

# The Gospel Witness

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

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## AUTOCRACY OR LEADERSHIP?

In all walks of life, in every department of human endeavour, a person endowed with qualities which enable him to influence others, to secure their co-operation in the prosecution of a particular piece of work, is likely to be charged by people with a passion for wearing an officer's uniform with exercising the power of an autocrat.

Such critics, however, are wanting in precision in the selection of terms. An autocrat is a self-ruler, one whose will is law, and who recognizes no constitutional responsibility to anybody outside of himself. An autocrat, in the strict sense of the word, in any realm of life, is an anachronism. A moment's reflection should be sufficient to convince anyone that it is at least improbable that all the wisdom, all the skill, all the discernment, in any given community, should reside in one person.

The jury principle illustrates the value of a judgment based upon the collective wisdom of a number of persons. On this ground, we believe in the fundamental principle of democracy. We believe in it politically. The people should have the right to choose their own government.

We believe also it should be applied to financial, industrial, and commercial, corporations. The shareholders of a company ought to have a voice in the election of their directors, so that through their directors they may appoint someone to manage their affairs.

We believe also in the application of the principle to religious organizations. We do not believe in any papal or hierarchical form of government. It is of the very essence of democracy that it confers upon the people the right to choose competent directors, or governors, as the case may be. But political democracy, while it gives every man the franchise, does not mean that any and every uneducated voter is competent to be prime minister, or to advise him in the discharge of his duty. The fact that a man has a few hundred, or a few thousand, dollars, as the case may be, invested in bank stock, does not make him a banker, nor render him competent to direct the affairs of a great financial institution.

The same is true in religious matters. For example: in the membership of a church, the fact that every member of the organization is accorded the right to vote surely was never intended to mean that any member of the organiza-

tion, by virtue of the fact of his membership, is necessarily qualified successfully to direct the affairs of the whole organization. That would be democracy gone mad.

There is a place in all human affairs for legitimate leadership, and for the exercise of technical expertness. Were we fortunate enough to have money invested in some large financial affair we should be happy to know that the management of the organization was in the hands of an expert autocrat, or an autocratic expert, whose "No" would mean "no", and whose "Yes" would mean "yes".

Of course, we should be glad to be assured that the judgment of the head of the bank, or other financial institution, was approved by the directors. But were we to discover that a board of directors, many of them being far from expert financiers, had disregarded the advice of the head, and had invested the funds of the institution in ways which he regarded as unsafe, we should be disposed discreetly to withdraw what interests we had in the institution, and transfer them elsewhere.

Were we unfortunate enough to find it necessary to be stretched upon an operating-table for a surgical operation, we should take the anaesthetic with greater confidence if we had the assurance that the lancet and other surgical instruments to be employed in the operation were to be handled by a surgical autocrat. In fact, we would far rather be operated on by one surgeon than by a committee any time.

This Editor is very fond of ocean travel—in fact, he could live very happily on the sea. But he would rather be *on* it than *under* it; and therefore when he walks up the gang-plank to board an ocean liner, he is always interested in the gold-braided autocrat on the bridge. And even though there were a hundred stockholders in the steamship company sailing as passengers, we should be disposed to enter the most vigorous protest against their financial interest being permitted to displace the captain in favour of a stockholders' committee. Surely simple common sense suggests that any ocean-going ship must be autocratically and not democratically controlled.

When we go riding in a motor-car, if we sit in the back seat—or anywhere else—we prefer to have an autocrat at the wheel; and, indeed, were we requested to drive

some other man's car, while the wheel was in our hands, and we were responsible for the safety of those who rode with us, we should insist upon being an absolute autocrat while driving.

The same principle applies when one travels by train. It is sheer nonsense to assert that the dear old lady—or young lady either—who owns a few shares of the railroad company's stock, should be permitted to tell the engineer how to drive his engine. It is nonsense to insist that the man with a pick and shovel, on the road-bed, is just as competent to manage the road as the president of the company.

In fact, every institution or organization which exists to get things done, is always on the lookout for someone who is competent to "dominate" the organization. When a university looks for a president, it wants a man who is big enough to "dominate" it. When a political party looks for a leader, it seeks for a man possessed of such qualities that he will be head and shoulders above all others, and will so completely "dominate" the party that they will all follow him to victory. When any sort of business concern, be it industrial, commercial, or financial, looks for a man who will so order the company's affairs as to enable it to pay dividends to its shareholders, it invariably looks for a man who is big enough to "dominate" it.

That does not mean, of course, that he is an irresponsible autocrat: he is responsible to the people who have appointed him, and he is under obligation to make a success of the enterprise which has been committed to his charge.

In the Great War millions of soldiers were engaged. Among them, in the rank and file, there were men of splendid courage, who counted not their lives dear unto themselves; and even in the humblest ranks there were men of potential military genius who, given time and experience, might have risen to be generals and field-marshal.

The various armies of the Allied Powers looked on life from differing points of view. The genius of each form of civilization was separate and distinct from all others. The idiom of their language was distinctively their own. They wore different uniforms. They used weapons of different sorts, and guns of many calibers. But they all had one object: they wanted to win the war. And in order to win it, they had to find someone whose genius was equal to the emergency, and who, judged by all military standards, was competent to "dominate" all the armies of the Allies.

But Marshal Foch was not an irresponsible autocrat. He was an autocrat in respect to the armies under him, but he was responsible to the governments which had commissioned him as generalissimo of all the Allied Forces.

Apparently it is only in the religious realm that every Tom, Dick, and Harry, is to be considered competent to fulfil duties which only experts can discharge. We do not believe the pastor of a church should ever be—or attempt to be—a despot, arbitrarily insisting upon this or that. But we do believe that he ought to be a qualified leader, that his training and experience should render his judgment superior to that of the average church member, or even of deacons who have had less experience and training than he.

Someone remarked to us recently that the church is the only institution which penalizes a man for doing that for which, in any other sphere of life, he would be rewarded. If a political leader leads his party to success, forms a

government, and becomes prime minister, he is praised as a successful man. If some man, with a genius for finance, undertakes the rehabilitation of declining business organizations, and brings them to such a state of efficiency as to make them paying concerns, he is usually rewarded by the thanks of the shareholders—and not infrequently by something more substantial than thanks.

So of the captain of the ship, the general of the army. But if a man is called to religious leadership as was Moses, as is any pastor of a church, and he succeeds in leading the organization out into a large place, instead of being commended for his ability and zeal, he is usually styled an "autocrat"; and even Aaron and Miriam complain that he takes too much upon himself. That he is wholly misunderstood in nine cases out of ten is suggested by the historical incident that when certain people, zealous for Moses' preeminence, informed him of some who prophesied, though not unwilling to continue to bear the burden, he reveals a weariness of his position as leader, and a longing to share its responsibilities with others, when he says, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon each of them."

A friend told us recently of a minister of apparently not very large calibre, who was expressing his discontent. Our friend said to him, "Well, what is the matter with you boys? What are you grumbling about?" To which this minister replied, "The whole trouble is that Mr. So-and-So dominates everything." And our shrewd informant replied, "That is too bad! I would not stand that if I were you. Why not dominate everything yourself!"

Ah, there is the rub. It is the dog-in-the-manger spirit. It is usually incompetency that growls at ability, and weakness that grumbles at another man's strength. We repeat what we said at the outset: there is no proper place in any department of modern life for the irresponsible autocrat. But there never was greater need for thoroughly-trained, fully-developed, and abundantly competent leaders of men.

When the people of the United States elect a President they are free to vote for such candidates as have been nominated—or not to vote at all. But when the President is elected as President, and is the virtual ruler of that nation, there are certain prerogatives which belong to his office, while he shares the general government of the country with the elected representatives of the people.

The same is true in principle of our methods of election in Canada and in Britain. We elect whom we will to govern us, but, having elected him or them, they become our rulers.

Thus a religious democracy, like a Baptist church, has the right, the sovereign right, to choose its own pastor; but when he has become pastor, by every analogy, and by every sound principle of government, as well as by the plain teaching of Scripture, he is the overseer of the flock, the chief officer of the organization. This, of course, does not mean that to dress a man up in a captain's uniform will make him a skilled navigator. It does not mean that a young fellow, fresh from college, without practical experience, who is appointed pastor of a church, has better judgment, and is more competent to direct the affairs of the church than some of his fellow-officers, the deacons of the church, who perhaps have had more years of Christian experience than the young pastor has had of life. Still he should be esteemed very highly in love for his works' sake.

It should be recognized that, officially, he is the overseer of the church. Wise and spiritual church officers will pay good heed to his counsels; and, so far as is possible, will follow his leadership, tactfully advising where they feel his judgment to be wrong, and recognizing that as he has been intellectually trained at college, so now he is to be experimentally trained in managing the affairs of a church. But when that good man has had ten, twenty, thirty, or more years of service, when he has piloted his ship through throngs of icebergs, and has so navigated his craft that she has weathered every storm that has broken upon it; when to his initial training as a minister he has added many years of daily experience in managing the affairs of a church, only people who are utterly stupid will insist that such a pastor's judgment should be superseded by the caprice of some little group of incompetents whose guiding principle seems ever to be, "Which of us shall be greatest?"

Let us get God's work done. Let us thank God for every man whom He has put in the church who gives evidence of being specially gifted of the Holy Ghost for the discharge of the functions of his particular office. Let us recognize that wise, strong, courageous, leadership is the crying need of the Christian church; and if we have no ability to be a general, a colonel, or even a captain, let us thank God for the humblest place in the ranks of the army of the Lord, and esteem and obey such as are over us in the Lord for their works' sake.

### MORAL COURAGE.

*An Editorial from The Montreal Gazette.*

During the past week some two hundred thousand people in Montreal turned out for the express purpose of paying their meed of tribute to the name of John the Baptist. The event itself is significant. It reveals the heartening fact that sooner or later every good man comes into his own. Time reverses our human judgments. The moral element steadily and surely wins its way. The thought that underlies every genuine dramatic production is that a sovereign power is at work in the universe whereby amid all the stir and tumult of human affairs, in the long run justice and righteousness must needs prevail. This has been the message of all true prophets and poets. Upon this high persuasion they have adventured their lives. We come to appreciate the record of those valiant souls who have deliberately chosen the harder task rather than the line of least resistance, and cherishing some lofty purpose in life have in loyalty to the voice of conscience bravely met all the risks and hazards of untoward circumstance, so that they might play a manly part in human affairs and further the interests of the Kingdom of God. And of devotion to the highest standards of truth, righteousness and duty, the career of John the Baptist affords a typical example.

The age in which John the Baptist lived was, in many respects, similar to our own. It was a time of deep and universal depression. The bright period of the Augustan era had passed. Business was paralyzed. Bankruptcy spread far and near. The cynics were much in evidence. They urged that a reign of terror must come upon the earth. They argued that the local gods had become discredited and that the old-time ideal of the "Pax Romana", just at the point at which it had reached the widest cycle of political

dominion, had tumbled into vice and corruption such as utterly frustrated its own ostensible ends and degenerated into a fearful despotism. Religion had also lost its ancient hold upon all classes of the people, including the priests, who attended upon the services of the temple, and the rabbis, who were supposed to be the teachers of the masses and interpreters of the law. For the most part the religious system of the time had become a formal and hackneyed tradition, smothered in puerile technicalities and, void of enthusiasm or distinctive teachings, was made subservient to the vicious machinations of Herodian expediency and current politics. Upon that world a dread silence of foreboding and a secret loathing fell.

It was under such world circumstances that John the Baptist began his work. He had been blessed by a sound religious home training. He knew that home influence which, when employed in the formation of childhood character, is worth more than all other agencies and institutes put together. His further education was completed in the desert. John would fain look straightly at the issues of life. He communed with his own soul. The ideas he had imbibed were by the labour of serious thought and profound meditation; thoroughly mastered and digested and considered in relation to the urgent needs of the critical hour when he must perforce speak out the convictions that had taken firm root within his soul. John the Baptist had a mind of his own. Not indeed the conceited temper which airily flouts religion as banal superstition of the ancients, or tends to the sophistical pretence that all religious notions are simply matters of personal taste or opinion. The vigour and independence of his mind are shown by the way in which he brings into clear light and self-utterance those basic ethical truths which have the sanction of the widest possible experience and which meet the approval of conscience, that inner voice of God within the soul. Had his mind been heaped up with rabbinical formulas merely, and with the current opinions of disillusioned sophists moving shrewdly and playing the intellectual game of make-believe, then the dearth and the silence of the desert places might well have swallowed him up or have become the emblem of a life vacantly spent in analysing and peddling all sorts of vague notions, without energizing any one of them by the force of a firm and strong conviction. Of what special value can it be to any of us to read the news of the world each morning, unless some clear-cut and definite expression of a cherished truth worth thinking about, worth the backing of our talents, and worth fighting for in the world, is forthcoming as our personal contribution to the welfare and progress of humanity?

John the Baptist dared to be himself. This does not mean he sought for notoriety or desired to pose as an eccentric, and, still less, that he could be oblivious to the debt he owed to others, or the weight of authority that belongs to those truths to which the experience and common sense of mankind have given a part and place in the development of the ethical interests of human history. But it does mean that in history it often happens that conscience and custom are made at odds with each other. Expediency rather than truth

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# The Jarvis Street Pulpit

## "ONLY AN ARMOUR-BEARER."

A Sermon by the Pastor.

(Stenographically Reported.)

"And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armour-bearer, and said, Come up to us, and we will shew you a thing. And Jonathan said unto his armour-bearer, Come up after me: for the Lord hath delivered them into the hand of Israel.

"And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armour-bearer after him: and they fell before Jonathan; and his armour-bearer slew after him.

"And the first slaughter, which Jonathan and his armour-bearer made was about twenty men, within as it were an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow."—I Samuel, 14:12-14.

The period of history to which our text refers belonged to the early years of the reign of Saul. It was a time when Israel's prestige had greatly declined. The Philistines, their natural enemies, seemed to be having everything their own way. Israel, by their enemies, was held in utter contempt. "Israel also was had in abomination," the Scripture says, "with the Philistines." And because they were so regarded by their enemies, the people of God had themselves, in some measure, lost their self-respect. "The Philistines gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the sea shore in multitude." The people of Israel were filled with fear; and they began to scatter to various hiding places. They hid themselves "in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits. And some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead," until there were only six hundred men left with Saul, and they "followed him trembling".

The Philistines had been very shrewd: they had destroyed in Israel all the places where arms and implements of agriculture might be made. "There was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel." They were dependent upon the Philistines for their implements of war. And the devil is just as shrewd to-day as he was then! He seeks ever to take possession of those places which exist for the sharpening of implements of spiritual warfare. That is why he has sought to establish himself in our educational institutions; to take complete possession, so far as he possibly can, in order that there might be no smith in Israel, and that the church of Christ should be without facilities for the spiritual warfare to which she is called.

There is an interesting and instructive analogy between the position of affairs in the period to which our text refers, and the condition of affairs religiously to-day. The truth is, the Philistines are having it very much their own way. I would avoid the sounding of any pessimistic note; but we have to face the facts of the case, and recognize the simple truth, that the spiritual Israel of to-day is not winning very many victories—moral victories. I know organizations have been multiplied; I know that resolutions looking to

the union of all the elements of the Christian church have been passed; I am quite aware that there are a great many people who point to the material progress the world is making as an evidence of its general improvement. Nevertheless, there are not many actually leaving the service of the Philistine king, and turning whole-heartedly to the service of Christ. Indeed, in many quarters you will find groups of Christian people who say, "Well, these are general conditions. The Philistines are in the ascendancy; the powers that are against us are so great—what shall we do?" I remember speaking to a certain professor some three years ago—or at least he came to speak to me—full of fear lest something disturbing should occur. But I said, "Doctor, this thing is wrong. We believe, do we not, that the Bible is the Word of God? Ought we not firmly to take our stand on this matter?" "O, but," said he, "it is a world condition: the tides are running everywhere; and what are we going to do about it?" It was exactly the spirit that possessed the host of Israel on this occasion. There was "a very great trembling," and, as then, there are those who now "hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks," instead of valiantly fighting for the truth. They will avail themselves of any excuse to justify their retiring from the front-line trenches.

Now I want to show you, if I can, this morning, how, amid conditions like that, God wrought a great victory, and inspired His own people; so that the trembling of the hosts of Israel was transferred to the armies of the Philistines. And before the day was done it was the Philistines, and not the Israelites, who were filled with fear.

These historical chapters of God's Book are as much inspired by the Holy Spirit as any portion of Scripture. We have here not merely the chronicles of certain events; we have a philosophy of history, written from the divine standpoint; showing how God brings things to pass. And if we have the spiritual perception given us by the Holy Spirit to look beneath the mere letter, to observe the operation of those principles which are of God and which are eternal, we shall see that, just as God wrought in that ancient day, He works to-day to accomplish His purposes, and to

bring to pass His ancient counsel. Let me come, then, to an exposition of the text.

## I.

I want to begin with the observation that IN THE DARKEST DAYS THERE IS ALWAYS ONE WHO DOES NOT SHARE THE GENERAL FEAR. Although the six hundred men followed Saul tremblingly, the true captain of the Lord's host, Jonathan, was unafraid. God had inspired in him a true confidence; and he was absolutely sure that the victory at last would rest with the Lord.

And you will remember how confidently our Jonathan always spoke of the future of His Kingdom. If you study the utterances of our Lord, you will never discover one doubtful word. He always spoke as One Who was able to see the end from the beginning, and Who was absolutely sure that in the end of the day He would be King. He said, "And upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Jesus was absolutely certain that the Philistines would be utterly put to rout, and that victory would rest with the banners of the Lord. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." Hallelujah!

I suppose I have proclaimed this truth to you before; I preach it again; I expect to keep on preaching it again and again—to emphasize that great truth that the establishment of the kingdom of God, the universal reign of Jesus, the ultimate coronation of Jesus of Nazareth, of the King of kings and Lord of lords, is a foregone conclusion; and however the people of Israel may tremble; and whatever men may say about the limitation of Jesus; the truth is, He knows no limitations. When He gave to us His great commission, when He laid His commands upon His church, He prefaced that great commission with an assurance of power: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore—that is where the emphasis should be—Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever—not what the councils have decreed; not what the alleged "scholars" think is reliable; not what the critics approve of—"teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Can you have anything more comprehensive than that? I say, therefore, that our Jonathan is sure of victory.

## II.

Let me now try to show you HOW HE ACCOMPLISHES HIS PURPOSE: In this day of trembling, Jonathan called one man into partnership with himself. Just look at the picture! The Hebrews, filled with fear, hurry across the Jordan—some of them; others resort to all kinds of hiding-places, until Saul has only six hundred men with him—and even the six hundred are for the most part unarmed, because the Philistines have robbed them of their implements of war; and have made it impossible for them to provide others. But it is significantly said that Jonathan was armed.

Blessed be God! You can never take the sword from our Jonathan! All the hosts of Philistia can never take from Him "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." And if all the hosts of Israel

are stripped of their armour, and robbed of every weapon of offensive warfare, it still remains true that the Captain of the hosts of the Lord is fully equipped for the accomplishment of His purposes.

But observe: Jonathan did not appoint a committee; he did not go through the hosts to see if he could inspire a few of them with courage; he did not spend his time on the army as a whole; but he said to his armour-bearer, "Come up after me—just follow me, never mind what other people do: whatever I do, you do; wherever I go, you go; when I command you, obey; but follow me, and we will go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the Lord will work with us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few. Two men with God are invincible; and even these tens of thousands of fully-armed Philistines will run before us, if God be with us. Come up after me."

My brethren, that is invariably God's way. Whenever I read of the great councils of the Church, whenever I read of the meeting of committees and boards, and these elaborate discussions on ways and means of organizing spiritual success, I put it down beside God's word, and I say, "That is seldom God's way of doing His business." Look! There is a nation in slavery; and God would deliver them out of the house of bondage. What is His way? He lays His hand upon one man: He commissions him to go and stand before Pharaoh. And without any organization behind him; without any assurance that he will have even the co-operation of the people whom he desires to save; he is to go and stand before Pharaoh and say, "Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go that they may serve me." That was all he had; and yet God used him to deliver the people out of the house of bondage.

In the days of Gideon—and they were days of trembling—God found a man who was threshing wheat, who probably had never thought of fighting. He was no soldier; he had no experience of warfare; and when the angel came to him he was threshing wheat "to hide it from the Midianites." But the angel of the Lord came to him and said, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." And the Lord clothed Himself with Gideon, and made him just what he described him as being.

The same was true in the days of Samson. Look again to the time when David's big brothers had gone up to the camp; and all that great army, with Saul at their head, were able to accomplish nothing against the Philistines; indeed they feared even to set the battle in array. But God clothed Himself with the ruddy youth called David, and hurled him like a thunder-bolt against the hosts of Philistia, until they were utterly put to rout.

And that is how spiritual victories are won. That is how revivals come. We sit down sometimes and say, "If we could only get everybody to do things; if only we could get everybody to work; then we should accomplish wonders." But revivals invariably begin by some one individual responding to God's call. The fire must start somewhere—why should it not start with you? Why should it not start with me?

It may be there is someone here this morning from some other church, as is not at all unusual; and you have come in here just to pay us a visit. And if I were

to talk with you, perhaps you would say: "Well, sir, I am sorry to admit it, but our prayer-meetings have so declined that really we have ceased to be a praying church. It seems to me that the church to which I belong is almost destitute of spiritual life. We have plenty of organizations; our activities are continually multiplying, but there are no conversions; there is very little preaching of the doctrines of grace; and I do not quite know what I ought to do. If only I could get the officers of the church to begin to pray; if I could organize some sort of spiritual movement in the church—I should have hope." My friend, it may be that God the Holy Spirit is just calling you to be His torch-bearer to set that place on fire. It has to start somewhere. It may start in the pulpit—it ought to start in the pulpit—but God will find somewhere a man for His purpose; and there is no reason why He should not find you.

I do not know in what particular sphere you move; but I want to emphasize the importance of this consideration, that it is evermore God's way to find a man—not an organization, but a man—through whom He can work. In the beginning when He had created the heaven and the earth; when He had flung into space the myriad stars; when He had carpeted the earth with flowers; when He had filled it with animal life and prepared it for human habitation; then contemplating it all, "God saw that it was good." But as the crown of it all, He said deliberately, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Man was God's greatest work, as he has ever since been His favourite instrument.

And that is still God's plan, to find a man through whom He can express Himself, through whom He can exercise His power for the accomplishment of His purposes. Therefore, if you are all alone, my friend, with nobody to help you; if you are only an armour-bearer—just one who has tried simply to follow Jesus; then hear our Jonathan's call: "Come up after me; follow me; do what I tell you to do; be a 'burning and a shining light' for me. Yield yourself unto Me as one who is alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto Me." Thus God wrought in the days of Jonathan and his armour-bearer; and thus He subdues His enemies and extends the boundaries of His dominion to-day.

### III.

The only passage to the hosts of the Philistines on this occasion was a passage between two sharp rocks. With what minuteness does the historian record the difficulties which faced Jonathan! There was a sharp rock to the north, and another to the south; and there was a very narrow passage so that Jonathan and his armour-bearer had to climb up upon their hands as well as their feet.

It is often very difficult to get at the Philistines, I grant you. They manage to establish themselves in the hills; they have a way of getting into official positions; they have a way of getting their hands upon the machinery of government, whether it be in the nation, or in the church, or in the larger denominational circles. You will always find that the Philistines are established in the hills; and the only way is between two sharp rocks. There is somebody here this morning who says: "Sir, it looks a very steep

climb to me. You do not know the church to which I belong; but if you did, I think you would admit that there is just about one path, and that involves a great deal of climbing and courage to get at the enemy." It always does. "When the strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace."

I do not know what special work the Lord may have called you to do; but when the Greater than Jonathan calls you to His side, and points out the garrison in the distance, I am sure in your particular situation you will say: "Well, if I could only get past that rock, if I could only get through that narrow passage, I should then hope for victory; but the difficulties are so great that it seems almost impossible that I should accomplish anything." But let me point out to you that that narrow passage which made the difficulty for Jonathan, made the difficulty for the Philistines too. It is forever true "that all things work together for good to them that love God"; and the thing which Jonathan naturally might have feared the most was the very thing that turned out for his salvation: for where there is room for only one Israelite, there is room for only one Philistine; and an Israelite is a match for a Philistine every time.

Napoleon would have loved to plan a battle after that fashion; for it was Napoleon's principle always to defeat the enemy in detail. He planned never to meet the whole army of the enemy at once, but just a part of it, and he would smash that; and then another part, and he would smash them; thus he endeavoured to destroy the army in detail—a piece at a time.

And here there are only two men against tens of thousands of the Philistines! And as God would have it, He allowed the Philistines to establish themselves where they thought they were perfectly secure—and it was the most dangerous place in the world. If you will give the devil rope enough he will hang himself every time. Considering his long experience, he is a bit of a fool. He is always digging pits for himself; always inspiring the Hamans to build gallows on which to hang Mordecais—and they never get hanged; it is always Haman who gets hanged instead. Goliath supplies his youthful conqueror with a sword to cut his head off.

Let us now see how Jonathan found his great opportunity in his great difficulty; for it is always so. And when you have surveyed your situation, be it in a Sunday School class or somewhere else, mark the most difficult spot in the whole field, for there is the place where you will find your greatest opportunity. For instance, some teacher says, "I should contemplate meeting my class next Sunday with the greatest delight if it were not for one boy, or if it were not for one girl." Ah! but the passage to that boy's heart is the passage between these two sharp rocks. You get that boy, and you have the class; win that girl, and, by the grace of God, they will all be saved. Wherever you find great difficulties there is your opportunity. You see my principle? The Philistines depended, in David's day, upon the giant Goliath; and they sat down comfortably behind him. "We are secure; nothing will happen. Nobody will dare to accept his challenge." And it turned out that the giant, whom they looked upon as their champion to lead them to victory, was the cause of their utter defeat.

Let us therefore believe that the Lord knows how to plan His campaign; and that nothing happens that is a surprise to Him. And in whatever part of the field of battle we are called to serve, there is always a path from there to the garrison of the Philistines; and if we follow our Jonathan, He will find the way.

#### IV.

I would remind you further, that Jonathan—even Jonathan—and his armour-bearer, WERE HELD IN GREAT CONTEMPT BY THE PHILISTINES. They despised them in their hearts. But Jonathan and his armour-bearer discovered themselves to the Philistines. I rather like that word where Jonathan said to his armour-bearer, "Behold, we will pass over unto these men, and we will discover ourselves unto them." As though he had said, "We will let them know that we have arrived; and we will hear what they have to say about it."

There are some people who do not want to discover themselves to the enemy. I have been engaged in a little warfare myself at times, in the name of the Lord; and I have had letters from valiant soldiers of the cross who desired to express their sympathy with me; and to assure me that they were praying for me; and that they wished me well; and hoped for success. And then they marked their letter, "Strictly confidential," and said, "Please do not mention my name." That is the way a lot of people like to fight. "O yes, I am with you; but then I do not want anybody to know it. I am just going to wait to see how the battle turns before I discover myself to the Philistines."

Well, if you want to be with those who come out of the caves, and the rocks, and other hiding-places, when the battle is turned; if that is the limit of your courage, so be it; but give me the man who is not afraid to discover himself to the Philistines, and boldly to avow his allegiance to the truth; and say, like Luther, "Here I stand: I can do no other."

And when they so discovered themselves, the Philistines said, "Behold the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves." Look at the crowd of Philistines pointing at Jonathan and his armour-bearer! How they sneer at their temerity! "And so you have dared to show yourselves at last? We thought we had frightened you out of your wits. You have been hiding a long time; but at last you have mustered courage to show yourselves out of the trenches. Come up to us, and we will show you a thing." Now Jonathan had said in effect to his armour-bearer, "If they challenge us; if they bid us come; if they treat us with contempt; if they sneer at us; that shall be a sign to us that the Lord has delivered them into our hands." And when the mocking Philistines said, "Come up to us, and we will show you a thing," Jonathan said, "The Lord hath delivered them into the hand of Israel." "Come to me," said the giant, "and I will give thy flesh to the fowls of the air; I will invite the beasts of prey to a banquet. Come along, little David."

That is always the attitude of Philistia. But "contemptible armies" are usually somewhat formidable. Hear the word of the Lord: "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." As you discover yourselves to the Philistines, you will be sure to meet with just such treatment. But let that be a sign unto you that

destruction and a fall for the proud and haughty are imminent.

#### V.

Thus Jonathan and his armour-bearer went up against the enemy; and in that narrow place we read that "Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armour-bearer after him: and they fell before Jonathan; and his armour-bearer slew after him." What Jonathan did, the armour-bearer did. And where did they fight? Just a narrow place "within, as it were, a half-acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow." That is where the first slaughter occurred—in a very little place, within an half-acre of land. But somebody here says: "I wish, sir, that I had a large sphere of service; then I believe I could accomplish something." But remember, Jonathan was not above labouring for the Lord in "an half-acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow." I wonder if there is some ministerial student here who says, "I am looking forward to the day when I shall have my opportunity." You have your opportunity now; and if you cannot do anything in an half-acre of land, I am sure you cannot do anything in a ten-acre field. I told you this morning, when making the announcements, about that young girl from the North, who said to me in the office there, six months ago, with tears running down her cheeks, "I am going home, where I shall have no religious privileges at all." I told her that she would have the Lord to help her. But she said there was no church near, no Christians to stand by her side, not even in her own family. Yet in her own home she found her opportunity, and by simply gathering in the neighbours, and reading the sermon in our own church paper, THE GOSPEL WITNESS, she led her own family, her mother, two sisters, and a brother, to Christ; and they have been baptized. That is where you will find your opportunity—in an half-acre of land.

Let us not despise the day of small things. Great fires have to begin somewhere. I suppose great destructive fires in the north begin in a small way, which some of these little children here could extinguish if they were on hand. But what great destruction is wrought! O that the Fire of the Lord might spread and burn out the evil! But it has to begin somewhere. Shall it be kindled in you?

#### VI.

And then when they saw what Jonathan and his armour-bearer had accomplished, "there was trembling in the host, in the field, and among all the people: the garrison, and the spoilers, they also trembled, and the earth quaked: so it was a very great trembling."

The Philistines are not very courageous. The man who has truth on his side can always afford to face those who have not. We need never be afraid of the hosts of darkness. We have only to turn the light upon them. I remember hearing a great reformer say some years ago, when speaking of his conflict with evil: "You go to a hillside in the spring-time and find a big, flat stone. The sun is shining brightly upon the hillside; and you lift the corner of the stone so that the light shines in; and then you will see the bugs run—run for cover—afraid of the light." And he said, "That is my business: just to turn in the light, and make the bugs run." Well, it was a homely way of putting it; but evil is always afraid of the light.

Judas came at night and "sought how he might conveniently betray him." Judas always comes at night. He always does his diabolical business when the sun is down,

and in the darkness. But the children of light, who are clad in the armour of light, who have never had to be afraid, always have the advantage over the Philistines; and if only we go forth in the name of the Lord, there will be a great trembling among the hosts of the Philistines. Soldiers clad in armour of light are invulnerable and invincible.

All this had been done, as far as Jonathan and his armour-bearer were concerned, without Saul's knowing anything about it. It had not got into the papers! Even had there been newspapers as enterprising as some Toronto papers you would not have seen a photograph in the paper saying, "This is Jonathan and his armour-bearer; and these two are going to do great things." But the watchmen of Saul were looking out over the field of battle; and they saw the Philistines begin to melt away. "Then said Saul unto the people that were with him, Number now, and see who is gone from us." He had to have a roll-call to discover who had done the fighting, and when they had called the roll there were only two absent, Jonathan and his armour-bearer—so quietly had they initiated and carried through this great and victorious enterprise.

Let us therefore not despise the work that is done quietly in the name of the Lord, because God will bring it to light in due time. Neither let us be discouraged if no one cheers us on the way to the battle. God has his watchmen. He will call the roll, and He will judge by whose faithfulness victory has been won.

And now I must hasten to tell you that there were some Hebrews—and they were real Hebrews—who had Hebrew blood in their veins; but who, when they saw how things were going in Israel, had said, "It may be a little more comfortable with the Philistines." So they said good-bye to Saul; and they were found in the camp of the Philistines. Have you ever seen them? There are some professing Christians who have about as much courage as little white mice; in the day of trouble they run to the place that is most comfortable—even though it be into the land of the Philistines. That is one of the saddest features of present-day religious life. There are so many who are apparently the Lord's own, who privately mourn the Philistine ascendancy, who declare that in their hearts they are Israelites indeed; but who seem to have lost faith in the word which promises spiritual victory to Israel; who seem to fear that revealed truth has no power to prevail against Philistine unbelief; and who, therefore, when the Philistine braggart insolently flings his challenge of "assured results" in the face of Israel, forthwith surrender and go over to the enemy.

But Jonathan's victory rallied all ranks to the standard of the king. The one-time "trembling" soldiers became terrible in their impetuous pursuit of the fleeing foe. "Moreover, the Hebrews that were with the Philistines before that time, which went up with them into the camp from all the country round about, even they also turned to be with the Israelites that were with Saul and Jonathan. Likewise, all the men of Israel which had hid themselves in Mount Ephraim, when they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the battle. So the Lord saved Israel that day."

And He did it, as He always does it, through the obedience of one man! Will you be that man? Can you so trust our Jonathan as to obey Him implicitly and follow Him utterly? Do you know Him well enough to be absolutely sure that He never leads His people to defeat?

Are you ready to stake all—your worldly goods, your reputation, your prospects in life, everything, upon one mighty venture of faith, and, following after Him, and alone with Him, between your particular Bozez and Seneh, either die or conquer with Him?

If so, you will not only have victory, but you will soon have much company. You must remember there was a reason for the apparent cowardice of so many Israelites, "There was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel." And you can scarcely blame a man for not fighting when he has no sword. And a few years of modern teaching has served to leave the church almost defenceless against the attacks of the enemy. Men who know little of the Bible themselves will believe whatever others tell them about it.

But let us follow Jonathan. Let us pray for victory. Let us so obey the voice of the Spirit that the Lord can save Israel through us, and multitudes will follow to help "mop up" the enemy.

"Thrice blest is he to whom is given  
The instinct that can tell  
That God is on the field when He  
Is almost invisible."

### MORAL COURAGE.

(Continued from Page 3)

is proclaimed as the uppermost motive of behaviour. Religious ideals are looked upon as fantastic, perhaps, or mockingly out of reach, or, again, as militating against the chances of worldly success, and not without some hint that, in the lives of the vast majority of people who pay deference to the traditions and services of the Christian Church, the maxim of safety first holds sway.

It is not easy to resist such plausible solicitations as these. The day of the thumbscrew and the faggot has passed, let us hope forever. But the silent pressure of public opinion and the subtle influence wielded by the consensus of judgment within the particular section of human society in which our lot is cast, has an enormous influence upon us, and betimes threatens to override our better judgment. It takes moral courage to be true to the bidding of conscience when the crowd is all the other way. It takes courage to be able to stand alone in defence of a cause which provokes the sneers of the sceptic and is about at the same stage as when the earliest disciples of Christianity were called upon to proclaim the story of the Cross.

It takes very much courage to persevere in what we honestly deem right and just, when one effort after another seems to go down in failure and defeat. It may be that the greatest test of human courage is that which comes when we have to choose whether we prefer the prize mark of a virtuous life above such distinctions and emoluments as the world can bestow. That severe challenge lies at the very core of our Lord's own teaching. Yet the greatest seers and leaders of our race have been those who have never higgled and never hesitated to obey the voice of conscience, whether it "bring peace or crown of thorns." They are the kings of the ages and the salt of the earth.



## THE GREATEST FIGHT IN THE WORLD.

By C. H. SPURGEON.

(Excerpt from Spurgeon's last great Conference address. Though delivered about forty years ago, the principles it discusses apply to our spiritual warfare today. We especially commend this excerpt to young ministers.—Ed. G.W.).

We are resolved, then, to use more fully than ever what God has provided for us in this Book, for *we are sure of its inspiration*. Let me say that over again. WE ARE SURE OF ITS INSPIRATION. You will notice that attacks are frequently made as against *verbal* inspiration. The form chosen is a mere pretext. Verbal inspiration is the verbal form of the assault, but the attack is really aimed at inspiration itself. You will not read far in the essay before you will find that the gentleman who started with contesting a theory of inspiration which none of us ever held, winds up by showing his hand, and that hand wages war with inspiration itself. There is the true point. We care little for any theory of inspiration: in fact, we have none. To us the plenary verbal inspiration of Holy Scripture is fact, and not hypothesis. It is a pity to theorize upon a subject which is deeply mysterious, and makes a demand upon faith rather than fancy. Believe in the inspiration of Scripture, and believe it in the most intense sense. You will not believe in a truer and fuller inspiration than really exists. No one is likely to err in that direction, even if error be possible. If you adopt theories which pare off a portion here, and deny authority to a passage there, you will at last have no inspiration left, worthy of the name.

*If this book be not infallible, where shall we find infallibility?* We have given up the Pope, for he has blundered often and terribly; but we shall not set up instead of him a horde of little popelings fresh from college. Are these correctors of Scripture infallible? Is it certain that our Bibles are not right, but that the critics must be so? The old silver is to be depreciated; but the German silver, which is put in its place, is to be taken at the value of gold. Striplings fresh from reading the last new novel correct the notions of their fathers, who were men of weight and character. Doctrines which produced the godliest generation that ever lived on the face of the earth are scouted as sheer folly. Nothing is so obnoxious to these creatures as that which has the smell of Puritanism upon it. Every little man's nose goes up celestially at the very sound of the word "Puritan"; though if the Puritans were here again, they would not dare to treat them thus cavalierly; for if Puritans did fight, they were soon known as Ironsides, and their leader could hardly be called a fool, even by those who stigmatized him as a "tyrant." Cromwell, and they that were with him, were not all weak-minded persons—surely? Strange that these are lauded to the skies by the very men who deride their true successors, believers in the same faith. But where shall infallibility be found? "The depth saith, It is not in me"; yet those who have no depth at all would have us imagine that it is in them; or else by perpetual change they hope to hit upon it. Are we to believe that infallibility is with learned men? Now, Farmer Smith, when you have read your Bible, and have enjoyed its precious promises, you will have, to-morrow morning, to go down the street to ask the scholarly man at the parsonage whether this portion of the Scripture belongs to the inspired part of the Word or whether it

is of dubious authority. It will be well for you to know whether it was written by *the* Isaiah, or whether it was by the second of the "two Obadiahs." All possibility of certainly is transferred from the spiritual man to a class of persons whose scholarship is pretentious, but who do not even pretend to spirituality. We shall gradually be so bedoubted and becriticized, that only a few of the most profound will know what is Bible, and what is not, and they will dictate to all the rest of us. I have no more faith in their mercy than in their accuracy: they will rob us of all that we hold most dear, and glory in the cruel deed. This same reign of terror we shall not endure, for we still believe that God revealeth himself rather to babes than to the wise and prudent, and we are fully assured that our own old English version of the Scriptures is sufficient for plain men for all purposes of life, salvation, and godliness. We do not despise learning, but we will never say of culture or criticism, "These be thy gods, O Israel!"

Do you see why men would lower the degree of inspiration in Holy Writ, and would fain reduce it to an infinitesimal quantity? It is because the truth of God is to be supplanted. If you ever go into a shop in the evening to buy certain goods which depend so much upon colour and texture as to be best judged of by daylight; if, after you have got into the shop, the tradesman proceeds to lower the gas, or to remove the lamp, and then commences to show you his goods, your suspicion is aroused, and you conclude that he will try to palm off an inferior article. I more than suspect this to be the little game of the inspiration-depreciators. Whenever a man begins to lower your view of inspiration, it is because he has a trick to play, which is not easily performed in the light. He would hold a *seance* of evil spirits, and therefore he cries, "Let the lights be lowered." We, brethren, are willing to ascribe to the Word of God all the inspiration that can possibly be ascribed to it; and we say boldly that if our preaching is not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in it. We are willing to be tried and tested by it in every way, and we count those to be the noblest of our hearers who search the Scriptures daily to see whether these things be so; but to those who belittle inspiration we will give place by subjection, no, not for an hour.

Do I hear someone say, "But still you must submit to the conclusions of science"? No one is more ready than we are to accept the evident *facts* of science. But what do you mean by science? Is the thing called "science" infallible? Is it not science "falsely so-called"? The history of that human ignorance which calls itself "philosophy" is absolutely identical with the history of fools, except where it diverges into madness. If another Erasmus were to arise and write the history of folly, he would have to give several chapters to philosophy and science, and those chapters would be more telling than any others. I should not myself dare to say that philosophers and scientists are generally fools; but I would give them liberty to speak of one another, and at the close I would say, "Gentlemen, you are less complimentary to each other than I should have been." I would let the wise of each generation speak of the generation that went before it, or nowadays each half of a generation might deal with the previous half generation; for there is little of theory in science today which will survive twenty years, and only a little more which will see the first day of the twen-

tieth century. We travel now at so rapid a rate that we rush by sets of scientific hypothesis as quickly as we pass telegraph posts when riding in an express train. All that we are certain of today is this, that what the learned were sure of a few years ago is now thrown into the limbo of discarded errors. I believe in science, but not in what is called "science." No proven fact in nature is opposed to revelation. The pretty speculations of the pretentious we cannot reconcile with the Bible, and would not if we could. I feel like the man who said, "I can understand in some degree how these great men have found out the weight of the stars, and their distances from one another, and even how, by the spectroscope, they have discovered the materials of which they are composed; but", said he, "I cannot guess how they found out their names." Just so. The fanciful part of science, so dear to many, is what we do not accept. That is the important part of science to many—that part which is a mere guess, for which the guessers fight tooth and nail. The mythology of science is as false as the mythology of the heathen; but this is the thing which is made a god of. I say again, as far as its facts are concerned, science is never in conflict with the truths of Holy Scripture, but the hurried deductions drawn from those facts, and the inventions classed as facts, are opposed to Scripture, and necessarily so, because falsehood agrees not with truth.

Two sorts of people have wrought great mischief, and yet they are neither of them worth being considered as judges in the matter: they are both of them disqualified. It is essential that an umpire should know both sides of a question, and neither of these is thus instructed. The first is the irreligious scientist. What does he know about religion? What can he know? He is out of court when the question is—Does science agree with religion? Obviously he who would answer this query must know both of the two things in the question. The second is a better man, but capable of still more mischief. I mean the unscientific Christian, who will trouble his head about reconciling the Bible with science. He had better leave it alone, and not begin his tinkering trade. The mistake made by such men has been that in trying to solve a difficulty, they have either twisted the Bible, or contorted science. The solution has soon been seen to be erroneous, and then we hear the cry that Scripture has been defeated. Not at all; not at all. It is only a vain gloss upon it which has been removed. Here is a good brother who writes a tremendous book, to prove that the six days of creation represent six great geological periods; and he shows how the geological strata, and the organisms thereof, follow very much in the order of the Genesis story of creation. It may be so, or it may not be so; but if anybody should before long show that the strata do not lie in any such order, what would be my reply? I should say that the Bible never taught that they did. The Bible said, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." That leaves any length of time for your fire-ages and your ice-periods, and all that, before the establishment of the present age of man. Then we reach the six days in which the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and rested on the seventh day. There is nothing said about long ages of time, but, on the contrary, "the evening and the morning were the first day", and "the evening and the morning were the second day"; and so on. I do not here lay down any theory, but simply say that if our friend's great book is all fudge, the Bible is not responsible for it. It is true that his theory has

an appearance of support from the parallelism which he makes out between the organic life of the ages and that of the seven days; but this may be accounted for from the fact that God usually follows a certain order whether he works in long periods or in short ones. I do not know, and I do not care, much about the question; but I want to say that, if you smash up an explanation you must not imagine that you have damaged the Scriptural truth which seemed to require the explanation: you have only burned the wooden palisades with which well-meaning men thought to protect an impregnable fort which needed no such defence. For the most part, we had better leave a difficulty where it is, rather than make another difficulty by our theory. Why make a second hole in the kettle, to mend the first? Especially when the first hole is not there at all, and needs no mending. Believe everything in science which is proved: it will not come to much. You need not fear that your faith will be over-burdened. And then believe everything which is clearly in the Word of God, whether it is proved by outside evidence or not. No proof is needed when God speaks. If he hath said it, this is evidence enough.

#### CONGRATULATIONS!

Readers of THE GOSPEL WITNESS have frequently read in these pages accounts of the ministry of Rev. James McGinlay, of London. In our issue of last week we reported the serious illness of Mr. McGinlay's mother in Scotland. A cable was received, urging him to return home.

Mr. McGinlay had been planning to be married at an early date. When this request to come to Scotland came it was decided to put the marriage forward a few weeks. Accordingly, Mr. McGinlay was married to Miss Vera Robinson Monday noon, July 20th. The ceremony was performed in Jarvis Street Church, by the Editor of this paper, assisted by Rev. W. E. Atkinson, Secretary of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Québec.

We confess to a very special interest in this marriage because both parties belong in a peculiar way to Jarvis Street Church. Mrs. McGinlay, nee Miss Vera Robinson, was one of our finest girls, a lovely Christian character, beloved by everybody. It would be difficult to imagine anyone who would make a more ideal minister's wife. We are sure James McGinlay, plus Vera Robinson, will make a mighty power for good.

Mr. McGinlay's splendid work, first in Alton, and now in London, is known to all our readers. He preaches to the largest Baptist congregation in Ontario west of Toronto, and we doubt whether there is a congregation in any denomination to equal it.

Mr. and Mrs. McGinlay expect to return about the end of August. We sincerely hope he will find his mother's condition improved on arrival in Scotland. THE GOSPEL WITNESS extends to Mr. and Mrs. McGinlay its heartiest congratulations.

# The Union Baptist Witness

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## PART TRUTHS.

The imagination of men and the fact that the natural man is a stranger to the truth continually provides an opportunity for Satan to trip up and ensnare many who are endeavoring to live blameless lives before the world. "Part Truths" seem to be his masterpiece, and some of the greatest errors that have been foisted upon the world have been accorded a hearing by the credulous because of their "Part Truths," and it is only by being "as wise as a serpent" that one can discern the subtle underlying apostate teaching.

During the past few days, the Office has received letters of enquiry concerning that soul-destroying doctrine of Russellism and the treacherous teachings of Pentecostalism, which show how busily engaged are the disciples of these cults and how necessary it is for Pastors to build their people up in the most Holy Faith that they may be fortified against error.

Not only, however, are "Part Truths" the snare of the unorthodox, but they are sometimes used by those who know the Lord, yet do not exercise sufficient Faith to rest upon His over-ruling power to "work all things together for good to those that love Him," and are not content to leave a matter entirely in His hands. This was the sin of Abraham, the sin of Jacob and of many lesser saints who follow in their train.

It is well to remember in days of controversy that the Lord is not glorified by "Part Truths." His cause is not furthered by shady means of procedure, nor by any means of deception, by lawlessness or disorderliness. It is true that Jacob received the blessing, but that was God's plan for him, and would have come about without human connivance. God will undertake for His people.

"Be not dismayed, whate'er betide;  
God will take care of you.  
Beneath his wings of love abide;  
God will take care of you."

At a recent meeting when a matter about which there was a difference of opinion was being discussed, we were amazed to hear in explanation of a certain position that because certain individuals had changed their minds, they felt justified in pressing the interpretation of a certain technical clause phrased some years ago and which they admittedly knew was not designed for the purpose which they were trying to gain. A clause which was fully explained and upon which they were in the past absolutely in harmony was wrenched from its context in order to bolster up a false position. Such METHODS are not the METHODS OF THOSE who have come together in a fellowship for the promotion of the preaching of the gospel, the prosecution of Missionary, Evangelistic and Educational work. Those who

prosecute them are not of us, for we have not so learned Christ.

In all matters of controversy, let us face facts bravely, seek the blessing of the Lord and find His mind on the matter. Where there is sin in the camp, let us fearlessly deal with it, ever remembering that it is His work we seek to do, and that our God is "a God of truth."

## CELEBRITIES.

A writer by the name of Jean Graham is each week portraying in the pages of the Toronto "Saturday Night" a pen picture of famous men. In the issue of July 10th, Dr. T. T. Shields was given considerable space. Those who know Dr. Shields are well aware of the fact that the article does not portray the beloved leader of thousands of Baptist people. It does not credit him with the kindness of heart, the patience, the forgiving Christian spirit, which we know to be his, but it does acknowledge him to be a great preacher and one whom the writer would go far to hear if he but repeated his sermon of June 14th. The service of that date was no exception to the rule, for at Jarvis Street Church one always hears the Gospel, preached in the power of the Spirit.

## REGULAR BAPTISTS.

Conference Held at Stanley Avenue Church.

In connection with the Fundamental Regular Baptists of Ontario and Quebec an all-day conference of pastors and people was held at Stanley Avenue Baptist church, this city, recently.

The president, Rev. H. S. Bennett, of Hamilton, presided, and led the assembly in praise and prayer, after which Pastor Roblin, of Otterville, gave an inspiring address upon Prayer.

The afternoon session was opened by the president, and after a brief time of prayer and a few items of business were dealt with, Rev. Alexander Thomson, of Toronto, assistant editor of THE GOSPEL WITNESS, under Dr. T. T. Shields, gave a helpful address, dealing with the troubles and difficulties of Zerubbabel, when he sought to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem after the return from Babylon. His remarks centered mostly around the words of Zachariah, chapter iv, 6, "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord." The message was listened to with keen interest and was accepted as a great help.

The evening service was again under the guidance of the president, and after a bright song service, led by Pastor Robert D. Guthrie, of Courtland, the meeting was opened by prayer. Pastor Asbury, a visiting minister from Virginia, took this exercise, after which Rev. P. B. Loney, of Toronto, gave an inspirational address. His Scripture selection was from Lamentations, chapter i, 12: "Is it nothing to you, all ye, that pass by?" He called upon all

Christian and thinking people to arise to the call of his text, and by the help of God, to endeavor to bring before a distracted and distressed world, the claims of Christ and the power of His Cross, as the only remedy for the ills of to-day and the one hope of the world for the future.

—From the "Hamilton Spectator."

## OH, FOR A TYPEWRITER!

From Liberia we have recently received a sheaf of letters, and this time it was necessary for the Rev. H. L. Davey to write his by hand, for his faithful old machine has at last given up, having fallen prey to the rigors of the climate, and no more the clink of the typewriter is to be heard within the walls of the mission house. The days of a typewriter are, alas, numbered in that land of torrential rains and high humidity. Has anyone a machine they could spare for our missionary's use.

## EVEN SO IN LIBERIA.

For some years, we have been in the habit of talking about the old-fashioned winters and the old-fashioned summers, the winters that were really cold and the hot, hot summer days, that came in July and August. Well, from the standpoint of summer, at least, this one is old-fashioned enough for most of us, and we begin to realize what it must be working almost the year round as our representatives in Liberia must do in excess heat and enervating humidity.

As we seem to have reverted to the old-fashioned type of summer, even so are our missionaries experiencing a change. At the New Cess Mission, because of the station's location on a hill, they have been practically free from the dangerous mosquito pest until this year. Now, they have droves, although there is no stagnant water near, and the compound is cleared of everything that would harbour them.

At the time of writing her last letter, Mrs. Davey stated that their helper, Charles Dean, was very ill with fever, and that Mr. Davey was also down with it. The other missionaries report as being in the best of health and for this we are thankful.

## WORK ON THE NEW STATION.

While all labor in Africa is of the kind that needs continual encouragement, and all work proceeds slowly, Mr. and Mrs. Mellish are gradually beholding their abode take shape. In the meantime, they are not idle, but continue their ministry of teaching, preaching and healing. Recently a poor neglected child came to them. He was indeed a terrible sight. His poor body was covered with that awful skin disease known as yaws, and he was almost a skeleton. The boy had been driven from his own town because they claimed he was bewitched.

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## Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

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## JETHRO AND THE JEW.

Lesson Text: Exodus, chapter 18.

Golden Text: "And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord had done to Israel, whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians," v. 9.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS.

Monday: Psalm 95:1-11.

Tuesday: Deut. 10:12-22.

Wednesday: Isaiah 37:14-20.

Thursday: Joel 2:21-32.

Friday: Numbers 11:16-30.

Saturday: 2 Cor. 12:1-10.

## 1. THE ARRIVAL OF JETHRO, (vs. 1-12).

An interesting and instructive incident is recorded in this chapter, relating to the visit of Jethro to his son-in-law, Moses. Since the latter's departure from his father-in-law to go down into Egypt (4:20) he had passed through some eventful experiences. The Lord had wrought marvelously in behalf of His people, of whom he was leader, and knowledge of His work had spread throughout the surrounding nations, reaching unto the ears of Jethro. On the receipt of such knowledge, and knowing the location of the Israelite encampment, Jethro took Zipporah, the wife of Moses, and their two sons, Gershom and Eliezer, and brought them unto Moses at the mount of God (vs. 1-5). Note may be made of the fact that the world takes note of any outstanding work of God in behalf of His people, and knowledge of such work spreads rapidly and extensively, (Josh. 2:10; Acts 2:6). The typical significance of the incident may also be explained in the coming of a Gentile in a friendly manner to the Israelites. The Amalekites typified the opposition of heathendom, Jethro typifies the Gentiles who would unite with Israel in the worship of God. Note may also be made of the fact that Zipporah was a Gentile bride of Moses, the Israelites, typical of the Gentile bride of Christ (Acts 15:14). The symbolical names of the sons are worthy of attention as a sidelight on the attitude of Moses during his sojourn in the wilderness (vs. 3, 4).

The meeting of Moses and his father-in-law is described briefly (vs. 7), and depicts an oriental meeting and greeting. The conversation which ensued pertained to the work of God performed on behalf of His people. "Moses told his father-in-law all that the Lord had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, and all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and how the Lord delivered them," (v. 8). Conversation betrays the man and manifests that in which he is interested at the time. The conversation of the child of God should be of the highest character (Col. 4:6), and much should be said of our Lord who has done so much for us. We do not speak enough about Him.

Emphasis should be laid upon the necessity of proper conversation and of bearing witness thus to our Lord. (Mark 5:19.) Jethro rejoiced when he heard of the Lord's work on behalf of Israel (v. 9), and blessed the Lord for His goodness to them, ascribing to Him the glory due unto His name (vs. 10, 11). It should be easy for use to rejoice in the blessing of another. Let not jealousy or other ill-feeling prevent us doing so. Note the blessings attached to personal testimony.

It was undoubtedly a comfort to Moses to have with him again his wife, and his sons. He had gone through much since last he had seen them; he was still under a great responsibility, and home life would help to sustain him in his trials. Many a man has been encouraged in the work of the Lord by a true helpmate, and the value of such a one is above rubies. She places her husband before herself, and God above all, and is anxious that the Divine will shall be done, regardless of consequences. On the other hand, many a man has been definitely hindered and has had his service blighted through the self-will of his wife. She has not been willing for him to do what he thought to be right, but has insisted on him doing what she desired, and for the sake of outward peace he has relinquished his convictions, in order to do her will. May God give us more sensible, reasonable, consecrated wives who will bless their husbands, and families, instead of hindering them in doing the will of God. The meeting of Moses and Jethro ended in a service of worship (v. 12), a delightful, proper, and natural procedure among those who believe in God.

## II. THE PLAN OF JETHRO (vs. 13-27).

The duties of Moses were many and various. One of these was that of judging the people. "And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening," (v. 13). In these words there is described an eastern custom where the ruler gave judgment on behalf of his people, generally while sitting in the gate of his city. Such work was very heavy for Moses, but God gave him the necessary strength to carry it on. Jethro observed his labours and enquired: "What is this thing that thou doest to the people? Why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even?" (v. 14). The answer given was that the people came to him to enquire of God, and he made them "know the statutes of God, and His laws," (vs. 15, 16). This was a very necessary duty, and such is not disputed by Jethro, but the manner of doing it receives his criticism. "The thing that thou doest is not good" (v. 17), he informs Moses, because he would surely wear away, and the people would suffer through standing around all day (v. 18). It was criticism kindly meant and given out of consideration for Moses and his people, and as such is not to be lightly esteemed; but was it in accordance with the will of God? The child of God must ever be on his guard against the kindly criticism of his relatives, for such persons sometimes put the loved one before the Lord, placing the physical before the

spiritual. Some would not have given the Lord such valiant service if they had listened to the advice of friends, instead of obeying God's voice. The spiritual transcends the physical, and it is better to wear out in God's service, than rust out sparing the body. Better to lose one's life in God's service, than to preserve it in obedience to Him (Luke 17:33). God's will should be our first consideration. Our Lord taught Peter this truth (Matt. 16:22, 23).

Condemning the procedure of Moses, Jethro suggested another way of doing the work. In his plan Moses would be the teacher of the laws of God, the one through whom the people would approach God (vs. 19, 20). Able men, "such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness," would be placed over the people as "rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens," (v. 21). These would judge the people at all seasons, judging the small matters, the greater ones being reserved for Moses (v. 22). In organizing thus, with the favour of God he would be able to endure, and it would be better also for the people (v. 23). Moses hearkened unto his voice, and appointed the judges, who set to work as directed (vs. 24-26).

The plan was kindly received, and appeared to be better than the one in use, but did it have the Divine approval? Later on the Lord directed Moses in the appointment of judges, taking no cognizance of this plan, and shared the fervour of Moses with the judges (Num. 11:25), implying that sufficient fervour had been granted to him for the performance of his duties, and that there was no possibility of him breaking down under them. The grace of God is sufficient for all (2 Cor. 12:9). Man cannot improve on the plan of God. When he seeks to do so he makes a serious mistake. Note the history of the church. We should abide carefully by the book, and conduct God's work in accordance with it. Emphasis requires to be placed on this, also on the fact that we are labourers together with God (I Cor. 3:9), and not independent servants.

## WORK ON THE NEW STATION.

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In substantiating this, his mother told a story something like this. When her lad was a baby it was necessary for her to take him with her to a farm where she was working. There she laid him down, and while she was engaged with her work, an ape came along and took her baby and left the ape baby. Everywhere the boy went the story followed him. In order to live, he must steal, and for this a heavy chain has been put about his thin leg. The missionaries cannot interfere, but, oh, how their hearts ache for him. They could not keep him because a brother came for him, and the missionaries could not become responsible for all that he had stolen.

In this land of ours such a story, we are happy to say, would stir the hearts of the hardest, and yet Africa may have millions whose lives are continually burdensome, and upon the shoulders of little children there rests the awful heritage of heathendom while the Saviour said, "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not."