

The Gospel Witness

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

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Harps on the Willows

(More than thirty years ago we read this sermon on, "Harps on the Willows, preached at the Brick Church, New York, by Rev. Llewelyn D. Bevan, LL.B.", and published in 1877. The memory of its music has lingered with us ever since. Some recollection of it recurred to us this week, and we looked up the old and treasured volume in which it was published. We reprint it for its own intrinsic worth, and as a sample of the great preaching of half a century ago. Where can one go to hear such discourses today? We should like to hear from our readers as to whether they enjoy these discourses of an earlier day.—Ed. G. W.).

"We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof."—Ps. 137: 2.

This is a beautiful and pathetic picture of the captive Jews and their sorrows in the land of Babylon. Scattered throughout that country, the prisoners of Zion were fain oftentimes to wander by the sides of its numerous water-courses, and pensively meditate upon their forlorn condition. The murmur of the waters, as they ran softly beneath the willows, seemed in sweet and melancholy harmony with their own saddened hearts.

The musical instruments, upon which in former days they had loved to exercise their national proficiency, lay silent, useless in their hands. At length they sat down by the river, and hanging their harps upon the branches of the trees, they gave themselves up to the indulgence of their sorrow.

They thought of Zion and her scenes of joy. The busy streets were now silent and deserted. The temple was in ruins. The land was everywhere a waste, inhabited only by a few scattered strangers, and the wild beasts which had intruded into the abodes of former activity and life. They themselves were far away from home, strangers, exiles, captives in Babylon. What could they do, but bitterly and silently drop their tears into the waves that played at their feet, and with harps hanging on the willows, weep when they remembered Zion!

And is not that a picture of many conditions of our human life? We are away from home, and homesick. Sorrow has

invaded our lives, and wrung our hearts into a sad and despairing mood. We have no spirit for any occupation. The brightest and the merriest circumstances awake no response within our souls.

Forth we wander by the side of some Babylonian stream. We sit down upon its bank. We hang our harp upon the willow that bends above it, and, like the exiled Jews, we weep when we remember the happier moments that have fled.

There are three things that we would learn from this picture of sorrow. Every man has a harp. Sometimes he must hang his harp upon the willows. He has no reason, however, to throw his harp away.

I.

EVERY MAN HAS A HARP. The harp was the well-known instrument for the accompaniment of song. Its music was sweet and delightful. By its strains the melancholy of Israel's king was dispersed. When calamity fell upon the nation, their harps were silenced, broken, and cast away.

And thus it is with all our lives. We have the elements of joy in them, the powers of song and gladness; and there is no man who has not the capacity and the occasion for delightful mirth.

Just think of the constitution of our nature, wherein a place is secured for joy.

The body is attuned to pleasure and happiness. God might have made us with organizations fitted for life, for recreation, for intelligence and activity, and yet altogether without the capacity of experiencing pleasure. Take, for example, the sense of sight. The fine adjustments of the visual organs might have been as perfect as they are now. The laws of light might have been precisely in accordance with the powers of vision. We might have seen and appreciated shape and relations of space, and even color, and yet there might have been no pleasure in sight, and the eye would not have delighted itself with seeing. But now behold what joy there is in light and color! There is something more than mere information in the aspect of things visible. The bloom upon the cheek of childhood, the light that gleams within the eye of beauty, the forms of strength and activity, the colors of the rainbow, the tints of the flowers, the azure of

the sky, the sapphire of the sea, the emerald of the grass—these now are delights; and a peculiar sense of pleasure is experienced as the eye looks out upon the beauty which God has lavished everywhere. Or, again, consider the sense of hearing. Sounds might have been so indistinct that to hear would have required the constant exercise of attention, the strain of effort painful and wearying; or they might have been so powerful that a whisper would be shocking, whilst the natural speech of our friends would be like the explosion of cannon close to the ear. And yet, how exquisitely has God harmonized the sound and the sense! They agree so accurately, they respond so truly, that hearing is musical; and perhaps the most perfect of all the sensations is that which results from the delicate blending of the harmonious and consonant, now heard in the sweet, low voice of the cultured woman, now ravishingly produced by the concerted music of choral antiphonies.

What a harp man possesses in physical nature if he would only let its music be heard! Every sight and sound, every scene and action, the birds in the air, the cattle on a thousand hills, the activities of the cities, the quiet beauties of rural life—all things fair and good, bright and godly, are but fingers of Nature's skilful hand which will touch the strings of the harps of our being and wake their perfect tones of rapture.

Play upon me, I beseech you, ye physical powers, and discourse the pleasant cadences of the lower world!

But if we ascend the scale of human being, we shall still find that man has the harp for pleasant accompaniment of happy song in the region of the immaterial and the intellectual. We often attach the thought of pleasure to the physical alone, and indeed there is danger lest we should degrade and corrupt the word itself until it has reference only to the material. "A man of pleasure," we say, when we mean a man whose delights are almost wholly animal and sensuous. We forget that pleasure belongs to the mind as well as to the body.

What delights there are in intellectual operations! The joy of learning—when it is indeed learning worthy of the name; the discovery of the unknown; the pursuit of the law which underlies obscure phenomena; the search for causes; the enumeration of effects—all these and others, the noble energies of the human intellect, afford keen and lasting delight.

What an unutterable moment was that in the life of the patient explorer into Nature's recesses when a substance hitherto unknown, unsuspected, came up in the experimental vessel, and presented itself before his eyes! As he gazed down into the fluid, he felt a strange, unaccountable thrill pass through his heart. His throat seemed to be choked. His whole frame shook with suppressed emotion. There was a tremor in the solution; it seemed to stir with a feeling sympathetic with his own; and then, as a wave or two passed over its surface and there leaped up into the light a bright metallic globule that shone for an instant and disappeared, the experimenter was fain to grasp at the table before him, lest he should fall with the intensity of the delight that filled his spirit.

Was it not the hand of the Creator reaching down to the harp of his mental being, and striking a chord on it responsive to that which the stars of the morning chanted when they saw Creation's work?

But these delights, the music of our being, cannot be compared to the pleasure which belongs to the still higher

sphere which we are privileged to enter. I forbear to pursue the delights of our soul in its affections—the raptures of home, the loves of children, friends,—the sweet sympathies of husband, wife, family, country, kind. Let me now only remind you of that sacred melody which is attuned when the joys of the spirit are experienced.

The sinner seeks his Saviour, and finds the pardon of Father and of Friend. If the shepherd has joy when he carries home the sheep, what think you must be the delight of the poor wanderer to feel beneath him the strong shoulders of the pastor, or rest in his tender arms. Whose joy should be the deepest, the parent's whose son has come home again, or the prodigal's, who has met with the welcome of forgiveness and love? You remember the hour of forgiveness, my brother. Heaven's clouds were cleared, the storm was hushed, the dread was dissipated, and a Father's love received you through the mighty merits of a Saviour's death. It is no wonder that the Church's sweetest hymns tell of this delightful peace and blessedness; and yet the best music of all the Christian poets falls far short of the rapture which dwells within the forgiven heart.

And with what language shall we tell of the occasions for harping that have occurred so often since the first forgiveness! Have there not been Bethels of a Divine covenanting, Horebs of refreshment, and Red Sea passages of deliverance and triumph? With Miriam we have clashed the cymbals, and almost forgotten the solemn dignity of our kingship as we danced with David before the ark of God. Prayer has had its blessed answers, and meditation its holy raptures. Nothing but song could express our heightened feeling; and we felt as if angel hands were sweeping the chords of our harp of life, and making the glad accompaniment to our joyous mood. The only words that could express our feelings were those of the prophet: "The redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head." Truly, indeed, every man has a harp.

Remember, brethren, this harp must be tuned and practised on. There was never yet a musician of skill who had not gained his skilfulness by constant and incessant industry. The musical art must be served with ceaseless devotion. Practice alone can make the master here.

And so with the instrument. It must be tuned and played on. It would seem as if the fibres of the material took to themselves the music, and underwent some strange transformation beneath the influence of the sweet sounds. Hence we say, the musician *draws out* the melody as though it had been hidden by his former art within the boards of the instrument. And the harp of our nature must thus be tuned and made melodious by constant use. Do not be afraid, then, of playing upon these pleasurable chords of being. They will gain sweetness and tune only thus by practising. And yet it is the last thing some Christians think of—tuning their harp. They let down the strings into a flaccid looseness until no sound can be gotten out of them but the subdued hum that seems only struggling into melody; or they tighten up the chords until nothing but most high-pitched shrillness is given forth, and sometimes with a touch the strings crack and break. Give way to your pleasureableness. Do not check it. Enjoy this life, the nature that is so good. Use your minds with gladness. Above all, as Christians, be glad. God is the "happy God", and His people have the birthright of happiness too. Let Zion re-echo with your songs. Be good gladly. Press on to heaven with delight, as

a schoolboy on his homeward journey the first day of the vacation, as an exile voyaging to the shores of his native land.

II.

But SOMETIMES THE HARP HAS TO BE HUNG UPON THE WILLOWS.

In the land of Babylon the Israelites had no heart to sing, and the accompaniment, therefore, was useless. Tears were the only outpouring of which they were capable, and in the intervals of the flowing tears they could only mourn their melancholic state.

And so is it with the harps of life. We have to lay them aside or hang them upon willows that droop over rivers of sadness, by whose banks we sit and wail.

There is no music in the harp of physical nature. We are weary or worn, it may be, wasted by disease, or in that strange, indefinable condition when, knowing not what ails us, we only know that a misery dark and doleful presses down our spirit.

Some people are affected thus by outward physical circumstances. The day is dark and dreary, the damp of the atmosphere seems to strike chill even upon our souls. The song birds have ceased their carol, and a like responsive silence falls upon our depressed natures. The most beautiful objects fail to arouse our interest; we take delight in nothing, and we cannot sing. Some may overcome the feeling, and by a strong effort of will arouse themselves to action, and even to cheer; but others are completely mastered by the external condition, and can only in patience await a change.

It is thus when disease invades our bodies or sorrow smites the soul. Songs are not suitable to funerals, and harpings in the house of mourning are out of place and impertinent. As we stand and watch the sufferings of those we love; as, perhaps, we almost reckon by the minute-hand of the watch the failing pulse of a dying friend; as we stand by the still, cold body which is all that remains of what once we loved, then, indeed, it is vain to bid us sweep the chords of our harp and sing even a song of Zion.

There are some silences still more profound that fall upon the music of our life. There are no songs for those who, by sacred ties of affection, come very near to those who plunge into some awful sinfulness and persevere in a course of certain ruin. The father whose eldest son forswears his father's faith, and throws away his father's virtues, and wins only a name that will be a dishonour among men—such a father has little heart for harpings, and is, indeed, in a silent land of bitter exile. The only child of some loving mother, who knows no law but waywardness, and makes love a license for wrongdoing, is no glad subject for the pleasant strains of melody.

And then how useless is the harp when we ourselves are in the hours of spiritual distress! God is absent, and we know no gladness till He shows His face again. While the Bridegroom was with them, there was no need for the disciples to fast; but the days would come when the Bridegroom should be taken away, and then they would fast in those days. They sang a hymn when the Master was among them, even though when they rose from the Supper it was to pass to Gethsemane, and Pilate's Bar, and Calvary. But their hearts had no desire for singing in the suspense and numb agony of the hour when the Christ lay dead. And so is it with the Christian still. When it seems as if the Lord had died, when we fail even to find the dead body of the Master, everything lost, then there are no harpings for us.

Doubt, despondency, despair, fear, and faithlessness, perhaps our own want of vigilance and zeal—only these felt—then the spirit is cast down and we have no heart to sing withal. These times of Babylonian exile, shame and sorrow, come to all of us, and we sit down by the rivers and hang our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.

III.

But observe, though there is no heart or place for song, and the harp must be laid aside, IT NEEDS NOT TO BE CAST AWAY.

They had been foolish and wicked men of Israel if they had flung their harps beneath the running river, and thus deprived themselves altogether of the means of melody when the days of joy came back again. Truly, it was seventy years—long years of waiting—before the exile was over, and the Babylonian woe had ceased. Still, the ages wore away at last, and multitudes went back to the Holy Land, and set up Jerusalem again, and built the Temple, and sang the Lord's song—not in the land of strangers, but in their own loved home. It was a wondrous scene, told by the scribe in one of the most beautiful passages of gladness and delight (Ezra III: 9-13): "Then stood Jeshua with his sons and his brethren, Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of Judah, together, to set forward the workmen in the house of God: the sons of Henadad, with their sons of their brethren the Levites. And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David, king of Israel. And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. But many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy: so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people; for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off."

So, brethren, cast not away your harp. The weather will clear and the soul will awake to gladness when the sunshine comes. The storm is over, and the birds that cowered frightened and half dead have plumed their ruffled feathers and are upon the topmost boughs, and into the light that follows the darkness they pour their merry song from well-nigh bursting throats. It is not always winter, and summer, golden, bright and glad, will appear. If March has her cold winds, May will have her flowers, and there will be need for gladness yet.

And the sickness will depart and the strengthened frame shall recover its wonted sense of health and vigor. Not always the darkened room, the footstep on tiptoe, the hush that dwells through all the house. Listen! there!—the song, the music; the invalid is at the harp and strikes forth a merry melody.

Yea, and there shall be some hours of gladness even for the wailing, weary heart that sickens over the sinfulness of child and friend. It was a sad home when the prodigal was far away. But one day the father saw the returning son, ragged, worn and disgraced, and that night there was music

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

BETTER TIMES ON THE WAY.

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, September 20th, 1931.

(Stenographically Reported.)

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

"Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

"And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

"No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there:

"And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." — Isaiah 35:5-10.

Prayer Before the Sermon.

By Rev. W. Gordon Brown.

Almighty God, in Whose hands is the breath of life, we acknowledge Thee as our Creator. We believe in the beginning, by Thy word the earth was, and man was; and that Thou hast made us for Thyself, that we cannot have true rest until we rest in Thee.

We acknowledge Thee, O Lord, to be the Providence that has guided our lives; with Thine all-seeing eye Thou hast planned our destiny, and with Thine all-leading hand Thou hast brought us from cradle days to this good hour. We thank Thee for Thy providence, O Lord, for all Thy leading. At times the buds have been bitter, but the flowers have been sweet; and where bitter buds are left, we believe that we shall find sweetness and joy at last.

And what shall we say of Thee as the Redeemer of our souls, Who, in Thy mercy, didst send Thine only begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, to this sin-cursed earth to live a human life in poverty and toil and suffering, to be the Teacher of the way to God, the Example of the perfect life; and, more than that, to pour out His life's blood as a sacrifice to God, that our sins might be forgiven? Before that Cross we stand to-night, O Christ, to acknowledge that salvation is by Thy blood alone, that in the power of that Cross our sins are forgiven, and by the glory of Thy resurrection our lives may be lived until at last we too shall rise in Thy perfect image, and shall see Thee as Thou art.

Acknowledging Thee, we come with our needs. Every hour we are beggars at Thy door. We pray that Thou wilt forgive our many and great sins, that Thou wilt minister to all our spiritual and material wants and needs. Come and speak to each waiting soul in this congregation to-night; give a message to every heart. Grant to those who are perplexed, guidance; to those who are in doubt, certainty; to those who are weary, rest; to those who are finding the burdens heavy, the grace that enables us to lay the burdens upon the great Burden-Bearer Who will bear them for us. Teach us to cast our burdens upon the Lord, to roll our troubles there, knowing that He will sustain us, as we do His will.

Speak to those who do not know Thee, O Christ. Open their ears that they may hear Thy word; open their eyes that they may behold Thy beauty; open their minds that they may understand the plan of salvation; open their hearts that Christ may enter in.

Bless, we pray Thee, all who preach Thy gospel. Many will do so under less favourable circumstances than those under which we meet; some in little mission halls, some on the street, some under persecution of the laws of the land; but wherever Christ is lifted up, may the promise be fulfilled that He spoke, I am with you all the days, even to the consummation of the age. May His presence make this Lord's Day the birthday of many souls; may Thy kingdom be greatly extended.

We especially beseech Thee to bless the efforts of this church as associated with our Seminary. Grant that as we

begin our work this week, we may do so in the power of God. Guard us from the errors of so-called Christian Education. Bring to us men and women of Thy choice. Raise up preachers of power and ministers of purpose through whom the kingdom of Christ may be extended, and His coming hastened. Hasten the day when a knowledge of Thee shall cover the earth as the water covers the sea, when Thy will shall be done upon earth as it is done in heaven. Until that day, let us live and work for the glory of our Lord and Saviour, in whose name we present all our petitions, Amen.

You cannot find a passage like our text, or a passage comparable to it at any point, outside of the Word of God. No one but God could propose or execute a programme like that. Surely that is a picture of good times to come! Would you not like to live amid conditions like that?—the eyes of the blind opened, the ears of the deaf unstopped, the lame man leaping as an hart, the tongue of the dumb made to sing, and the wilderness, the parched ground, and the habitations of dragons, existing no more; with plenty everywhere, and the way of holiness revealed, with multitudes traversing the path—and all of them singing on their way, coming to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads.

The record of the first day of God's creative work is summed up in the words, "And the evening and the morning were the first day." That is always the order of the divine procedure: God moves, not from morning to night, but from night to morning. The Book begins with a story of darkness, when darkness covered the face of the deep: it ends with the story of a glorious city, of which it is said, "And there shall be no night there." "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

The thirty-fourth chapter of Isaiah is a very dark chapter. It draws a very gloomy, a very terrible picture. But it is followed immediately by the thirty-fifth, and the two pictures, and the two principles they involve, ever recur in human history. You find them again and again in this Book brought into juxtaposition and contrast. The thirty-fourth chapter describes the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion. It is dark and awesome indeed. But upon the stormy night of the thirty-fourth chapter there breaks the morning of the thirty-fifth, with the gracious promise, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

I shall not engage in controversy with any of you. Sometimes we are looked upon as being rather controversial here. We do not object to contention where there is something vital to contend about, but controversy, for controversy's sake, mere contentiousness, we abhor. Somebody would spoil my sermon this evening by insisting that he knows to exactly what period of history these two chapters belong. They are chronological experts; chronologically and geographically, they know almost everything. I do not question their scholastic usefulness. When we come upon a portion of Scripture like this, the question must arise, Where does this belong in the divine scheme of things? To what day and generation does it refer? When, and where, and under what conditions, was it or is it yet to be fulfilled?

I have no doubt that the thunders of the thirty-fourth chapter have already been heard, for all true history is prophecy, and all prophecy is history. There are principles which persist through all human experience. The sword of the Lord has been many times bathed in heaven, and shall yet be many times more. Times of judgment have been succeeded by visitations of mercy. "The wilderness and the solitary place" have been made glad, and shall be again. The thirty-fourth chapter must have a final fulfilment, and so must the thirty-fifth; but the definition of time and space I must leave to others. This I know, the thirty-fifth chapter has been fulfilled again and again in spiritual principle throughout the history of the Christian church; evening and morning have alternated; darkness, distress, drought, and destruction, have been succeeded by times of revival.

Did you think I was going to speak about business conditions this evening? Well, I am; for you cannot live departmentally in this life. You cannot shut and bolt the door, and say, "This is No. So-and-So, Don't-Care Avenue. That is where I live, and I do not care what happens to the rest of the world." You must care. "None of us liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself." Nor can a man shut himself up to Sunday and say, "I will not be on speaking terms with Monday." Nor can you put a barrier between the sacred and the secular, saying, "It is a sacred thing to pray, and to sing the hymns of Zion; but I am engaged in secular pursuits; I have to go to the office in the morning."

These principles run all through life, and you cannot divorce religion from the workaday world. Nor can you divorce the affairs of the marketplace from the sanctuary of prayer. It is not possible for men to forget and utterly to neglect God, without coming into the experience of the thirty-fourth chapter of Isaiah, or its equivalent, with all its darkness and gloom.

If we could wholly have escaped the conditions which now obtain everywhere in the world, one might have wondered whether the Bible was true. The thirty-fourth chapter of Isaiah was due when the majority of the pulpits of the land have been pouring contempt upon God's Book, teaching people not to believe; to care nothing about prayer; to live without fear of God before their eyes; when nearly all our educational institutions—not merely the state institutions, but the denominational institutions—have been crammed full with, to use the phrase that was much discussed a while ago, "practical atheism"; what wonder if God should leave us to ourselves, and bring us at last to recognize our need of Him?

I remember a man once coming to me in the early years of my ministry, who said he was going to visit a little church in the country. He was to come as far as

my town by train, and would then drive the rest of the way, and he asked if he might stay at my home. I replied to his letter that I should be glad to welcome him. In our conversation he said, "It has always been my lot to take a church when it is down, and bring it up again." He told me where he was going, and I said, "Brother, you will find a church there after your own heart. It is far enough down, I assure you; and if you are the Lord's prophet who can improve matters, I am sure you will be welcome." He came back to me in two or three days, and I said, "How did you get along? Are you going to become their pastor?" He replied, "Thank you; I fear it is a little too far down!"

Yet somebody said not very long ago, that when business is on its back, it is always looking up! There is some comfort in getting so low down that you cannot get any lower. The darkest hour is frequently just before the dawn, and inevitably the thirty-fifth chapter will follow the thirty-fourth; the morning will succeed the night: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

That is not idle, unreasoning, and unreasonable, optimism. What is sometimes called optimism, I prefer to call ostrichism—putting your head in the sand, as the ostrich is alleged to do, and saying that all is well when it is not well. I speak as one who believes that God is on the throne, and that He will bring His counsels of grace to pass, that better times are on the way.

"The glory of the Lord" is spoken of in the thirty-fifth chapter. This must have more than a physical bearing: it must be moral and spiritual. And the message is that spiritual revival succeeds divine judgments. This chapter will not find its fulfilment merely in the opening of physical eyes, the unstopping of natural ears, and the healing of our lameness. Nor does it mean that this world could be improved by the operations of a landscape gardener on a large scale. There is something far bigger than that here: it is a picture of spiritual revival.

And when we have spiritual revival, we shall have a business revival—we shall have revival everywhere. The world must be better for God's visitation at any time.

I.

SPIRITUAL REVIVAL IS ATTENDED BY THE RESTORATION OF SPIRITUAL FACULTIES. Powers which have been atrophied by long disuse are restored, and reinvigorated, and rejuvenated, and regain their proper place and function. Our Lord bade the disciples of John to report as one of the credentials of His Messiahship, "The blind receive their sight." And that is the unfailing, invariable, and infallible, sign of His presence.

The analogy of physical blindness is very instructive. There are degrees of blindness ranging from a vision that is but slightly defective, to total blindness. There are people who are short-sighted. There are some who are blind to colour, or to certain colours. There are some who can discern the day, but cannot make out any shape or form. And there are those who live in perpetual night.

All these degrees of blindness have their analogy in the moral and spiritual world. The sight of the people of God becomes dim, their vision is obscured, they fail to add to their faith, virtue, and to virtue, knowledge. That failure to cultivate the spiritual results in partial paralysis, and men become, as the Scripture says, "blind"; they "cannot see afar off". They are shut up to the things which are seen and temporal; they are without spiritual perspective; and, being without such perspective,

they are devoid of the ability properly to appraise the values of life. The physical and temporal become the all-important; and the invisible and the spiritual, the things that are "afar off", are appraised as having almost no value at all. They are partially blind.

Many professing Christians are like that. They have eyes for some things, they are still able to recognize the main chance, they have eyes for a good bargain, they know in what direction their temporal profit seems to lie. Their vision is keen enough at short range, they can see things this side of the grave very, very clearly, and they are experts in their valuation of these matters; but beyond that, they know and see nothing. Hence, when a company of people like that come into a church, and when that partial blindness afflicts the officers of the church, and comes upon the pulpit, so that the preacher cannot see across the river, but sees nothing except that which is immediately around him, he ceases to preach personal, individual salvation, and becomes very much interested in "social service". When a preacher makes that his special task you may be sure he is partially blind. The man whose eyes are wide open will not be indifferent to the physical need of his neighbour, but he will see other and more important things beyond that. When such condition obtains in a church, there is no view of the future. There is no view of eternal issues. Salvation that begins here, and never ends, is a thing of which men do not speak, because they have no thought of it. They are partially blind. But when God draws near to save us, "The eyes of the blind shall be opened."

The partially blind usually are the first to apprehend the dawn. The revival begins with the people of God, who, by reason of their failure to "grow up into Christ in all things", have become "blind and cannot see afar off". When "the old man" gains the ascendancy in the life, the characteristics of age appear, and dimness of vision is one of the first. One of the characteristics of the Laodicean, lukewarm, state of the soul is that it is "blind". Alas, that so many of the Lord's own children, in times like this, have eyes only for things which are seen and temporal.

But when eyes are spiritually open—how different! The man sees in the man with whom he has worked for twenty years, and to whom he has never yet witnessed, a precious soul for whom Christ died. He says, "I never thought of him in that sense before." He finds in his own family some of the Lord's own jewels. He loved them before, but now in a new way he sees them, and yearns over them that they may be saved. Like his Master, he is "moved with compassion".

We had a great Baptist preacher in this country years ago, Rev. Alexander Grant. I do not know that anyone here knew him, but he was one of nature's noblemen. He was standing one day in the Winnipeg railway station, watching long colonist trains come in and empty themselves of hundreds of immigrants from all parts of the world. Somebody noticed Mr. Grant in a corner where he could command the whole platform. The tears were streaming down his face, and he was sobbing. His friend approached him and said, "What is wrong, Mr. Grant? Have you had some great sorrow?" "No," said he, "I am just wondering how all these people are to be told about my Lord Jesus." The eyes of that great man of God were open, and he saw in the multitudes that which was hidden from unspiritual eyes.

When people see opportunities for testimony, and for personal witness, and see in the people about them those

who have been bought with blood, it is an unmistakable evidence that their eyes have been opened.

I remember a man in a certain church before I was converted who was, to use a hackneyed phrase, my pet aversion. I did not like him. Do not ask me why—I am simply telling you a fact, without the philosophy of it: *I did not like him*. I used to say to myself, "I should like this church a great deal better if he were not here." One night I went to church, and he actually spoke to *me*, the minister's son, about my personal relationship to Christ! I went away saying, "I believe I will not go back again. What right had that man, of all men, to speak to me?"

The next night I was converted, and I looked at that man and said, "What has happened? He is the finest man I ever saw." All his peculiarities seemed to have dropped off over night. I felt he was a splendid specimen of Christian manhood. I think that is what lies back of the scripture, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." We suddenly discover something in them that is lovable. The eyes of the blind were opened, and we began to love people all around us, and to discover that this is not such a dreadful world after all. What a vast difference it makes when our eyes are opened!

Did you ever hear Dr. Russell Conwell give his lecture on, "Acres of Diamonds"? It is the story of a man who wanted to find diamonds. He sold his little farm in India, and went to the coast of Spain; he spent all his money in the search. When the priest who had advised him thus to do, went to call on his successor on the little farm, he saw in the hut a little stone. He said, "Where did you get this?" "Oh," said the farmer, "It is just a stone I picked up out there in the sands of the brook that runs through the farm." "But," said the Buddhist priest, "that is a diamond." "Oh no; there are no diamonds on my farm." "But it is," said he, "show me where you got it." They went out to where the waters were flowing through the farm, and the priest put his sandalled foot into the brook and turned up diamonds everywhere. There were acres of diamonds around the man, but he had no eyes to see them; and went away to look elsewhere.

What about the little children in this city? I purposely drive through the slums sometimes to see them, and say to myself. What chance have they, humanly speaking? They are rough, uncouth, dirty, and ragged. And sometimes I hear One say, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." Oh, for eyes to see the King's diamonds! Dr. Conwell's story is the legendary origin of the famous Golconda diamond mine. There are jewels all about us if only our eyes were open to see them. And when God comes to His own people, we shall see in every man and woman, boy and girl, one of the King's gems for which He shed His life's blood.

When that becomes true, *the totally blind behold the Lamb of God*, and look "for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." How helpless we are until God comes in saving power. No eloquence, nor learning, nor argument, can avail to open blind eyes. No human science can remove the scales from sin-blinded eyes; no religious ophthalmology can take the place of the power of the Holy Ghost. He only can open blind eyes to see the Lamb of God.

"The ears of the deaf shall be unstopped." The same analogy holds with respect to degrees of physical deafness. Some can hear nothing at all, while others can

hear only sounds of peculiar pitch and intensity. Some have no ear for music. They can hear the sounds, but for them there is no distinction of sounds.

All this is true spiritually. There are some who hear only the rumble of the streets, the grinding of the wheels of business, the ring of gold upon the counting-house table, or the shrill and high-pitched song of pleasure. They have keen ears for the voice of envy, and malice, and all manner of evil speaking; but are deaf to the gentle tones of charity. They are slow to catch the voice of the Good Shepherd calling over the mountains, or the voice of the Beloved standing before the door. They cannot hear the wail of China, nor the cry of India, the groaning of those who are without Christ. They have no ears for such sounds. All spiritual tones fall upon their ears to no purpose. The voice of God's Word has no music in it. Their souls are not ravished by the songs of grace. Privilege and duty call upon them in vain. No sermon makes them better, but rather worse; no hymn inspires their hearts to praise. Even when round about them men are moved by the Wind that bloweth where it listeth, they hear not the sound thereof.

But how different when "the ears of the deaf are un-stopped"! The same man goes to prayer-meeting, and says he is more charmed by the testimony of a poor, stammering convert than by any concert he ever attended. His ears are no longer like a scavenger's cart, picking up all the vile things along all the back lanes of the city—they are open to the Skies, and they exclaim:

"Hark, hark! my soul! angelic songs are swelling
O'er earth's green fields and ocean's wave-beat shore;
How sweet the truth those blessed strains are telling
Of that new life when sin shall be no more.

"Far, far away, like bells at ev'ning pealing,
The voice of Jesus sounds o'er land and sea,
And laden souls, by thousands meekly stealing,
Kind Shepherd, turn their weary steps to Thee.

"Onward we go, for still we hear them singing,
'Come, weary souls; for Jesus bids you come';
And thro' the dark, its echoes sweetly ringing,
The music of the gospel leads us home."

Then, too, *the totally deaf hear*. Nothing can enable one to understand what the scripture means by that saying, "Dead in trespasses and sins", like a little experience in trying to lead such to an acceptance of the gospel. We have dealt with people of average, and of more than average intelligence. We have dealt with not a few educated, cultured people whose faculties were trained and disciplined, and who were mentally alert to the truth of all realms save only the spiritual. But we have found such utterly incapable of understanding even the alphabet of the gospel, utterly unresponsive to its every appeal. We have seen such people show themselves to be as deaf to the call of Christ as one who was physically dead.

On the other hand, we have seen people of less than average intelligence, of little or no education, respond to the whisper of the Spirit; and we have seen their minds enlarged, and their faculties sharpened; and have learned the meaning of that scripture which says, "The entrance of thy word giveth light". When God thus comes in

revival power into the midst of His people, the word is fulfilled that is written, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."

There is also *the analogy of physical lameness*. There is a kind of moral rheumatism that lays hold of people. All service becomes a burden.

There was a man who was a member of this church when I became Pastor nearly twenty-two years ago. He was then only fairly well off. A little earlier he could have appreciated the service of a firm whose advertisement I saw the other day, "Suit pressed while you wait." While he was poor he was busy about the Lord's business. He would go to an early morning Sunday School, then to church at eleven, and at Sunday School again in the afternoon—perhaps to two of them. He would be out on the street witnessing for Christ, and working at some mission at night. Not only was he busy on Sundays, but on week-days as well. He was regarded as one of the most earnest personal workers in this city. But all that was when he was poor.

When I first came to the church he invited me to go down town and have lunch with him at a small club on Yonge Street. I have never been able to find it since. But it was a neat little place, with wicker chairs and tables, and that sort of thing. It was a very nice place, and he told me it was ideal to entertain a friend if I did not care to take him home to lunch. He said he would be glad to recommend me for membership. A few years later he invited me to have lunch with him—and he took me to the Ontario Club! I can see him now—how proud he was! He was getting on and up in the world. He got on a little farther—and then farther still. I went into his office one day—he had a new office now, and a big establishment,—and I saw over his desk, so that you could not sit down opposite him without seeing it, a framed certificate to the effect: "This certifies that Mr. So-and-So is a life-member of the National Club. He had at last arrived!

After he got on in business he got so lame that he could not do anything for the Lord. He was as lame as Mephibosheth. He used to be able to walk anywhere for the Lord, but after he got two or three cars, and a chauffeur to drive them, he was so lame he could not come to church more than once a day.

But when the Lord comes in fulness into a man's life, what a change is wrought! Our lameness disappears. We are no longer like Johnny with a sore foot, too lame to go to school or to run an errand; but are ready for every good word and work. Before the man could not cross the aisle to speak to another about his soul—now he can go blocks out of his way to persuade a poor sinner to come to the house of God. Before, months were occupied in rendering a single service: now he is like David's Gadites, "Swift as the roes upon the mountain." No exhortation can help a lame man—only when God comes and saves us shall we see him leap as an hart. So, too, poor sinners, lame as the man at the gate of the Temple called Beautiful, with no power to run in paths of righteousness, shall be made to walk therein.

"And the tongue of the dumb shall sing." In any one of these analogies there is material for a whole

discourse. When the Lord is absent, what silence falls upon the church! There are no songs of praise, no witness-bearing to His wondrous grace. But it is only a spiritual dumbness. Church members can speak of all other matters. The lawyer can speak at the bar, the business man at his club, the student at his debates, the society woman at her reading-circles or parties, or whatever her gatherings are called. But there is no voice for Jesus Christ. No praise, no prayer, no persuasive speech in His behalf—"Dumb dogs that will not bark", as the unfaithful prophets are called. But when the Lord comes, what singing! What praise! What songs in the night! What songs of deliverance!

So of the unsaved: when God's people begin to praise Him for salvation, sinners will begin to pray for salvation, and there will be joy in the presence of the angels of God over sinners repenting, and new-born souls exclaim,—

"Oh, this is life! oh, this is joy
My God, to find Thee so!
Thy face to see, Thy voice to hear,
And all Thy love to know."

II.

Another result of this divine visitation will be this: *spiritual supplies will abound where before they were sought in vain.* Put these words together, and see what a condition of life they portray: "Wilderness"—"desert"—"parched ground"—"thirsty land"—"the habitation of dragons". There is nothing inviting or attractive about that. Yet it describes the condition of the individual or church life from which God is absent. You find hundreds of people who are simply disgusted with organized religion. Nor do I blame them. You may call me severe if you like, but there are scores of churches in this city that have no sound religious reason for their existence. If they closed their door to-morrow, the kingdom of God would not suffer one whit, for there is no testimony to a supernatural religion, there is no witness that God can come into this world in this time of distress to do anything for men.

The business world, and the political world, and every other department of life, have reached the limit of their ability; and men are at their wit's end, not knowing what to do. How little of God is given them! The church has become a wilderness. There is plenty of growth of some sort, but a man could starve for want of nourishing food. There is "the parched ground", the glistening sand, the mirage of the desert, a thing that promises but never performs. A man goes into a church, hoping to get spiritual blessing, and he comes out saying, "I did not get a crumb to eat, nor a drop of water. There is nothing here at all for me."

I fear I should be correct if I said that the majority of the churches of to-day are a mockery; they mock the thirsty souls of men, and fail utterly to minister to their spiritual need. They are only as glistening sand, a mirage of the desert, a disappointment to all who seek refreshing by their ministry.

Did you ever try to water a piece of thirsty land? You can keep on pouring the water upon the earth, but it soaks up everything; there is no quenching its thirst. What is

"thirsty land"? A land that is always saying, "Give, give, give, give"; but which gives nothing in return; a land that never has enough; without surplus, without overflow.

That is a picture of the modern church. When the poor man says, "It is useless for me to go to church. Look at my clothes. I should be a marked man if I were to go; and beside, the collection plate embarrasses me. I should like to put something in, but I cannot." So he stays away. No church perhaps needs money more than we do, but let no one stay away from here because he can put nothing on the plate. Do not stay away because you have not the latest in dresses, or the most up-to-date hat—indeed, I think I shall like you better if you wear one of your old ones! I assure you such attire will not be reckoned against you in this place.

But I say, the proverbial "man on the street", who says that the church has no use for the poor, and no use for anybody unless he can do something for the church, has much truth on his side. In too many cases the church is a cistern, not a fountain; a purse, not a mine; a mendicant, not a minister; receiving, but never giving.

"The habitation of dragons". The habitation of dragons! Can that be said of a church? Is it not true that some of the most unscrupulous men to be found are religious men? Is it not a fact that many of the men at the head of great corporations who employ other people to do doubtful things, are office-bearers in the church? that there are churches that are little better than "the habitation of dragons"?

But when God comes in, the wilderness becomes a fruitful garden. You go to a store and buy something, but it is really second-hand; the strawberries, or apples, or whatever it may be, are likely to have lost somewhat of their freshness. But go to the orchard and pick the fruit from the tree; or to the vineyard, and take the grapes from the vine; or turn back the leaves in the strawberry patch in early June and pull the luscious berry for yourself. Who then needs the addition of sugar or cream? And when the Lord comes into His church, He converts the wilderness into a garden. "Much fruit" hangs from the branches of the True Vine, and our Beloved brings a troop with Him when He cometh into His garden to eat His pleasant fruits. Then men taste and see that the Lord is gracious, and find that something that makes life sweet and worthwhile. The man says, "I do not know what it was. I did not see anybody in particular in that church. It seems to me they were a body of common people. They are not specially well-dressed. I saw many cars outside—but they were chiefly Fords. The people looked as though they all lived on an ordinary plane of life. But the moment I got inside the place, I could smell the fragrance of flowers. I felt the divine Presence. I knew I was in the garden of the Lord."

Where the Lord comes, that is always so. There is no longer the parched ground, the glistening mirage. Then when somebody says, "I wish I knew how to be saved," there is someone to respond, "I will take you to a place where you can be saved." "What is the minister's subject?" "I do not know; but he will be sure to get to the cross. Come with me." "But I have been to so many churches, and have always been disappointed." "But," saith the other, "you will not be disappointed here. You may not hear great preaching but you will be sure to hear of a great Saviour." And when he comes he finds no parched ground here, no glistening sand. His eyes

are opened; his ears are unstopped; he sees the Lord of heaven, and goes away a saved man, saying, "That parched ground has become a pool. I had a refreshing drink,—

"I heard, the voice of Jesus say,
"Behold, I freely give
The living water—thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live".
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him'."

The parched ground becomes a pool. The church lives, and no longer mocks a thirsty world.

"And the thirsty land springs of water." Giving—giving all the time. It has an overflow to its life that is a blessing everywhere. The church ought to be like the Nile, making the wilderness and the solitary place to be glad, and the desert to rejoice, and blossom as the rose. Have you "enough and to spare", my brother-Christian? Have you enough of the divine fullness to have something to run over and bless the life of somebody else? or are you living at a poor dying rate, like a piece of parched ground, and a thirsty land?

And where the dragons found their habitation, where was an attitude of mind that found pleasure in evil, there now grows grass for the flocks to lie down in, and reeds and rushes growing beside the still waters—it has become the Good Shepherd's pasture field.

Oh, that God would send us a revival, a real revival,—not to this church only, but to all the churches. When people get right with God, if and when men's souls are properly related to God, we shall have a business revival, too. The fundamental thing in human life is the spiritual, not the material. We must seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness and then the lesser things will be added.

III.

Amid such spiritual surroundings AN HIGHWAY SHALL BE FOUND. A way! A road! Did you ever go looking for a road? for a way out? That is what every business man is looking for to-day. That is what every statesman is looking for to-day. That is what the world is looking for, a way out, a highway, so that we may get on. We have come to a standstill. We have been on so many detours that we do not know what way we are going.

It is not long since the Evolutionists were telling us that the world was getting better—and now they are croaking like owls—or do owls croak? The man of God may be an optimist. While we have God with us, we can never fail.

"An highway shall be there." There is no way out? Yes, there is. When revival fires burn, when the dews of heaven descend, when revival from God comes, no sinner will ever seek without finding the way to heaven.

And it shall be "a way of holiness". The unclean shall not pass over it. The blood of Christ shall wash us to make us clean. We shall be justified by faith and sanctified by the Spirit through belief of the truth. The high way shall be called the "way of holiness". I like the way the Provincial Highway Department has marked our roads. They call all the provincial roads, "The King's Highway",—The King's Highway No. One, No. Two, and so on. When God draws near He will set men's feet

upon the King's Highway which leads from earth to heaven.

Is it paved? The Lord will go with us up hill and down dale. "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there."—"I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

And at last "the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

There is a good time coming, my friends. And it will come as we call upon God for it, and as we have a real visitation from His presence.

Let us pray: We thank Thee, O Lord, that we can always look up. When we look to Thee, we look to One infinite in His resources, Whose supplies never fail. We come, therefore, to Thee this evening to pray that even now the eyes of the blind may be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Lord, grant that in this very service some may pass from death unto life; for Thy name's sake, Amen.

HARPS ON THE WILLOWS.

(Continued from page 3)

and dancing in the long silent homestead. Keep your harp, my friend; and, if it be possible, keep it in tune. Prayer shall be answered, covenant shall yet be kept.

And thou! too, depressed and cast down Christian, throw not away thy harp. There shall be peace and joy and fullness of blessing yet for thee. God shall show Himself, and Christ will yet return. On the road to Emmaus their hearts burned within them. A song then would have been welcomed, and though they knew Him not, their Lord was at their side.

The time when the harp shall be needed, may not come until the moment of death. A life of sorrow, doubt or conflict may not have one hour of leisure or delight, and only swanlike can be the song; and yet, then the harp will be needed, though only one chord may be struck from it upon earth—its strains sounding amid the music of heaven. Then, for all the harp will be gained, for all shall sing the new song of Moses and the Lamb.

As I thus closed my meditation, a thought, or perhaps rather a fancy, passed through my mind. Are the harps of heaven ever silenced? Is there today any harp hanging upon the branches of the trees which are by the river of the water of life? If so, they are waiting only for the joy—the highest heaven knows—the return of some sinner upon earth to his Father and his God. Brethren, is it your impotence which silences the songs of heaven? Now, then, yield to the proffer of the mercy that is in Christ, so that there may be the joyful strains swept from the harps above to accompany the songs which tell of some of you converted, saved, today!

"GATHER UP THE FRAGMENTS THAT REMAIN."

We have received several letters recently which have been very suggestive. One writer subscribed 50c a week to the Radio Fund, saying that it was but half the minimum amount named in our appeal. That suggests that perhaps there may be many who could give 50c, or even 25c per week, who could not give \$1.00. To all such friends we say that even

(Continued on page 12)

Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

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REV. ALEX. THOMSON.

Lesson 41 October 11th, 1931.
FOURTH QUARTER.

THE ALTAR OF INCENSE.

Lesson Text: Exodus, Chapter 30.

Golden Text: "And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations." v. 8.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.

Monday: Lev. 10:1-7.
Tuesday: Num. 16:36-40.
Wednesday: Luke 1:5-11.
Thursday: John 13:1-11.
Friday: John 17: 1-12.
Saturday: John 17: 13-26.

I. THE ALTAR OF INCENSE (vs. 1-10).

The altar of incense was part of the furniture of the holy place, standing in the centre of that compartment, before the veil which separated the two places (v. 6; 40:26). It was made of shittim wood (v. 1), a cubit in length and breadth, and two cubits in height, with horns at the corners (v. 2). It was overlaid with gold, with an ornamental rim or crown of gold round about it (v. 3), and had rings fastened to its sides, in which to put the staves for the purpose of carrying it (vs. 4, 5). Upon it the high priest's duty was to burn sweet incense every morning and evening (vs. 7, 8); a warning is given against offering strange incense upon it (v. 9); and Aaron is instructed to make an atonement upon the horns of it once in the year with the blood of the sin offering (v. 10). Such action, while manifesting the holy character of this article of furniture, yet proclaimed its imperfection and insufficiency. It was but a type, pointing forward to the Antitype. As such it speaks to us of prayer ascending unto God (Psalm 141:2; Rev. 5:8; 8:3), prefiguring the prayers of the saints ascending unto God in the place of service, but probably the more fittingly applied here to our Lord the Great Intercessor, Who ever lives to make intercession for us (Heb. 7:25), and is our Advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1). Our prayers ascend unto the Father through Him (John 14:13; 15:16); and there is no promise of answered prayer, or of admittance into the Father's presence apart from Him.

It is of further interest to note that the altar was placed before the mercy seat, though the veil was between, and, therefore, that the incense was presented in the direction of this symbol of God's throne. Note the purpose of our Lord's intercessory work, its significance, and its blessedness. The general subject of prayer may here be referred to, and ex-

planation given of its nature, its privilege, and its entire dependence upon Christ.

II. THE ATONEMENT MONEY (vs. 11-16).

"When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a reason for his soul unto the Lord when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them when thou numberest them" (v. 12). Several particulars are stated concerning this ransom or atonement money. In amount it was "half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary" (v. 13), probably about sixty cents; it was to be paid by every person numbered "from twenty years old and above" (v. 14); the rich were not to give more, and the poor were not to give less (v. 15); and in the service of the tabernacle it was to be used (v. 16). Those who were able to go forth to war were numbered (Num. 1:45), the women and children being excepted, also the Levites (Num. 1:47). Refusal to pay this contribution brought unpleasant consequences upon the offender (2 Sam. 24:15). This was not a voluntary contribution, but one obligatory upon all those designated, and manifested the claim of God upon them. In God's dealings with His people, recognition is given of their state before Him as sinners, and provision is made for their acceptance on the basis of redemption, typical at that time and fulfilled in Christ Jesus; God therefore teaching the reality of His claim upon men, the necessity of substitutionary redemptive work, and the nature of His eternal purpose relating to the death of Christ. The ransom or atonement money points to our Lord's great work. He has redeemed us, but not with silver and gold (1 Pet. 1:18-20). He paid the price in His own precious blood, and as in the atonement money, the one price covers all. It may further be noted that the payment of the atonement money gave each one a definite share in the structure of the tabernacle, the silver being used for sockets, hooks and fillets (38:25-28); so through faith in our Lord's atoning work the child of God participates in and becomes a part of the spiritual temple of God now in process of construction (Eph. 2:19-22). Note the necessity for atonement for sin, the nature of scriptural atonement, and the results accruing therefrom. It will also be instructive to emphasize the unity and clearness of the Bible in reference to this subject; the Old Testament dealing with it in statement, type, and symbol, the New Testament in historical and doctrinal teaching.

III. THE LAVER FOR WASHING (vs. 17-21).

The material of which the laver was made is stated, but no particulars are given concerning its dimensions, or shape. The material was given by the women, the brass forming their looking glasses (38:8), and probably constituting a somewhat sacrificial gift. In the laver was placed the water for the washing of the hands and feet of the priests (v. 19). Their bodies were washed at their consecration (29:4), and did not require again such a ceremonial cleansing, typifying the eternal nature of regeneration: once saved we do not require to be saved again (John 10: 27-30), but as the hands

and feet of the priests became defiled in the course of their daily duties, and required cleansing, so the child of God in the course of his walk and general activities becomes contaminated, and needs cleansing. Cleansing by water speaks to us of the sanctifying influence of the word (Eph. 5:26), required daily by the servant of God. The water in the laver was for the priests alone. The act of washing was to be performed when the priests went into the tabernacle (v. 20), or whenever they entered upon the service of God in His sanctuary—teaching us the necessity for cleanness in the service of God. Emphasis should be placed upon the necessity of reading the word of God devotionally every day in order that our lives may be benefited by its cleansing properties. Suggestions may be made as to the best ways of doing this, in relation to books, selected portions and topics. The act of washing was for the priest a serious and necessary business attended by consequences of a drastic nature in case of disobedience (vs. 20, 21). God was most particular in reference to His service, and He has not changed in this respect. It is still true that He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever (Heb. 13:8). His standard of service is high, but He has made provision for reaching it, therefore we are without excuse. May we make it our business to please Him (Luke 2:49).

IV. THE OIL AND THE INCENSE (vs. 22-38).

The attention given to details by God is seen in these directions relating to the tabernacle. Every particular is of importance, and in our study this should be kept in mind. The ingredients of the anointing oil in their various proportions, are stated in this section; myrrh, the balsamic juice of Arabian myrtle; sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus, or sweet cane, a product of Arabia; cassia, from the same tree probably as the cinnamon, and olive oil. Typically these refer to the fragrance of our Lord's character, manifested in the Holy Spirit. We are informed by the Psalmist in reference to our Lord, that "God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes and cassia" (Ps. 45: 7, 8). Oil was used in the act of consecration, and in this case it was to be applied to the tabernacle, the articles of furniture in both sections of the same, the altar, the laver, and the priests (vs. 26-30). They would thus be sanctified or set apart for the service of God: speaking to us of the Holy Spirit (1 John 2: 27; John 16:13). Our Lord is particularly the anointed One (John 1:41; Acts 4:27), but in Him and by the same power we also are anointed in His service. Warning is also given against imitating it (vs. 32, 33), teaching us that it is sinful to imitate the work of the Holy Spirit. One should be most careful in attributing work to the Spirit. Be sure first that such work is fully in accordance with the revealed will of God. The Holy Spirit never leads contrary to the Word. Beware of imitations in gifts, such as tongues, and in a sanctification which springs from the flesh. The spices speak unto us of the fragrance of our Lord's life (vs. 34-38). Note the significance of beating such small, and apply to our Lord's death (v. 36).

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BE CALM.

The above is the advice of the Right Hon. David Lloyd George in viewing the British financial situation and it is good advice to follow at all times.

"Be calm," that is the only common-sense slogan for any crisis and not only for the nations of the world, but all organizations need to practice it, as unprecedented conditions arise and crises are faced in every sphere.

What is good advice for our Nation is good advice for individual organizations within it and especially do we take it to ourselves as a Union of churches at this time, but we would add "Our Confidence is in Him" as we remember that "Right is Might" in the Christian warfare.

Press Reports.

Press reports give the impression that the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec has been recently deprived of one of its strongest self-supporting churches and, as usual, these reports have dragged in the name of Dr. T. T. Shields as though he were responsible. The fact is that Dr. Shields has absolutely no responsibility for the Annette Street situation, and the following statement will clarify the matter in the minds of our readers.

A Statement.

Once more it is pointed out that the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec is a missionary fellowship. **IT HAS NOT FAILED** in its purpose, although some who were in the first instance responsible for the Union have failed and are answerable to God.

At the time of the merging of the Missionary and Educational Society into the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec, there was in existence a society known as the Women's Missionary Society of Regular Baptists of Canada. This Society, from its beginnings, was a divisive movement and not altogether in harmony with the ideals of the leaders who were protesting against modernism in the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, nevertheless, because of the position which many found themselves in, in the old Convention, support was lent to this Women's Society and under the pressure of the battle which was waging and because of the fact that Mrs. C. J. Holman, the President, was identified with the Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto—the storm centre, she was to some extent credentialled by the Union. Under such conditions, the Women's Missionary Society attracted unmerited attention and became firmly entrenched in the churches, although its policy, its over-emphasis, its over-lordship and its methods, were out of harmony and keenly resented by many of the thinking people throughout the Convention.

It was not very long after the forming of the Union that the lack of co-operation on the part of the Women's Missionary Society was sensed and the matter was introduced to the Executive Board of the Union by the late Mr. Thos. Urquhart. At that time, however, it was felt that Mr. Urquhart was a little severe in his judgment of the matter and a meeting was arranged with a committee of the Women's Board to see if more co-operation could not be given. That meeting was a failure and although it was realized that such an organization in the churches might create a grave situation in the future, no action was taken.

Subsequent events have proven that the confidence placed in the President of the Society was unwarranted because the Women's Missionary Society was not fostering the interest of the Union but was, on occasions, interfering with the rights of the local church.

After the London Convention, the Women's Missionary Society of Regular Baptists of Canada became openly antagonistic to Union interests, putting their own interpretation on matters and accusing the Pastors and brethren with misrepresentation and falsehood. **WHAT ACTION DID SUCH A POSITION DEMAND?**

Pastors throughout the Convention called upon the Women's Missionary Auxiliaries in their churches, associated with the Women's Missionary Society of Regular Baptists of Canada, to dissolve. The story of the opposition to such an action from the President of that Society and through her central organization, known as the Board, showed its endeavor to maintain its control in the churches.

The Women's Missionary Society was willing to see every church in the Union wrecked, the missionaries at home and abroad left without support and one of the greatest soul-winning stations in the world and its ministry destroyed, for their own small purposes. They simply refused to co-operate, or accept the position of the church. They were absolutely lawless in their position and sought to dictate on every matter.

Linked with the Women's Missionary Society and reflecting its attitude was the F.B.Y.P.A. The very life of the churches was being sapped by these interests contrary to the missionary purpose of the Union.

If the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec is to be of service in the Kingdom of God, it must needs be free of such divisive and unscriptural movements and **IT SOON WILL BE** if we are CALM, mindful of the work which the Lord has given us and of the admonition "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

Annette Street.

And now we come back to recent press reports. Many will have been somewhat shocked to learn that Annette Street Church, Toronto, had declared to sever its connection with the Union. By a majority of thirty-four the church made this decision. The majority was gained by the importation of many members who in years have not been regular attendants at the church services; a majority gained by the uniting of forces without one vestige of use one for the other, or for the pastor—a majority composed of many factions and led by those who were always antagonistic to the Union and including in its committee two men to whom the Pastor had refused communion.

AGAINST SUCH A MAJORITY, one finds the regular attendants at the church, those loyal members who have supported the church, the Pastor and all phases of the work and are in perfect unity working harmoniously for the sending forth of the blessed Gospel. Who are they? The entire existing Deacons Board, five term deacons and two honorary deacons; the Church Clerk; the organist and choir leader, the two church pianists; many members of the choir; the Superintendent of the Sunday School, his assistant, the treasurer and every teacher with the exception of possibly two or three; the superintendent of the Primary Department, the Sunday School pianist, the Superintendent of the Senior Young People's Society; the Superintendent of the Junior Society; four members of the Finance Board of the Church; five members of the Missionary Committee; the President of the Women's Missionary Circle; the members of the Christian Volunteer Band and their leader and every member of the famous Annette Street Gospel Band, and two Trustees of the Church property.

It is wise to **BE CALM** and get all the facts.

THE CONVENTION.

The Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec

will meet in

ANNUAL CONVENTION

in

Jarvis Street Baptist Church,
Toronto.

OCTOBER 19TH TO 22ND INCLUSIVE.

Inspirational Meetings.

Outstanding Speakers

Plan to Attend

THE MISSIONARY BULLETIN.

It is encouraging to hear that the Missionary Bulletin not only serves the home constituency, but takes its messages to friends far and near.

From Saskatchewan comes a note — "For the past five months I have received the 'Missionary Bulletin' and I want you to know that it has been a means of blessing to us.

"It brings the entire work of the Union before us both at home and abroad and gives us the burden of prayer on behalf of others. We believe with you that blessing comes by way of the Throne and we are grateful to God for you and shall continue to pray for all who are sounding out the Everlasting Gospel. I enclose ten dollars for Missions."

THE FRENCH WORK.

Churches that would like to avail themselves of a visit from Rev. Arthur St. James should note that he will be in Toronto from October 12th to the first week in November and is open for engagements. Write him direct at 2437 De La Salle Ave., Montreal.

SUNDERLAND.

From Mr. Robert Brackstone we hear that God has graciously answered the prayers of the saints on behalf of those who suffered a double bereavement at Sunderland and His grace has proven sufficient in strengthening and comforting the sorrowing hearts.

In the midst of grief the church has had blessing and a young man has obeyed the Lord in baptism. A great many strangers witnessed the ordinance.

CENTRAL, LONDON.

Great crowds greeted Rev. James McGinlay's return to his church and at the Thursday evening Bible lecture and again on Sunday, the Lord gave souls and several will shortly follow the Lord in baptism.

WAVERLY RD., TORONTO.

On Wednesday evening, September 16th, the members of the Waverley Road Baptist Church, Toronto, completely surprised their Pastor with an address and a beautiful gift as a token of their appreciation of his ministry among them.

Mr. C. F. Richardson, chairman of the church's Finance Committee, read the following letter and Mrs. Ida J. Cook presented Mr. Alexander with an English tooled leather purse containing a substantial amount.

Dear Pastor:

When we look back over the history of our church for the past five years, you as Pastor, and we, as members of the Waverley Road Baptist Church, have much to thank our Heavenly Father for in connection with the work.

We are thankful for your ministry. Some of us have seen you in the vestry, sick with pain, just before going to the pulpit and this has convinced us beyond a shadow of doubt that you must be in the will of God, otherwise you would not have been able to give us the Bible teaching you have given. We are pleased and thankful that your health has improved of late and our prayer is that this sixth year may be one great blessing and glory to God and that all branches of the church's work may step in line and that Waverley may do great things for God and that she may truly become a powerhouse for the Master. We pray earnestly that Waverley Church this year may be united as one family in Christian fellowship.

As a slight token of our love for you and faith in your ministry, we ask you to accept this purse and again we wish for you and Mrs. Alexander a happy sixth year at Waverley Road Church."

Mrs. Alexander was presented with a beautiful basket of roses.

THANK YOU.

To the churches and schools that have so generously responded to the request for picture rolls, and papers thanks is expressed. These will all be put to good use.

LINDSAY.

The Lindsay Regular Baptist Church will have a week of Special services beginning September 28th and continuing until October 2nd and the prayers of sister churches are asked.

Rev. Clifford J. Loney, President of the Convention, is to be the speaker at several of the services and Dr. Shields is to be with them on Friday, October 2nd, when a rally of the whole district is looked for.

The Pastor, Rev. J. M. Fleming, advises that the church hopes that this will be the beginning of a real forward movement in Lindsay. On a recent Sunday, a graduate nurse was converted and is going everywhere bearing witness to her Saviour. That the Lord may give them

many more souls is the prayer of this people.

OTTERVILLE.

When the Annette Street Gospel Band visited Otterville a few weeks ago, they had a glorious time. Pastor Roblin writes to thank the members and those who made the arrangement possible and says: "On Saturday evening we had the Open Air meeting in Otterville and one man was saved and several others were under conviction. On Sunday we had a good day with services at Otterville and Rosanna. At Rosanna one young girl about seventeen years of age came out for baptism and two young lads professed conversion."

KENORA.

Student John Armstrong of the Toronto Baptist Seminary who has been with the Gospel Car in Southern Saskatchewan all summer is now supplying Tabernacle Baptist Church, Kenora, for Rev. E. E. Hooper, who is on vacation during the month of September.

On Mr. Armstrong's return journey, he was reached by telegram in Winnipeg and asked to go to Kenora if possible. He readily responded and we have heard from him, as follows: "I am glad to say that I am enjoying the work very much. There is a large group of young people in the Church and they all seem to take a deep interest in the work of the Lord. Last week at prayer meeting there were fifty or sixty present and more than three-quarters of the number were young people."

"The last Sunday that Mr. Hooper was here a young lady accepted Christ as her Saviour. Her parents were Anglicans but she had formerly no use for any church and told me that she was practically an atheist. Since becoming a Christian, however, she has no use for the things which at one time she loved, but rather 'old things are passed away, behold all things are become new'.

"Last Friday I had the joy of leading a young man to know the Lord. He was a regular attendant at Church but had never taken his stand for the Lord."

WINGHAM.

From Wingham we hear that church attendance is increasing and the people are taking a new interest. Open air meetings are held each Saturday evening.

"GATHER UP THE FRAGMENTS THAT REMAIN."

(Continued from page 9)

the smallest amount would be of assistance in carrying on this radio ministry to hundreds of thousands of people.

Other letters have suggested that people think of Toronto Baptist Seminary as an educational institution needing hundreds, and thousands, of dollars; and that because they cannot send a large amount, while in full sympathy with the work we are doing, they send nothing, feeling that anything they could contribute would be too small to be of value. The fact is, the Seminary is most economically conducted. It costs only about \$1,000 a month for twelve months, or about \$1,500 a month for the eight months of the Seminary year.

We say therefore to our Seminary friends that even the smallest contribution will be most gratefully received.

If three hundred people were to send \$5.00 each, that would care for the Seminary for a month. If one thousand people were to send \$1.50 each, that would do the same. If sixty people were to send \$25 each, that would make \$1,500, and pay all expenses of the Seminary for a month of the Seminary year. If one hundred and fifty people were to send \$10 each, that would make \$1,500.

These three enterprises, the Seminary, THE WITNESS, and the Radio, have really hitherto been supported by the "fragments that remain". While, of course, we should appreciate large gifts, we shall be most grateful for the smallest. Please remember us at once.