. Really it is wonderful!

So, now, let us see—what did our little bird tell us? It told us that Mr. Ex-official was interested in the opinions of the Editor of *The Gospel Witness*, who had called him a Modernist; which we have shown to be not quite correct. It showed us also that Brother Schutt, the Superintendent of Home Missions, reads *The Gospel Witness*; and when he finds himself mentioned therein, is rather "bothered" about it. We suggest when Brother Schutt reads this little item that he go into Brother Senior's office and tell him not to "bother his head about it"!

We have also learned that Brother Senior is an optimist. But in order to explain that, we must give a definition. We once heard that an optimist is a man who does not care what happens—so long as it does not happen to him; and that a pessimist is a man who has lived too long with an optimist. We are, however, comforted as we write these words by the reflection that the offices of Brother Schutt and Brother Senior are not far apart, and that they will be able mutually to condole with each other. We earnestly commend each to the consoling ministry of the other.

Once more: we have learned that Brother Johnston—or, to be more precise, Rev. J. A. Johnston, B.A., B.Th (both degrees from McMaster University) must "do something".

We have also learned that Brother Senior has been requested, or invited, we are not quite sure which, to attend the Convention out West. We have gathered also from our little bird's report that Brother Senior is a little bit worn out, and needs a vacation; and that he is going to rest very quietly—and then see if they cannot "get something going".

We have learned that there are some people in the Denomination, as represented by Mr. Ex-official, who feel that an orthodox professor should be appointed in Professor Marshall's place.

And incidentally, something we had almost forgotten. We have learned that certain people have dis-

(Continued on page 16.)

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE BELIEVER'S GOD.

A Sermon by the Pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields.

Preached in Jarvis St. Baptist Church, Sunday Morning, October 6th, 1929.

(Stenographically Reported.)

"Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable."—Heb. 11:12.

Prayer Before the Sermon.

O Lord our God, we come with thanksgiving and praise into Thy holy presence, and with a holy gladness, because though Thou wast angry with us Thine anger is turned away; and now Thou dost comfort us. We thank Thee that for the believer the tempest of wrath is past, the trial has been concluded; and we are justified through faith in Christ Jesus the Lord. We bless Thee for the assurance that in Him we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of our trespasses. We are no longer aliens, no longer strangers and foreigners. All cause of controversy has been settled at the Cross. We have become the children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. We thank Thee for this marvellous miracle which has made bankrupt sinners heirs of glory; which has converted paupers into princes; that men in whom the Divine Image had been completely destroyed are made once more like Him Who created them. We rejoice in this this morning.

We come as a company who believe in Thee. We thank Thee for this house of prayer, for this day of worship, for this oasis in the desert, for this resting place beside the pilgrim road. How often Thou hast met with us here! How frequently hast Thou verified Thy word, and proved that Thou art in the midst of those who assemble in Thy name!

We doubt not that every believer here has need of special grace. Do we not need the daily manna as did Thy pilgrim people of ancient times? We pray that Thou wilt give us this day our daily bread. Give to each of Thy children a portion of spiritual meat. As Thou didst break the loaves and fishes in the desert place, so do Thou give to each one of us some special portion, that every believer may know that he is not lost in the company, but that he has been called by his name. Indeed, as Egypt's Governor differentiated between Jacob's sons, and made them to know that the individual need of each had been considered, so deal with us one by one, even giving to Benjamin his double portion as a special token of Thy love.

We pray this morning for cleansing from all sin. Remove from us all sense of unfitness, of distance between ourselves and Thee. May the assurance of our acceptance in Christ be very precious to us this morning. Help us that we may hear the Beloved saying to His beloved, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." If we know our own hearts, Lord Jesus, we would rather be pleasing to Thee than to all the world beside. We pray that this morning every believer may receive that delightful communication from Heaven, that love-letter from the skies, which will assure us once again of our place in the heart of God, of our establishment in the everlasting love of Him Who died for us. How we thank Thee that this has become possible; that we have not been put among the servants, but among the sons; that we are not assigned the outer courts, but admitted into the inner sanctuary, even the holiest of all, by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ! We praise Thee, we worship Thee, O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, One God, Who hast wrought so great a salvation for us.

And now we would find refreshment and invigoration, we would receive strength for the journey. We must go on, for here we have no continuing city, we must carry life's burdens, we must fight life's battles, we must continue life's pilgrimage, we must walk before God and be perfect. Give strength for this day's tasks. Give strength to the mother who must spend most of her time with the children. Give patience to the teacher who is often tried in his or her arduous task, and to the young man or the young woman this morning who is seeking to witness for Thee in the round of daily duty, give

special grace. Bless the boy and girl who in the midst of his or her play would glorify the Lord Jesus. This morning wilt Thou so overshadow us with Thy presence, and so bestow Thy grace upon us, that from the oldest to the youngest everyone shall receive some gift from God.

We thank Thee for health and strength, we thank Thee for soundness of mind. We pray Thy blessing upon Thy children who are not with us this morning. Very tenderly we would remember those who languish upon beds of pain. Why is it we are in health and strength to-day when so many suffer? Let Thy blessing be upon the hospitals and upon the hundreds and thousands of people who are never free from pain. The Lord be gracious to them, and to those who exercise the exacting ministry of attendance upon the sick. Bless all doctors and nurses, and all those who in the homes must bear this burden of ministering to the afflicted. Remember, we pray Thee, those whose minds are clouded, those who suffer for a little while the failure of reason. O Lord, break through the darkness, and unveil the beauty of Thy face to such as know Thy name. Though there be some who do not know their closet friends, we pray that they may know Thee.

Be gracious to any who have suffered bereavement. We think of the heartache, of the inexpressible grief, by which many are bowed down. The Lord be gracious to them! Put the arms of Thy love about them and minister to them in their loneliness and in their grief. Have regard to the aged whose steps are feeble and whose eyes are dim, and in whom the daughters of music are brought low. May their hearts discern the King in His beauty, and their spiritual vision behold the land that is very far off, while Heaven's music is know their closest friends, we pray that they may know Thee. to pass that at evening time it shall be light.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, to protect such as go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, and all others whose duty takes them away from the sanctuary of God to-day. We pray that Thou wilt make even the desert places, even the deck or the hold of a steamship, a place where God may be met. So wherever man labour, wherever they travel, may the Lord God be with His people! Close the eyes of such as shall change worlds to-day, and by Thy grace open them again in glory.

Bless all Thy ministering servants who preach, the army of Sunday School teachers who teach, missionaries in the far places of the earth who bear witness for Christ. For all fathers and mothers, young men and maidens, boys and girls, and little children, we seek Thy saving and upholding grace. We come to Thee with our multitudinous needs, while we rejoice in the intimate care of a Father Who loves us all. Let Thy blessing, Thy benediction, rest upon us; and as we come to Thy word this morning, may the bush burn with fire; may the Voice be heard speaking out of the bush; may some word be spoken to us which shall lay hold of the heart and conscience and will, and make us such as we have never been before.

Open the eyes of those who have never seen our Well-beloved. We thank Thee that to get a glimpse of Jesus is to fall in love with Him, and to love Him forever. We pray that those whose minds have been darkened to the attractiveness of Christ may have their eyes opened; and if there be any such here this morning, men or women, or boys or girls, let every heart be surrendered to the Lord Jesus! Lead us all, by Thy great grace, into the possession of the enjoyment of Thy peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In our prayer meeting last night one of the brethren quoted a scripture from Isaiah, "For my thoughts are

not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." That principle is for ever true; and we must needs ever come to the Word of God that we may learn to think His thoughts after Him.

There is a view of the universe which is, I think I may say, almost everywhere prevalent, to the effect that this world, and the worlds about us, constitute a great machine that is "wound up and left to play", a machine that is governed by fixed and inexorable laws, by a law that operates in a prescribed way, and which, literally, cannot be prayed against, or persuaded. It is not exorable, not subject to prayer or entreaty, nor to any power which prayer may invoke; but inexorable: we, and the world in which we live, and the worlds about us, are all subject to law. But Christianity teaches that even the law is subject to the divine Lawgiver.

I read an answer to a question last night in one of our papers. The question was, "Do you believe in evolution?" And the answer was to the effect, "I believe in development: 'first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear'." Thus avowed evolutionists misrepresent their own position, and so delude many. We all believe in development—but that is not evolution. The evolutionary idea which is everywhere prevalent, is to the effect that the created order as we now see it came from some primordial germ. The life-principle, or whatever was in the beginning, the theistic evolutionist admits must have come from God; but he is one with atheistic evolutionists in accepting the assumption that there were wrapped up in that original something, certain resident forces, and that from that something, by its own power, through innumerable ages and incalculably numerous transmigrations, this present ordered universe has come to be. That God had something to do with it, the theistic evolutionist admits, but whatever He did was done in the beginning. He set His laws in operation then, but if He has had anything to do with things since it has been rather in the character of a spectator. Laws are fixed, and what is the use of praying! By that philosophy, therefore, everything is interpreted, on a naturalistic plan.

The Bible is a revelation of God. It tells us who God is, and what He is like. He is the Creator: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." But the revelation of this Book is to the effect that God has never withdrawn His hand from the material universe, nor from the lives of His human creatures; that while He was "in the beginning" and while He is in all that He has made, yet He is above it all, a personal, transcendent, God, Who is still governing the world that He made, the universe of which He is the Creator. The Book is written to show us how God can come into human life, how He can accomplish in human life that which is above nature, that which cannot be accounted for at all on natural grounds. The view of the universe that "pushes the great First Cause back as far as possible"—and so far that no one can discover it—as a matter of course denies everything that is supernatural. Therefore we need not be surprised at the denial of the miracle of the Virgin Birth—which is the supreme miracle. This is the crowning, the ultimate, proof of God's ability to interpose, that He Who is God, came down and robed

Himself in human flesh. The Virgin Birth is the climax of all miracles. It teaches us that God can come into human life and effect, by His divine power, that which men of themselves can never bring to pass. The Bible calls upon us to believe in such a God as that, the God Who is revealed in Christ Jesus.

The supreme example of faith given us in the Bible is Abraham. He is described as the father of all those who believe; and all believers are said to be the "children of Abraham". The Bible does not concern itself very much, as I have frequently pointed out to you, with abstract definitions: it shows us rather principles in operation. The Bible is a book full of illustrations, and the principle of faith finds its supreme exemplification in the life of Abraham. "Oh, but", you say, "will you go to the Old Testament for the supreme example of faith?" Certainly; there never has been a greater believer than Abraham! and we who believe are his children. Abraham's record is briefly summarized in this chapter. If you would know what faith is, study the life of Abraham: "Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable."

How differently God works from men! When men begin some new thing they endeavour to begin it on a big scale. How the church of Christ has been cursed with these big movements of recent years! During the war we had all sorts of "drives"—drives for the Red Cross, drives for the Patriotic Society—what they call "high pressure methods" applied for the getting of money. When the war was over many said, "If we could get all this money for the war, why cannot we get it for the Lord's work?" Hence The Seventy-five Million Dollar Campaign among Southern Baptists. And the trouble with our Southern Baptist friends was that they began to spend the money before they got it. Much of it did not come at all, and they have been in debt ever since. In the Northern Convention there was the One Hundred Million Dollar Drive, or "The New World Movement" I think it was called. In all these matters men said, "If we are to get anything done we must appeal to big men with big things. Alas for human philosophy! God never has had any use for a "big" man. He has never used a "big" man. He has made some very little men great, but human bigness has no place in God's programme. When God would raise up a race of believers, when He would populate heaven with a multitude that no man could number, He began with one man. "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you," said He, "for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him." "Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead", a multitude.

I shall try to tell you this morning what our great God stands ready to do with one man—not with a great organization, but with one man, with one boy, with one girl, one person surrendered to God to go as a missionary to Africa, or to South America, or India, or China, or somewhere else. I desire to show what God can do with only one man in whose life He dwells.

Let me try to make very simple and plain to you some of the characteristics of Abraham's faith, which is to say, the characteristics of true faith, of faith in God: "Therefore"! That refers to the record of his faith. It was because Abraham believed God these wonders fol-

lowed. How did he believe? What was involved in his believing?

I.

In the first place, his faith was A Faith That, Because it Recognized God as God, PUT GOD FIRST IN EVERYTHING. It was said of Abraham in the beginning of his career, "By faith Abraham, when he was called . . . obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." The first step in Abraham's faith was a complete surrender of himself to God; he put God first. And when God said, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee", Abraham did as he was told.

All the boys and girls can understand, that if you really believe God, if you have the faith that saves, you will so put God first in your life that you will do as He tells you; you will obey Him.

That faith *involved his leaving his own company*; separating himself from the natural conditions of life; emigrating, so to speak, from the place where he was born into some other place. When Jesus Christ comes to any one of us, He demands that He shall be Lord; we are to follow Him, no matter what it may cost. It may mean for you young people the breaking up of your companionships; it may mean separation from friends. It may mean that you will have to change your manner of life entirely, and go out from the condition of life in which you now find yourself to conditions entirely different, where there is a new centre, a new principle dominating your life. The simple question is, Are you willing to put God first? Is that your conception of God, that when He speaks it is not for you to argue, that it is not for you to attempt to justify your disobedience? His word is to be the absolute law of your life, and when He speaks you are to accept it, and obey it without question.

That is what faith is. It is useless to say that I believe in God if I do not do what He says. It is folly to say that I love Him if I do not keep His commandments. Faith worketh by love, and the faith that saves the soul is a faith that puts God above every thing, and follows Him.

You will observe, too, that *Abraham's faith put God even before his family*: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house". I do not think there is anything that so cripples young people as unwholesome companionships. If we are to be true Christians and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, and are going to have the best of life—as God wills that we should have—then we must be willing to separate from our companions, and even leave our father's house if need be. Sometimes a man may have to take a position apart from his wife, a wife may have to stand apart from her husband. Children may have to oppose their parents, and parents their children. It is not nearly so unusual nowadays for children to oppose their parents in certain things as it is for parents to oppose their children, for we live in a day when children rule the household, and the will of father and mother is no longer the rule of the house. Children are allowed to go—I had almost said—to the devil, because at home there is no discipline, no restraint. But as Christians we shall have to take our position as Abraham did, if we are to realize the fulness of blessing, sometimes we shall have to separate ourselves from our dearest friends. I do not think we sufficiently emphasize that principle.

"Evil communications corrupt good manners", and you young people cannot live in the presence of the ungodly, nor keep company with them, nor share their views of life, and find pleasure in associations with them, without a very definite spiritual deterioration in your own experience.

Oh, the wisdom of it, God knew He could not do anything with Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees. He said, "Come away from here, shut yourself up with me and I will make something of you". God can never do anything with any of us in Ur of the Chaldees.

It involved some sacrifice for Abraham to leave his own country—and it may involve sacrifice on your part. I published in *The Witness* a few weeks ago a communication that Dr. Stockley had brought from the Old Country, a most interesting document. You remember how Mr. Woolley, leader of the archaeological explorations from the British Museum, superintended excavations at Ur of the Chaldees. There was a time when the critics said that Moses could not possibly have written the Pentateuch, because in Moses' day writing was unknown! Great scholars were they not! When they said that, there were a lot of little preachers who said, "Oh, I shall have to change my views." But now the spade of the excavator has gone down, and they have discovered the very city in which Abraham lived. Mr. Woolley said that the streets of Ur of the Chaldees were comparable to Regent Street and Bond Street in London. The city had been buried for centuries. When they got down to the foundation the diggers said, since they had got down to the foundations and below to the solid clay beneath the foundations, there was no use digging any farther. But Mr. Woolley insisted they should dig deeper. They went down through eight feet of solid clay, and underneath it they came upon another city; they uncovered a city of Noah's day. Mr. Woolley had not believed in the flood, but, scientist as he was, when he saw there before his eyes right under the foundations of a great city, down under a solid bed of clay, another city buried, he said that nothing but a mighty deluge could ever have done it.

We shall believe God's word after a while. But my point is this, that when God said to Abraham, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house", he was not leaving a cottage in the wilderness, he was not leaving some brush arbour; he did not live merely in a tent, but he lived in a city which even in that day had come to an advanced state of civilization. Yet he turned his back upon it all, and went out into the wilderness wherever God might lead him, because he put God first.

Are you willing to do that? Is your faith in God of such a character that you can enthrone Him above all circumstances, above all considerations of self-interest, and follow Him whithersoever He leadeth? No one of us really believes God while He is relegated to a second place. Will you think of that? The very idea of God is that He Is God! You cannot relegate God to a second place, for then He would cease to be God to you. He fills every place, God must be first or He would not be God. You may profess to have a God, but the God that is put second to father or mother or children or home, or temporal interests, or material wealth and comfort and temporal prosperity—the God who is relegated to second place is not God. He will not give His glory to another. Unless God is first you have only an idea of God. But the real God, the God of Abraham, must be

first; for He will not be second. It is not faith until we put Him above everybody and everything, and say, "It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth good". That is what Abraham did; he put everything on one side, and followed the Lord.

Perhaps you say, "That would be all right if I could only see a little in advance; I must know what is in the future". Abraham did not in the beginning. It is as though Abraham had said, "Where shall I go?" And the Lord had said, "It is none of your business." "What sort of a land shall I find?" "I will tell you when the time comes." "What compensation will you offer for this sacrifice?" "I promise you none." "What then shall I do?" "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee. Trust me; put your whole life, present and future as well as the past, everything, wife, friends, all you have, absolutely in My hand; and do as I tell you." When we can do that we have faith, and we give God His only proper place.

II.

Thus Abraham's faith believed that GOD COULD FULFIL HIS PROMISE TO HIM. Our text deals with a later stage of his experience. He believed that God could fulfil His promise to him, notwithstanding his natural incapacity to receive it. We talk a great deal about our "capacity to receive blessing". You have no capacity until God creates it. What has the Book to say? What happened to one—no; not that only, but unto one "and him as good as dead". There was no capacity there for the fulfilment of God's promise. God took Abraham out one night and said, "Look at the stars; can you count them? So shall thy seed be." And as yet he had no children! The promise was given when these two, by natural standards and by natural law, had passed all possibility of parentage.

Abraham's faith therefore was a faith that believed that God was above all law, above all natural processes, above all natural powers. In a word, it was a faith that believed in the supernatural, that believed that God could do what He promised, solely because He was God.

I do not wonder that Harry Emerson Fosdick says, "The virgin birth involves a biological miracle that is unthinkable to the modern mind," or words to that effect. That is true. It is unthinkable to the "modern mind", whatever that may be. It is unthinkable to the natural mind, to "the carnal mind." The Bible is a record of the accomplishment of impossibilities from Genesis to Revelation. There is scarcely a page in the Bible that can be believed by any man who lives on the natural plane. What is the Bible for? It is written to show you that God is above all these things; that He is still among His people, that "the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them." That is what the Bible is for.

What sort of God have you? A God that is shut up to circumstances? A God that must needs work by natural processes? Or, is your faith reposed in a God Who is the Author of the universe and all that is in it, and therefore in Whom reside powers that are superior to all the forces of nature? Will you speak about earthquakes and lightnings, and mighty cataracts and the rolling oceans, and the myriad stars? Listen, "He made the stars also". He is above the stars; He is above

everything and everybody. You and I are called upon to believe that God can accomplish in our lives the naturally impossible, just as He did for Abraham. And until you believe that, you have no God at all. The god of the Modernist is not a God. I do not know what He is. The god of the Modernist is chained, shut up, imprisoned in the cosmos, locked up by the laws which He Himself has made; like some motor-manufacturer making a motor-machine, and then being wrecked in the ditch by the product of his own hand. No; our God is above it all.

Very well, then, let us make some application of that simple principle, to the man who is not a Christian. Is there a man or woman here, or boy or girl, who is not a Christian? Why are you not a Christian? You say, "Not because I do not want to be, sir". Is it because you do not need Christ? "No! no! I need Him. No one needs Him more than I do." Why then are you not a Christian? "Because I could not live the Christian life." You are quite right, you could not. "I have tried a thousand times, and failed. There is no use my trying again." You are right in that opinion. "I joined the church a number of years ago, and thought the church would help me. But, I find I was worse after than before." Why are you not a Christian? "Because, sir, I have no capacity for being a Christian. I cannot think as a Christian ought to think. I cannot speak as a Christian ought to speak. I cannot act as a Christian ought to act. What is the use of talking to me about being a Christian?" Ah, listen, to what God did for "one, and him as good as dead."

The gospel I preach to you promises a power that will come into your life, and do for you what you cannot do, what no church can do, what no minister can do; what no book can do, what no power on earth can do, but what God can do because He is God. You may be "born again", you may experience that biological miracle unthinkable to the modern mind! Yes: the miracle of the virgin birth may, nay, *must*, be repeated in the experience of every true Christian, for the Holy Ghost quickeneth Whom He will. He comes to make dead souls live again, because He is God.

Will you trust Him? He is not a human Saviour, but a divine Saviour Who died, Who rose again, Who is enthroned in the glory, and Who is "over all, God blessed for ever". Will you yield your broken heart and life to Him and say, "O, Lord, if ever there was a bankrupt wretch I am that man; if ever a man needed all the powers of heaven to make him by grace other than he is by nature, I am the man. Come and do that now. I trust Thee as God."

As for you *Sunday School teachers*—what is your task? "Why", you say, "it is to win souls for Christ." I know there is a Scripture which says, "He that winneth souls is wise," but that always needs a definition. There is a sense, of course, in which we win souls; as ambassadors for Christ, we are to beseech men to be reconciled to God. But let us never forget that when a soul is saved there is a new creation; the miracle of Isaac's birth is repeated every time a soul is saved. The birth of Isaac was supernatural. Do you teachers believe in a God like that when you come to teach? Do you say, "O God, Thou canst use me to-day. The word of life from my lips can make new creatures in Christ Jesus, begotten again by the

word of God which liveth and abideth forever"? As you preach and teach the word to scholars dead in trespasses and sins they will live again. Do you believe that?

Let me speak to *this church*. Can you believe for the conversion of souls "dead in trespasses and in sins"? Do we actually expect this miracle every time we assemble? Do we believe that the Bible is the word of God, and that when it gets to the hearts and consciences of men they live again?

You have heard the story, have you not, of the young man who asked Mr. Spurgeon how it was that every time he preached souls were saved. He said, "When I preach nothing happens." Mr. Spurgeon said to him, "Do you expect people to be saved every time you open your mouth to preach?" "Oh, no", the young man replied, "I would not like to say that." "Well then", said Spurgeon, "what are you complaining of? I always do." Of course! Is our faith a faith in a God Who quickeneth the dead?

I do not know whether there are *experienced preachers here* (this morning, but there are *some young preachers*. Yes, there are preachers here; there are some who have been preaching this summer, and others who are going to preach—and a great many of you boys will be preachers. You are going to preach some day in Africa, or in China, or in India. Some day you will stand face to face with a hard task, and you will say, away off there in that foreign country, "I remember when I was in Jarvis Street the Pastor said that God could use the poorest instrument to make dead souls live again; and I am going back to my task with a stronger faith."

But what is your task? I am tired hearing people talk about movies, and motor cars, and radios, and all the rest of it, as reasons for people not attending church. One would think we live in a day when God has ceased to be God. If the modern church is empty, it is not because the motor car has come, or the radio, or anything else: it is because God has departed. A church in the midst of which Almighty God still lives and moves is as mighty as it ever was. In all the world's history our God has not changed; and if we have faith in God we shall see miracles to-day as Abraham did.

This word that I speak will after a while come to *some preachers in the country*. There are a great many people who read what is said in this pulpit, who would not be found in the pew—lots of them! There are hundreds of people who would not be found reading *The Gospel Witness*. No! but they will be careful to read it when they cannot be seen. They will read it anyhow. (You preacher, yonder, when you come to read it, please remember that I am talking to you.) I can visualize now scores of them. I know them all by name, those preachers who know I know them, and who know I am talking to them, although they are not here this morning. This man yonder says, "I am as orthodox as you are. I believe the Bible just as much as you do—but you do not know my situation." Well, what is your situation? "You do not know that I have one man in my congregation who, if I were to take my stand for a whole Bible, would turn things upside down. I have to be wise, you know! I have to act diplomatically." Yes! And this man who says he is orthodox, this man who says he believes God, *does not believe that God is able to deal with a little two-*

by-four country deacon! I do not know your situation! I have had just as difficult a situation as you ever had, my brother. "But he is the chief supporter of the church. And furthermore, he has ever so many nieces and nephews in the church, and a considerable family of his own; and if he were to be offended we should have an earthquake." Listen, if you were to offend him you might have an earthquake; but if, at the same time, you please God, you would have a heavenly visitation that would more than compensate you for the earthquake.

What is the use of saying that you believe God, that you trust God, when you cannot bring the smallest problem of life to Him for solution? The preacher who cannot trust God to settle his little difficulties in the church has not much faith. What sort of God is He that He cannot manage that little church of yours? He rules the universe pretty well. I am glad it is still in His hands. I do not know what we should do if it were given into the hands of the Convention; we should not have any rain, or dew, or anything! But He lives and reigns and rules! Hallelujah! Get on good terms with Him, and you need not be afraid of anyone else. Believe God, and you may have a revival.

And now *you Jarvis Street members*, do you say we believe God? Are you sure we do? There is a man down there whose life is crippled. I do not know who he is, but he is drying up, withering. Theoretically, he is as orthodox as Paul, but I will tell you what is the matter with him. He has no blessing in his soul because he has not learned to honour the Lord with his substance, and with the firstfruits of all his increase. Ah, but the man says, "We have got to lay up for a rainy day." I met a dear friend who told me he was not laying up very much, but he was laying up a little for a rainy day—but the rainy day never came for him, for he went suddenly up into the glory. There are some people who seem to expect that by and by there is going to be nothing but rain! I do not know why you need so many mackintoshes, my friends, or so many umbrellas. It would not take much to keep you anyhow! What about God in the evening time? Cannot He look after you in "the rainy day"? He looked after Noah pretty well when it was rather wet—and he can look after you. But there are men who are so careful about the future, so concerned about the bread-and-butter question, that they are utterly useless to God; they are grasping and grasping, laying aside something for the rainy day. As a result their souls are shrivelling up. I heard of a man in Paris some years ago who was afflicted by some disease—I do not think they could name it, it was something new—but his skin was just shrinking. It was getting tighter and tighter all the time, and the poor man was shrivelling up, dying for want of a liberal life. There are professing Christian people like that.

I do not know what your difficulty is, but whatever it is, wherever you are, let Abraham's God be yours; and believe as Abraham believed. To-morrow down in the shop, when you come face to face with a thing, and are tempted to say, "It is no use; it is impossible", that moment say, "Thank God, here is a chance for God to do something for me." "Oh," says the mother, "I shall have to give up. These children of mine are like the sons of Zeruah to-day, they are too strong for me. I cannot control them." No you cannot; but you can lay hold of God and ask Him to control them for you. He will do it.

I do not care what your difficulty is, He can meet it. Abraham believed in a God Who was superior to all natural obstacles, Who was above all natural processes, Who had power to implement His every promise.

Whatever God promises, He will bring to pass. If it is silver and gold that are needed—and Jarvis Street needs money—He will supply it. Do you know what we need here? We need a quarter of a million dollars—and more on top of that—for larger buildings for the Sunday School and for the Seminary. What shall I do? Shall I ask you to put them up? You have not a quarter of a million dollars! But God has. He has plenty of money. Let us ask Him for it. The silver and the gold, the cattle on a thousand hills, are all His. Let us ask Him for what we need.

And you students, you are going to be hard up this winter. There are going to be times when you will not have money enough to be comfortable. Well, if you are going to be preachers you had better get used to it! "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." You will have to get used to that by and by. And it is a blessed thing to get even twenty-five cents directly from the hand of God, a great thing to get a little bit of money put in your hand by your Father. When you get something you say, "How good that is! And He has plenty more; He can supply all my needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Will you practice that? Will you learn now in your student days to take the God of Abraham into partnership in all your difficulties, and say, "I am going right now to put God to the proof in my daily life, and stake everything on His promise? When you have had experience like that you can go out and preach in some little church with all kinds of difficulties—and smile at them. When you get the awkward member of the church—he may be a deacon, or he may be someone else, I don't know. I am not reflecting on my deacons. I have seven of them—and that is enough! But they are good men, every one of them, splendid men. But I have had trouble in time past. Whatever the difficulty is, meet it with a smile and perfect composure; and do not allow it to rob you of a night's sleep. Simply say, "I have got a great God, and I trust Him; and He is going to see me through."

"A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing:
Our Helper He, amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work his woe;
His craft and power are great,
And armed with cruel hate—
On earth is not his equal."

III.

I could say many things to you if I had time, but I add this, that Abraham's faith was A FAITH THAT BELIEVED THAT GOD WOULD HELP HIM TO BEGIN ALL OVER AGAIN. Twenty years he waited for Isaac, or maybe more, and then at last he came. He grew to be a splendid young man. I do not think there is anything lovelier in life than to see a strong man with a strong son at his side, the very image of his father, getting ready to take his father's place. If there is any kind of pride that is justifiable I think it is a godly father's pride in a godly son.

I think Abraham was proud of Isaac, proud with a holy pride. I think Abraham said, "I am the most favoured man in all the world. There never was another man whom God so honoured as he has been pleased to honour this poor unworthy servant. Here is my son, the son of my old age. And oh, what a joy he is!" "How are you getting along, Abraham?" "Oh, splendidly. Look at Isaac! Is he not fine? His mother and I just thank God for him every day we live. He is the joy of our lives." And then upon that sunny day the clouds gathered, and the Voice out of heaven said, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering." "What! after waiting twenty years or more for his coming? And after seeing him grow up to manhood's estate? Blot it all out, and leave me stripped at this late hour!" Is that God? Abraham said, "Yes, it is God; and because it is God I will do it." "But, Abraham, the promises cannot be fulfilled in any other way than through Isaac. God said 'In Isaac shall thy seed be called.'" I think Abraham answered, "It is not for me to say how God is going to fulfil His promises. My God is God, and He will find his own way." "Lay him in death", was the command; and you know the story of how Abraham did it.

Can you do it? Jarvis Street, I want to speak to you. *Supposing God were to call upon us to begin all over again, could you do it?* I do not want to do it. I have said to my friends, one experience such as mine is enough for a lifetime. I do not want another. But supposing—supposing—God were to take our Isaac away? Supposing He were to leave us empty-handed somehow, reduced once again to nothing, could you trust God to start over again? I got a view of some things happening in some of our churches when people get together and for a while the blessing comes, and then there comes a period when the blessing seems to stop in some of our little churches, and some of our pastors are saying, "Well, what now?" It is simply laying Isaac on the altar. Can you believe that the God who blessed you in the beginning can bless you again? It is never too late for God to begin all over again. Someone here says, "I am past the evening time. The shadows are lengthening, and surely you do not say I may have an experience like that?" You may, dear friend. I do not know what your particular circumstances are. God may test you yet as He did Abraham, and He may put you into the most difficult situation that you have ever been in in all your life. If He does, are you ready to begin all over again with the God of Abraham? Empty-handed!

"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." Abraham came to the place appointed; he laid Isaac upon the wood, and stretched forth his knife to slay his son. As he did that, he drove the knife into his own heart, he died over again, he was crucified. Then he saw a ram caught by the horn in the thicket, and he offered him up instead of his son.

I have thought that it must have been then that Abraham saw Christ's day. It must have been in the

light of the fire that ascended from that altar, when he had cut the bands by which Isaac had been bound, and father and son stood there together with the ram that was offered up instead of his son, that he saw Christ clearly. I can imagine Abraham's saying, "O Lord, I thank Thee that Thou hast brought me by Thy grace to the place where I can be a little bit like Thyself, for I offered my only begotten son as Thou wilt offer Thine." Down through the ages Abraham looked, and he saw the Father and the Son going both together down through the centuries to the place called Calvary, and at that place where Abraham consecrated his all he came into oneness with God; and he knew what God was, for he knew that He could raise Isaac again from the dead.

Of the innumerable multitudes growing out of one as the reward of faith I cannot now speak. What I want to leave with you this morning was just that no matter what your difficulty, whether internal or external, whether it relates to your personal life or to your Christian service, or to your family life—whatever it may be, if you are a Christian, you have a God Who is superior to it all; and if you will give Him the first place He will come into your life and fulfil the promise of His word.

"O Cross, that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from Thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead;
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be."

WHAT A LITTLE BIRD SAID!

(Continued from page 9.)

covered that when they passed their Amending Bill at Temple Church, Toronto, thus getting rid of Jarvis Street Church and its Pastor and a few other churches, they did not thereby succeed in purging the Denomination of all dissatisfaction. We have learned also, that it is now one of the tasks of officialdom, to try to satisfy "the people". But we have learned too, that there are still certain elements in the old Convention who care nothing for "the people", and who, as represented by Mr. Senior, are of the opinion that theology is not the important thing at McMaster.

Furthermore we have learned that some of the larger givers of the Denomination have promised certain sums to McMaster, but that these sums have been promised on certain conditions. We have hinted at the conditions. We shall probably record the reports of other little birds on this matter a little later.

Now let nobody say that anyone was eavesdropping. It is perfectly legitimate for a little bird to perch on the branch of a tree; and we assure our readers that the little birds who bring information to *The Gospel Witness* office never fail to play the game. If two men under a tree talk in such tones that the little bird on the branch cannot help hearing them, what is the little bird to do? Ought he to fly away? But what if he is waiting on the branch for the coming of his mate? What if therefore he cannot fly away? Or what, if for other reasons not to be divulged, he must wait where he sits, and hear what he hears, because he has no cotton-wool in his pockets wherewith to close his ears? Certainly it would not be polite to do as certain ene-

mies did in the New Testament when they stopped their ears. Moreover he might by doing so attract attention to himself.

Our little bird related the conversation which we have here reported, with a perfectly clear conscience; and we boldly declare to all the world that our conscience is equally clear in receiving the message and sharing this interesting little bit of information with our readers.

Puzzle: Find the bench under the tree; and identify the bird on the branch. Selah!

LAST SUNDAY IN JARVIS STREET.

The Pastor returned from West Virginia Saturday, March 1st, and occupied his pulpit at both services on Sunday. A new record was set for the School for an ordinary Sunday, with an attendance of 1,532. It is an inspiring sight always to see this great army of young people in church on Sunday morning. In the evening there was another great congregation. The Pastor baptized seven, and gave the hand of fellowship to sixteen new members at a Communion service which filled the auditorium downstairs and overflowed into three sections of the gallery.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE EDITOR'S TRIP TO WEST VIRGINIA.

Pressure of matters requiring his attention have made it impossible for the Editor to write his article on his trip to Clarksburg, West Virginia. It is enough to say that we enjoyed two of the most delightful weeks we have spent in many a long day. We promise our readers a brief account of it in next week's issue.

Books by Dr. Shields

"THE ADVENTURES OF A MODERN YOUNG MAN."

A series of sermons on the parable of the prodigal and his brother.

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The Union Baptist Witness

The following pages (17, 18 and 19) are the official organ of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches in Ontario and Quebec.
337 Jarvis Street, Toronto, Canada.
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NORTHERN GOLD.

It is a joy to know that an increasing number of pastors are appreciating and using the power of the printed page to reach men and women for God. Snow, rain, and bad weather generally, may keep people from church; but the church paper will go to those people, no matter what the weatherman may report. The devil knows the value of advertising. So do his ministers, who transform themselves into what appear to be angels of light. Witness the vast production of pernicious literature by the sect known under such names as "Millennial Dawn", "Watch Tower", "International Bible Students (Should it not be 'Twisters'?) Association",—all of which are names for Russelism. Since the devil and his emissaries so largely use the press, it is cause for profound thanksgiving to God when another of the apostles of the light and truth found in the face of Christ, ventures to print a Gospel paper.

Northern Gold is the name of the new, four-page, and very readable magazine, issued by Pastor James Forrester, 136 McIntyre St. E., North Bay, who is the pastor of the North Bay Regular Baptist Mission. We hope that many of our readers will write to Mr. Forrester, enclosing money for copies of this paper.

Part of the last page is devoted to a history of the North Bay Mission, which is not yet one year old. "Since our Mission opened, eleven who were 'dead in the trespasses and sins', have been quickened together with Christ, and are no longer 'strangers and foreigners', but 'fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God'. Others have made an open profession but, on account of removal, we have been unable to follow them. Surely, when we think of our babes in Christ, we can rejoice over that which has already brought joy in the presence of the angels.

"Seven sisters followed the Lord in baptism, and the experience of all those present at these services was one of deep blessing. One of these ladies was strongly urged, because of increasing years, that the physical strain would be too great. But after she was immersed, her heart was filled with joy, because she found her loving Saviour would not allow even physical harm to befall her while following His command.

"When Rev. W. J. H. Brown was here, a singularly beautiful event impressed all present. The 'child of the King', who was to be baptized, followed the golden pathway of the sun's radiance, as it cast its evening glory over Lake Nipissing. Surely nothing could be more symbolic

of the brightness of the Christian walk with Jesus, and of eternal glory with 'the Lamb as the light thereof', which awaits just through the narrow gateway, when 'this mortal shall put on immortality'."

SEMINARY ACTIVITIES.

The second edition of *The Seminary Advocate*, of which Mr. J. Fullard, 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto, 2, is editor, has some very good things in its five pages. Mr. E. V. Apps, in the "Men's Department", tells how "a dozen students and friends of the Seminary conducted a service in the Parliament Street All-Night Mission, Tuesday, February 11th, from eight-thirty to eleven-thirty p.m."

"The programme was an impromptu one, led by Mr. Johnson. An improvised quartette sang one item, two ladies sang solos, and everyone gave a ringing testimony to the saving and keeping power of the Lord Jesus Christ. The presence of God was manifest in the meeting, and He displayed His power in baring His arm to the salvation of five or six precious souls.

250 Men.

"What about the congregation? We were overawed as we faced two hundred and fifty hungry, homeless, destitute men, many yes practically all, of whom were without Christ. Yet our hearts were thrilled with unspeakable joy at such a gracious and glorious privilege of presenting to them the One altogether lovely, the Friend of the friendless, our blessed Lord.

"How the boys loved to sing the old hymns!

"As one by one we gave our testimonies in song and word, tears were seen. There was no 'high-powered evangelism'. About eleven o'clock Mr. McGrath closed with prayer. Then a quiet, simple, straight-forward appeal was made for those who desired to flee from the wrath to come and shelter under the precious blood. Seven hands were raised, and each of the men students singled out his man, and taking him off to one side, endeavoured by God's grace to point him to the Saviour.

"What a thrill it is to lead a soul to Christ! What an unutterable joy to hear a man in deep contrition cry out unto God for mercy and forgiveness and cleansing in the precious blood of Christ, his Substitute!"

At Mount Pleasant.

Miss O. Finney, in the "Ladies' Department", says that "Sunday morning, February 16th, found a number of lady students, as well as men, at Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church, of which our much beloved instructor, Mr. Thomson, is pastor. After the inspiring morning service, the students were served with a delightful lunch by the ladies of the church, and then followed

a prayer meeting, before launching out into the work for the afternoon. Our work was to help take a census of Mount Pleasant district.

"Though a bitterly cold afternoon, the coldness did not reach our hearts, for we were happy to have the opportunity of witnessing for Christ, even if at times the receptions were as cold as the weather.

"Obedience to the Word."

"Everyone who went calling felt the presence of the Lord, and we are praying that results for eternity, as well as for time, will be the reward of the work done."

One of the evening students, Miss Bessie Warden by name, has written the following poem. We believe pastors would do well to work this into a sermon, and so to increase its usefulness by passing it on to their congregations. It is entitled, "Obedience to the Word".

"What if I say

The Bible is God's Holy Word,
Complete, inspired, without a flaw,
But let its pages stay unread
From day to day.

And fail to learn, therefrom, God's
holy law?

What if I go not there to seek
For guidance on this earthly way?
Does it matter what I say?

"What if I say

That Jesus Christ is Lord Divine,
Yet fellow pilgrims can behold
Naught of the Master's love in me.
No grace of kindly sympathy?

If I am of the Shepherd's fold,
Then shall I know the Shepherd's
voice,

And gladly make His way my choice.
We are saved by faith, yet faith is one.

With life, with daylight and the sun.
"Unless they flower in our deeds,
Dead empty husks are all the creeds;
To call Christ 'Lord',
But creeds strive not to obey,
Belies the homage that with words
I pray."

* * * *

BAPTISMS IN FORT WILLIAM.

Pastor Leander Roblin had the great joy of baptizing five adults on Sunday, February 23rd, in the Tabernacle Baptist Church of Fort William, before a congregation that filled the little church. Rev. Mr. Hunter, of the Canadian Sunday School Mission, gave the message, and at the close, four children professed to accept the Gospel invitation. "There is a fine spirit among the people, and I pray that the Lord will keep it so. God's people must be in 'one accord' if they are to have blessing."

CONVERSIONS AT WEST FORT WILLIAM.

The Tabernacle Church is on the east side of Fort William; over on the west side is the Baptist Church of which Rev.

R. J. Campbell is pastor, situated in the part of the city known as West Fort William. People in that city are finding the winter hard, because of unemployment; nevertheless, the Lord is blessing His work. Since the last Sunday in December, Pastor Campbell has had the joy of seeing eight profess conversion. For seven weeks the Pastor spoke on "Modern Development in the Light of prophecy", and nearly every Sunday evening saw response to the Gospel invitation. "Our Bible School and Young People's continue with enthusiasm and blessing." The School meeting before it, a large part of the scholars remain for the preaching service. The Pastor's morning messages are now taking the form of a series of studies in "Soul-winning". The church is carrying through a Gospel of John campaign, attempting to distribute four hundred copies of the Gospel through the neighbourhood. The copies used are the ones containing valuable helps by Dr. Horton. "Already three of these have been signed by individuals who have accepted Christ."

SOUTH ZORRA RE-OPENING.

Last week we reported the Sunday services that celebrated the re-opening of the South Zorra Baptist Church, where Rev. W. F. Mesley is the progressive pastor. Since then, we have received a copy of *The Daily Sentinel-Review*, of Woodstock-Ingersoll, for February 24th, from which we venture to quote the following: "On Monday evening more than two hundred people gathered to celebrate the re-opening of the South Zorra Baptist Church, to which extensive alterations and additions had been made. The new basement of the church was suitably seated and decorated for the occasion, and all partook of the sumptuous chicken supper provided by the Ladies' Aid. Following supper, adjournment was made to the church auditorium, where an inspiring song and testimony service was enjoyed, Howard Marshall being the leader. Rev. W. F. Mesley, pastor of the church, then took the chair, and a programme of vocal and instrumental music, and of addresses by ministers and laymen kept the gathering entertained until a late hour." More than one hundred dollars was received for a thank offering.

ON THE AIR.

The ministry of Pastor W. J. H. Brown, of Annette Street Baptist Church, Toronto, over CFRB (359 meters, 1250 kilocycles), in his Gospel services from one to one-thirty Sunday noons, has won for itself a large circle of friends. A number of the radio audience have been attending the regular services of Annette Street; indeed, the attendance of late has been the best for a very long time. Blessing upon the preached Word is also in evidence.

We hope that our readers who have radios, enjoy the powerful ministry of Dr. D. G. Barnhouse, of Philadelphia, as his fundamental messages are broadcasted over the Columbia chain of radio stations, from five-thirty to six p.m.,

each Sunday. Listeners in the vicinity of Toronto can hear Dr. Barnhouse over CFRB. This chain of stations through which the clear, biblical and evangelistic testimony travels across the continent, reaches literally millions of people. When Christ is preached, we rejoice, and will rejoice.

THE HOME-GOING OF ARTHUR RISLEY.

Mr. Arthur Risley, former student of the Toronto Baptist Seminary and pastor of the Immanuel Baptist Church, Mimico, went Home to be with the Lord on Thursday, February 20th, following a lingering illness. The funeral service, conducted by Dr. T. I. Stockley, in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, was largely attended. One of the hymns at the service, was that through which the deceased was converted at Yonge Street Mission, on the Watch-night service of 1923, the hymn that all the redeemed must love, "There is a fountain filled with blood". The other hymn sung was a favourite of Brother Risley, "Peace, the Gift of God's Love". Rev. A. Thomson gave a personal word as to the work which Mr. Risley had done for the Lord. Dr. Stockley gave the Scripture message, and in doing so, referred to the clear testimony which our brother had given to the power of the Gospel. The Dean stated his opinion that Brother Risley never allowed a person to escape him without giving a testimony to Christ, and that he therefore had done more for our Lord in six years than most do in sixty. He rests from his labours, but his works follow with him, to the land where His servants do serve Him.

FAREWELL TO PASTOR HALL.

Last week we were able to report the out-pouring of blessing upon the opening of the ministry of Pastor M. R. Hall in Westbourne Baptist Church, Calgary. Only since then, however, have we received the report of the honouring farewell given him by the Baptist congregation, to which he ministered for over seven years, in Timmins, Northern Ontario. The last Sunday evening of Brother Hall's ministry there, saw the church building crowded to capacity. The text was, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (I Peter 4:11.) The following evening, after a bountiful supper, the President of the Missionary Society of the church expressed their appreciation of the services of Mrs. Hall, in a beautiful presentation. "Mr. A. J. Grigg then read an address to Mr. and Mrs. Hall, expressing the deep regret felt in their departure from Timmins. Pastor Hall, it was pointed out, had been a faithful pastor, in visitation of his people, especially the sick and shut-ins; he was a great comfort to those in sorrow, and ever ready to lend a helping hand. A purse of two hundred dollars from members and adherents of the congregation and other friends

was then presented to Rev. and Mrs. Hall. The pastor, in reply, expressed their thankfulness and appreciation (though not knowing what the purse contained), not only for the regard that had been shown in these gifts, but also for the kindness and support received from the people throughout his ministry here."

HELPING BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Our office has received the following acknowledgment from Rev. A. A. McLeod: "I am enclosing herewith receipt for \$175.00 to hand, from the Union of Regular Baptists of Ontario and Quebec for Western Home Mission work, as carried on by the Convention of Regular Baptists of B.C.

"We are indeed grateful to the Union for this goodly fellowship in our Western work. You will be pleased to know that our B.C. Home Mission work is steadily growing. We have recently added three to our Home Mission fields, two of them in Greater Vancouver, among the Japanese, and one in the interior of the province, where the majority of the people are immigrants from European countries. There are other places that we plan to occupy as soon as we are financially able to do so."

BLESSING AT WINDSOR.

"Six more were baptized last Tuesday and nine were received into membership on Sunday. Also, five came forward in response to the invitation and a number are waiting for the next baptismal service." More of this next week.

REV. DONALD FRASER.

Rev. Donald Fraser has resigned the pastorate of the Hiawatha Baptist Church, St. Thomas. Brother Fraser was greatly used of God in assisting Pastor Robert Guthrie in evangelistic services at Courtland; and is now available for helping in evangelistic services among any of the churches who may require his help.

PASTORS' AND PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE.

A Call for Prayer and a Meeting for Organization on March 14th, in the Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church.

Sessions 10 a.m.; 2 and 7.30 p.m.

The morning will be given over to prayer and fellowship, led by the Rev. David Alexander, Waverly Rd. Baptist Church.

In the afternoon session following the opening exercises, the organization of a Toronto Pastors' and People's Conference will be considered. This will be followed by an address by Rev. C. J. Loney of Stanley Ave. Baptist Church, Hamilton.

The evening session will be opened by a season of prayer and praise led by Brother O. L. Raymer and followed by a message which will be brought to us by Doctor T. T. Shields, Jarvis St. Baptist Church.

A very hearty invitation is extended to all to attend all the sessions, morning, afternoon and evening.

"MEN OUGHT ALWAYS TO PRAY."

On Monday, March 3rd, at the invitation of the Executive Committee of the Union, the Pastors of the Toronto District met with them for a day of prayer and praise. The meeting opened at 10 a.m. in the Toronto Baptist Seminary Building, with fifteen present, while, before the day closed, twenty-one had been in attendance. Rev. David Alexander, of Waverley Road Baptist Church, opened the meeting, and later Rev. J. H. Peer, of Willowdale Baptist Church, presided; Rev. C. J. Loney, of Stanley Avenue, Hamilton, presided in the afternoon. The time was chiefly taken up with prayer, interspersed with songs of praise, followed by a few words of exhortation and encouragement from the President of the Union, Dr. Shields. At 1.30 the meeting adjourned, but at 2.30 p.m., the Pastors again came together, and the whole afternoon was given over to prayer, all taking part. The general tenor of the prayers was for greater victory in our churches and in our individual lives, against the workings of the enemy, and for revival in general. Great fervency of spirit marked the gathering and the presence of the Lord was manifestly present. The meeting broke up at five o'clock, but the result of such a prayer fellowship and intercession time may never end.

At the morning session, it was decided that each week a similar conference should be held, to which all the pastors of the Union, residing in Toronto and its suburbs, together with the Executive Committee, should be invited; and each month this meeting should take the form of a Pastor's and People's Conference, to which Christian laymen, women as

well as men, should be invited. Pastor H. W. Bowers testified to the rich blessing received from similar conferences held in Hamilton, and strongly recommended the plan to the Toronto group. Rev. Alex. Thomson, of the Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church, kindly extended an invitation for the first Pastors' and People's Conference to be held in his church on March 14th. This invitation was accepted and further announcements will be made through the pages of *The Gospel Witness*.

Reported by Rev. L. C. Whitelaw.

MICHIGAN NOTES.

By Rev. C. R. Peterson.
CURRAM.

Pastor Arthur J. Corcoran is carrying on an aggressive work at Curram. He has been on the field only a few months, but in these few months he has been faithfully building up a Scriptural work. He is doing much Bible teaching, and at the same time is leading the church on to an aggressive ministry. Especially has he met with success in the work among the young people of the town. A young people's society has been organized, enlisting the young men of the place. He writes: "My chief aim is to place the Word of God into their hearts, after first getting it into my own, and then I know we shall see God and see Him working, and less of the works of men." Bro. Corcoran expects to be ordained to the ministry in the near future.

* * * *

TRAVERSE CITY.

In the year of 1926, a group of Bible-loving people began a work here that

was organized on August 13th of that year into the People's Gospel Tabernacle. Rev. C. W. Boman, a Canadian Baptist preacher, was called, and carried on the work until early in 1928. For a number of months they were without a pastor, but early in November of last year, Pastor E. R. Beucler, of Oconomowoc, Wis., was called to take up the work. On November 26th they organized into a Regular Baptist Church, adopting the Articles of Faith of the Baptist Bible Union. The outlook is very good, and the work promises to go forward under the leadership of Brother and Sister Beucler. They plan to hold special meetings in the near future.

SHEPHERD.

At one time a Baptist Church flourished at this place. The time came when the church asked for financial help from the Michigan Baptist Convention. The then-Secretary of Missions assured the deacons and trustees that if they would deed the church property to the Convention, they would send them a pastor. It seemed the best thing to do under the circumstances. Next Sunday the people came to church to hear the new preacher, but no preacher came. None came the following Sunday. About the third week a crew of men began the work of moving the church. When the members enquired what it all meant, they were informed that the Convention had sold the property to the Roman Catholics for \$1,000, although it is said that the building was worth \$2,000 or \$3,000! Of course, this happened a number of years ago, but it is interesting as throwing light on the workings of the ecclesiastical machine.

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Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

Vol. V. No. 1.

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, Editor.

Lesson 12. March 23rd, 1930.
First Quarter.

Lesson Text: Revelation, chapter 8.

Golden Text: "And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!"—Revelation 8:13.

I. OPENING OF THE SEVENTH SEAL, (vs. 1-5).

(a) Silence in Heaven, (v. 1).

In a previous lesson we learned something of the significance of the opening of the seals. We found they were related to the cleansing and taking possession of the inheritance by the Lamb, and the opening of this last seal is especially significant in view of that which occurs under it. After it was opened, John states, "there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour". The duration of this silence does not appear to be long, and if one were at work it would pass quickly, but simply waiting in quietness it would seem a long time. This impresses us with its significance. Prior to this we read of a great thanksgiving service round the throne, and the voice of a great multitude is heard praising God. Now every voice is hushed, and not a sound is heard for the space of half an hour. This would seem to be the silence of expectancy, implying appreciation on the part of heaven's inhabitants of the significance of God's judgments and a sense of awe in anticipation thereof. It is the calm before the great storm. Note the awful nature of God's judgments and the effect they ought to have upon us now.

(b) The Angels of the Presence, (v. 2).

After the period of silence John saw "seven angels which stood before God". These evidently were angels who were specially near the throne. They were the angels of the Presence. From a comparison of other Scriptures we know there is a gradation among the angelic beings, some being known as archangels, each having specific duties to perform. Two of the latter are known to us as Gabriel, (Luke 1:19), and Michael, (Dan. 12:1). The use of such angels at any time would emphasize the importance of their mission, and their use here implies the same. To these angels are given "seven trumpets". Trumpets were used in ancient times on various occasions in connection with feasts, (Num. 10:10), in relation to the march of the Lord's host, (Num. 10:2), and in connection with His judgment upon men, (Josh. 6:16). In this case they have the last significance. Note the effect of a trumpet call in arousing attention and stirring expectation.

(c) The Angel and the censer, (vs. 3-5).

After the angels receive their trumpets "another angel came and stood at the

altar having a golden censer". Such a description implies the performance of priestly duties; the altar the antitype of the earthly article of that name, the duties performed the heavenly counterpart of those of earth. It is the picture of one assisting in the work of intercession, offering incense "with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne". Of our Lord it is said He ever liveth to make intercession for us, (Heb. 7:25), and some think He is seen here at work, but such an interpretation while it is not without some basis, is yet somewhat doubtful, in that as the Lamb our Saviour is opening the seals and this would imply His appearance in two characters at virtually the same time. The angel is to be looked upon rather as one called specially to the work of offering the incense with the prayers of all saints. These prayers are seen as coming specially before God at such a time, prayers in general no doubt, yet it may be of interest to note the petition our Lord taught His disciples to pray, when He counselled them to say, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as in heaven". (Matt. 6:10). Throughout the ages the Lord's people have been supplicating the Father for the answer to this prayer, and while in a spiritual sense in individuals, it has had a limited fulfillment, yet its real fulfillment will not take place until the Lord returns and sets up His kingdom. The time of the coming of the prayers, recorded in the chapter, before God, is just prior to the glorious revelation of our Lord. It is not out of place therefore to associate the petition and the time and to think of the certainty of the answers at that particular period. It is encouraging to remember God's attitude concerning the prayers of His people. He delights thus to be approached, (Heb. 4:16), and promises to answer, (John 16:23,24). "And the angel took the censer". The altar is not only a means of blessing, but is also associated with judgment. When the prayer, "Thy kingdom come" is answered it will mean judgment for the world, (2 Thess. 1:7-10), the unrepentant suffering the consequences of their sins. Explanation may be made of the nature of prayer, our Lord's attitude concerning it, the great possibilities enwrapped in it, and the necessity for it.

II. THE TRUMPET JUDGMENTS, (vs. 6-13).

(a) The first trumpet, (vs. 6, 7).

The judgments recorded under the trumpets are seven in number, divided as before into four and three, the former relating to the judgments in nature, the latter to those which may be looked upon as more of a supernatural character. Before the angels sounded the trumpets John says he saw them prepare "themselves to sound", that is they took up position to perform their duty, implying solemn deliberation in the carrying out of their task. "And the first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up." There are two forms of interpretation in relation to the nature

of these judgments, one the allegorical, the other the literal. It is generally good principle to accept scriptural statements in their literal capacity when the meaning made known thus gives good sense. In the verses before us if an allegorical interpretation is to be applied, it will be extremely difficult defining the meaning, and there will be differences of opinion perhaps at wide variance with each other. The literal meaning gives good sense, and there is scriptural ground for such phenomena in nature. We have but to read of the plagues of Egypt to realize that God has worked before in a similar manner, (Ex. 7:10). That which is described as taking place under this first seal is a great electrical storm, creating tremendous havoc upon the earth, although nothing is said about human life being lost.

(b) The second trumpet, (vs. 8, 9).

When the second angel sounded, "as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea, and the third part of the sea became blood. And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea and had life died: and the third part of the ships were destroyed." Moses smote the river in Egypt and turned it into blood. Here the same is done on a larger scale, possibly affecting the Mediterranean Sea. And the same is done by the fall of some heavenly body. Such a thing is within the realm of possibility according to man's present knowledge as parts of heavenly bodies whirling through space have been known to fall upon the earth.

(c) The third trumpet, (vs. 10, 11).

When this trumpet is sounded a great star burning as a lamp falls from heaven upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters. Its name is called Wormwood, and the third part of the waters became wormwood, and many men died of the waters because they were made bitter. In this there is the falling of another heavenly body upon the earth, its fall affecting the drinking water of a large part of the human family, who upon partaking of it die.

(d) The fourth trumpet, (vs. 12, 13).

Under the first three trumpets the earth had suffered, under this fourth one the heavens are affected; the sun, moon and stars being smitten so that day and night suffer in their illumination. But this is but the prelude to greater and more terrible judgments which affect man more particularly as noted in the warning of the heavenly messenger appearing probably as an eagle (R.V.). We are made very conscious by this brief record of the Almighty power of God, of the dreadful nature of sin, of the terrible time yet to come upon this earth when God will punish sin and of the necessity in the present day of sincere repentance for the same. Too little is being thought or said about future judgment and men are going on in their sin, heedless and careless who require to be warned to flee from the wrath to come. The responsibility for doing this rests upon the shoulders of the Lord's people.