

The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF EVANGELICAL PRINCIPLES
AND IN DEFENCE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.
\$2.00 Per Year, Postpaid, to any address. 5c Per Single Copy.

Editor: T. T. SHIELDS

Associate Editor: ALEXANDER THOMSON

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

Address Correspondence: THE GOSPEL WITNESS, 130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2, Canada.
Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada.

Vol. 14, No. 26

TORONTO, NOVEMBER 7, 1935

Whole Number 703

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

WAS THE EARTHQUAKE A SIGN OF THE LORD'S RETURN?

A Sermon by Rev. E. E. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, November 3rd, 1935.

(Stenographically Reported)

"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:

"Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

"And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

"For our God is a consuming fire."—Hebrews 12:25-29.

That is but a text on which to hang the subject announced for this evening, "Was the earthquake a sign of the Lord's return?" The earthquake to which the subject refers was that of last Friday, November 1st, at one o'clock or thereabout, the earthquake which lasted fifty seconds, two minutes, three minutes, and perhaps minor shocks up to an hour, according to the various reports which have been published.

The earthquake extended from the southern part of New York State to the extreme north of Canada—we do not know just where; and from Lake Michigan to the Atlantic Seaboard. It was rather a severe earthquake. Some damage was done, but comparatively little; yet it was a severe shock. Some small fissures were made in the earth, and some embankments were turned into lakes—but the damage was slight.

Some scientists wonder that greater damage was not done in view of its intensity. Other seismologists say it was really not sufficiently violent to do any serious damage. They called it "a tremor"! But their opinions have nothing whatever to do with your experience: I remind you merely of what other people say about it. What you felt, what you feared, is an entirely different matter; and you have a perfect right to think of that quake as you experienced it.

It is interesting to know that we are not immune from these things, as we had thought we were. We have pitied the Western States and California; and complimented ourselves that we were immune from such dangers. There

have been earthquakes in Canada in the past, but we have no authentic records of anything so intense as that which visited us two days ago, unless it be that which shook Montreal in seventeen hundred and thirty-two, killing seven people, and destroying one hundred and eighty-five buildings. Some say we are never wholly free from tremors, that the sensitive seismograph frequently registers such vibrations. Certainly the world generally is never entirely free from earthquakes. Be that as it may, it is indisputable that Japan has an earthquake at least daily, and some scientists tell us that there are perhaps fifty in the world every day; while something like three hundred and twenty-seven earthquakes—we will not quarrel about the exact number—have been reported in Canada during the past three hundred years, exclusive of the Western States.

In view of these facts the earthquake was sufficiently serious to merit consideration. It was an unusual experience for us here, and the fact that we are not immune from quakes is, perhaps, in itself, somewhat of a shock. The seismologists did not prophesy this quake, nor can they tell us certainly whether there will be recurrences, whether we may not at some time have a disturbance of sufficient violence to leave disaster in its wake. The fact is now demonstrated. You and I will be wise to look at this visitation quite independently of all that the scientists say. They cannot exactly foretell them, they cannot prevent them, they cannot restore the damage done. We shall be wise therefore to view this

experience as we should view all human experiences, in the light of divine revelation. As we passed through that experience Friday morning, none of us knowing at what moment the earthquake might develop into a disaster of the first magnitude, the instability of all earthly things must have been borne in on many minds; and the question of the relation of this life to a life to come must have compelled serious consideration. We all faced eternity, and no wise man will attempt to laugh off the implications of such an experience.

No matter what else fails, we in Canada are accustomed to have at least a solid earth under our feet; but when that shakes, all confidence is swept away. In the hour when the solid earth shakes, unbelievers ought to think of God; the Christian ought to think of God, of eternity, of heaven, of hell, and of salvation, the only salvation which is in and through the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. For myself, by His grace, I am resolved to take a lesson from this experience, and to endeavour to be more faithful to Him, for, at the longest, the time is short.

Yet we face death every day, when there are no earthquakes. "The living know that they must die." They do not know when, nor how, nor where: they simply know that they must die. Yet people live as though there were no God, no hell, no heaven; as though they had no soul, as though Christ had never died. But judgment is rapping at the door. The age rushes on to its close when men and nations must be summoned to judgment. Whole cities have been shaken into ruin in a few minutes by earthquakes, and destroyed by fire and flood. It is no new thing for judgment in various forms to come upon the world.

I.

But let us look for a few moments at THE EARTHQUAKE PHENOMENON IN THE LIGHT OF HOLY SCRIPTURE. The earth has always trembled at the presence of God—always! It did so when He came down on Sinai and robed Himself in fire and cloud: "And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." There was also that event connected with the coming of Israel out of Egypt when Korah, Dathan, and Abiram challenged the leadership of Moses and Aaron, and gathered together "certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" Moses summoned all the people to pray, then commanded them to separate themselves from these men even as he had received commandment of the Lord, saying, "Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the Lord hath not sent me. But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord. And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under

them: and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods . . . and there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense."

There have been other earthquakes. When God specially communicated Himself to Elijah there was an earthquake, which was probably strictly local. One earthquake is recorded by Amos: "The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake." Obviously that particular earthquake was of such significance that it became in the prophet's view a conspicuous and memorable point of time. Zechariah refers to the same event, reminding the people of how they "fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah."

When the Lord Jesus died on Calvary "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent." When He rose from the dead "there was a great earthquake." When Paul and Silas sang praises to God in the jail at Philippi "suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken."

These incidents suggest that whatever may be the underlying laws by which earthquakes are generally produced, an earthquake may result from direct divine interposition.

II.

Let us now for a few moments consider THE RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE SEISMIC PHENOMENA which, chiefly from Biblical history, we have briefly reviewed.

We read in Revelation of other earthquakes which are yet to come: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw." The ancient prophets were called seers because they saw into the future, they saw things as they were to be. John saw by visions many things, and he bore witness of those things: "And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven"; "And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell"—Toronto, Chicago, New York, London, Rome, Paris, Berlin, Warsaw, Budapest—"the cities of the nations fell." It is like God's word in Genesis, "He made the stars also." That simple statement is all God needs to say. There was an earthquake of absolutely unprecedented dimensions and violence, and "the cities of the nation fell." Chicago's six hundred feet buildings, Toronto's Bank of Commerce Building, and New York's mighty skyscrapers—the Empire Building of twelve hundred feet, the highest buildings ever erected. What will happen in that day of which God speaks, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which

cannot be shaken may remain"? What will happen when God seriously enters into judgment with the world?

I remind you Bible students that we have in Revelation not only a record or a prediction of the tribulation, but a prediction of God's judgments, too. Many fail to differentiate between the two. These are His judgments when He enters into judgment with the world. God has been shaking things, even in our day; so that if any man has confidence in himself, if he has confidence anywhere but in God, it is because he is blind, and dead, and lost. Surely from nineteen hundred and fourteen forward God has been shaking the world—and indeed for a much longer period. But He did this in nineteen fourteen: He shook all human confidence in the stability of human governments, in the possibility of anything approximating perfection in human leadership. From that day to this there has not been a statesman who has presumed to be an authority in the science of human government.

Of recent years God has been shaking confidence, if you please, in gold. The people of the United States may not hold a dollar in gold. All the gold in the United States is in the vaults of the government, and it is now illegal for an American citizen to possess gold. All you may hold is paper. If you have real property it may be taxed out of existence. The paper currency you hold depends for its value upon the solidity of the government whose stamp it bears. Of wealth, there is nothing that men may possess with any sense of security; and it is God Who has shaken the earth and all things that are therein. And if there be anyone here who has not yet been shaken out of all confidence in the value and permanence of earthly things, he needs another earthquake! And surely this shaking by superhuman powers "signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."

Therefore I say that even *this earthquake was fraught with a message from God*. Whether it was a sign of the Lord's return or not, we cannot say as of the local earthquake of Elijah's experience, "The Lord was not in the earthquake". "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." "The very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." Does any man breathe, or move, or think, without God? Can God's world be shaken as though by a giant hand and God have nothing to do with it? It is not a question of how it occurred, nor altogether whether it may occur again, but why did it occur? A certain scientist would reassure us. He flouts the idea that earthquakes result from the cooling of the earth, and tells us that the earth will not be cold and dead for eighteen hundred million years. We may be glad he put it at that figure. If he had cut off one hundred million years, we might have been anxious. None of us want serious things to happen to this earth while we are on it!

But all pleasantries aside, this is God's world, hence the earthquake must have been in some sense the work of God. He created this world, He keeps it whirling in space; and He says He will create "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Some scientists tell us that earthquakes are a sign of age; others that new mountains are in the making. It may be so. And if so, they are still of God. "Thou,

Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." Yes; even the earth shall wax old as doth a garment; but when the earth shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, when as a vesture God shall fold them up and they shall be changed, those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and are therefore saved through His precious blood, shall enter into full possession of the "kingdom which cannot be moved."

III.

Once more let us ENQUIRE WHETHER EARTHQUAKES AND OTHER SUCH DISASTERS MAY SCRIPTURALLY BE VIEWED AS IN ANY SENSE A SIGN OF THE LORD'S NEAR RETURN.

Was the earthquake a sign of the return of the Lord? We shall proceed cautiously toward the answer, because *I must first warn you against the tendency to careless assumptions*, respecting the teaching of Scripture. Certain people who read the Bible, and know much of truth, form the habit of taking at second hand very much that is passed on to them instead of going direct to the Bible for themselves. If I were to ask this congregation whether the wise men who came at the time of the birth of Christ followed the star from the east to its objective, I suppose many would answer, Yes. As Christmas approaches, you will see pictures showing that idea—books printed having for illustration on the cover, three men following a star over a desert country. In some pictures the wise men and the shepherds will be grouped together about the infant Christ. The shepherds came the night He was born: the wise men came some time later. It is generally assumed there were three wise men, but the Bible does not say so. Pictures of the Magi nearly always represent them as three in number. But some assume there were fourteen; others, a larger number. I think the larger number the more probable. It would be rather unlikely for men bearing generous gifts of gold and frankensense and myrrh, to travel in so small a company as three. It would scarcely be safe for so small a company carrying so much treasure to travel roads infested with robbers. But the Bible does not say there were only three. Many assume the wise men followed the star across the desert to Jerusalem. It does not so appear from the Bible record. They saw the star in the east, and followed its direction. But God never miraculously supplies stars or sun when men can find their own way—and all roads in that day led to Jerusalem. The star told them that somewhere the Messiah was born, and they went to Jerusalem. When the scribe said He was to be born in Bethlehem, they went to Bethlehem, "and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was." It did not guide them across the desert, according to the Scripture; but it did guide them from Jerusalem to Bethlehem.

I have referred to this at length only to show how careless people may be even in respect to the most familiar events of Scripture; with the result that their views are based on mere assumptions which are without any scriptural foundation.

Let me cite another example. How often have we heard people quote this passage, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear

heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him", as though it related to the future felicity of the saints. Perhaps in its largest significance it may. But in its present significance it means exactly the opposite to what many assume. They invert its meaning. So far from its suggesting a present impossibility of knowing what God has prepared for His people, it is a positive declaration that it is the believer's privilege to know something of the present and future wealth of the inheritance of the saints. Hear that text in its completeness, which is so often misquoted because it is only partially quoted: "As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." That is to say: things which the wise men of the world do not know, and cannot imagine, are freely communicated to us by the unseen, eternal Spirit.

Perhaps *this tendency to careless and groundless assumption is shown in nothing more than in respect to the teaching of the Scriptures concerning the coming of the Lord.* How often have I heard it said, by someone, shaking his head solemnly, "Wars and rumours of wars: the coming of the Lord must be near." It may be, but "wars and rumours of wars" are not a sign thereof. What saith the Scripture? "Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." If wars and rumours of wars were a sign of the coming of the Lord, such reports and rumours have obtained ever since Abraham took the field against Chedorlaomer and his three confederates. The history of the world is a record of blood; of wars, and rumours of wars. There is never a day when there is not war somewhere upon earth, when there are not rumours of wars. I have read that, in the one hundred and fifty years of the history of pacific America, there have been but thirty-eight years in which the United States was not actually engaged in war. Notwithstanding some would say that the Lord must soon be coming because there are "wars and rumours of wars."

He is coming, but these things are not necessarily signs of the imminence of His advent. So far from their being signs of His coming, *Christ Himself definitely says they are not signs.* Why did He say so? Because here were some fishermen who had had three years' training, who were going out to face the world. They needed to be told by Him Who knew what sort of world they were to face. He did not want them to be unnecessarily troubled: He wanted them to have a knowledge of the conditions they would have to face. He told them the time would come when they would be killed for His name's sake. Does someone say, "But that is Matthew; is there anything in one of the other Gospels that will throw light upon it? Matthew's gospel is specially for the Jews." That is itself a mere assumption; but for my purpose I need not contravert it here, for Mark also says, "When ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet." Observe also what Luke has to say about it: "But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by", or, as the Revised Version has it, "the end is not yet."

But what about earthquakes as signs of the Second

Advent? These are natural phenomena, independent of human origination or control. Are they a sign of the coming of the Lord? Let us enquire of the same authority: "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places"—there were plenty of them before the destruction of Jerusalem—"all these are the beginning of sorrows." Thus our Lord warned them that when these things at last should come, they would be on the edge of persecutions. It would be a beginning of the real life they were to live: "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake."

Again let us consult Mark: "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows." The same expression exactly as in the other passage. And Luke says, "But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven"—here, however he says, "Before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake." I think He refers here to the "fearful sights and great signs" that took place before the destruction of Jerusalem in eighty-seven.

Christ Himself therefore says that wars and rumours of wars, earthquakes, pestilences, famines, are not signs of His coming.

IV.

WHAT THEN ARE THE SIGNS OF THE COMING OF THE LORD? We are told that "in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

One of the signs of the last days will be that ungodly men will masquerade under the guise of religion, "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." Such are a thousand times more dangerous than the open blasphemer, the profligate, or the drunkard. Incalculably more dangerous in the sight of God, and in reference to the salvation of men, is the man who has the form of godliness while denying the essential truth of the gospel, the expiatory work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Peter writes, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and

their damnation slumbereth not. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment . . . the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." If there be a professing Christian here to-night who is not sure that he is passed from death unto life, who is not living a consistent Christian life, I beseech you, in Christ's stead, settle this matter in the face of high heaven, be washed in the blood—or withdraw from the church, and stay out. Every false professor is standing in the way of sinners. If you are such, people are stumbling over you into endless perdition.

The time was when men believed something, and believed it so profoundly that they went to prison and to death for their faith, rather than deny the Lord Who bought them. Those days for the majority of professing Christians are past! Alas! they are gone. In this day we have hundreds and hundreds of churches where, if the blood of Christ were preached as the sinner's only hope, the congregation would be shocked. A prominent man in one of the denominations said not long ago that the story of Christ and the gospel was so rare that if it were proclaimed from the pulpit the people would be astonished—and he may be presumed to know, being an official of that denomination. Years ago a professor in Chicago University said to his class, what then perhaps seemed rather a remote possibility, "Young gentlemen, to-day they are questioning the Old Testament, they are questioning Moses. I may not live to see the day, but there is no doubt you will see the day when men will question the very Deity of Christ." That day has come. In institutions, once avowedly evangelical, they not only question the Deity of Christ, but boldly deny it; and, in some instances, question even His historic existence.

I will not here enter into controversy, but it supplies what I want to say, to remark that there was a certain professor in McMaster University who scoffed openly at the historicity of the Book of Jonah, and scorned all those who, in his judgment, were fools enough to believe that it is indeed history. But the Lord said, "As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." And, "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here." Thus the all-glorious Lord stamped with His approval the Book of Jonah as historical fact. A professor in McMaster University scoffed at it, and by implication scorned the wisdom, the knowledge, the prescience, of the Lord Who died "the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God."

Peter said ages ago, "There were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." But listen! Listen, you men and women of God, listen to this inspired Word. Do not forget that it was the Holy Ghost speaking through Paul to the Galatians when he said, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed". And lest there should be any doubt about it, like the "verily, verily", of the Saviour, he said again, "As we said before, so say I now again, If any man

preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

Men have no right to stand in the pulpit and invent a message: they have had a Gospel message delivered to them, and it is their solemn duty in the sight of Almighty God, and as they shall stand to give account at the judgment seat of Christ by and by, to declare from the Word of God the whole counsel of God. I counsel you in the name of the Lord, do not go to hear them. Rebuke them; tell it out; rebuke them openly; let it be known that men are leading thousands to destruction by denying the Lord, and withholding the glorious gospel of His grace from the sinning, suffering, dying, lost, sons of men.

V.

BUT CHRIST IS COMING. I MUST SAY A WORD ABOUT THAT. He is coming: I must say that at least. And He is coming *openly*. Of that I am sure: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him."

If one should say, "That means when He comes to judgment", I reply, Read the Book of Revelation, and see if it is not reasonable since its message was sent to the churches that God would have said something about His other coming, His alleged coming for His church, His intermediate coming, or some coming other than His open and manifest coming, if there were to be such an intermediate coming. Hear these words in proof: "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Will someone say, "But the elect are the Jews." Are they? Why should God gather the Jews particularly and exclusively from the four winds whether saved or still in unbelief? If you carefully study the Bible you will find that the "elect" are the redeemed of the Lord, both Jew and Gentile, all who have repented and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is also written, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened." Personally I think "the tribulation" refers to the tribulation at the destruction of Jerusalem which in point of intensity and utter sorrow and pain exceeds any other tribulation of the earth in all time, but whether or no—"in those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Luke puts it, "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Surely the teaching is that the coming of the Lord will be universally manifest.

Notice the passage in Thessalonians. I heard one highly esteemed and beloved preacher, in quoting this passage, say, "I have to differ from many of my brethren in this. It seems to me to be a very noisy chapter." With which I agree. Here it is: "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring

with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

There are other signs which are multiplying all over the earth, telling in language that cannot be mistaken by any Spirit-taught man, that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh; though no scripturally-taught man will presume to say how nigh. Christ certainly will come again. *It is necessary for Him to come in order that He may raise the dead.* It is absolutely essential that He come in order that *He may meet out vengeance upon His enemies, that He may rule the nations with a rod of iron, and that He may be known over all the earth.* Jesus Christ must come, again. He is Christ, the Messiah, "whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

He is gone up on high; but He is coming again. The first thing He is coming to do is to cause us to rise to meet Him in the air. Are you ready for the trumpet blast? Are you ready for that hour when the heavens shall blaze with His return? Are you ready for that day of which He speaks when He says the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father, and in His own glory, and the glory of the holy angels? Are you ready for that light which shall outshine the sun in his meridian splendour? When the Lord shall come in glory, will you be ready for the trumpet sound? Are you prepared to meet God? "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." Prepare to meet God, ye Christian men and women. Prepare, believers, for that great and terrible day which may be at the door! "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth."

"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire."

"Lo! He comes, with clouds descending
Once for favoured sinners slain:
Thousand thousand saints attending,
Swell the triumph of His train:
Hallelujah!
Jesus comes, and comes to reign.

"Every eye shall now behold Him,
Robed in dreadful majesty:
Those who set at naught and sold Him,
Pierced and nailed Him to the tree,
Deeply wailing,
Shall the true Messiah see.

"When the solemn trump has sounded,
Heaven and earth shall flee away;
All who hate Him, must, confounded,
Hear the summons of that day—
Come to judgment!
Come to judgment! Come away!

"Now redemption, long expected,
See in solemn pomp appear:
All His saints, by men rejected,
Now shall meet Him in the air:
Hallelujah!
See the day of God appear!

"Yea, Amen! Let all adore Thee
High on Thine eternal throne:
Saviour, take the power and glory,
Claim the kingdom for Thine own:
Oh, come quickly!
Hallelujah! Come, Lord, Come!"

A CHAT ABOUT THE SEMINARY

"What is happening at the Seminary?" you ask us, and we are glad you are interested. A little chat together may help to satisfy a delightful curiosity and also to stimulate interest in what we think is really worth-while.

For one thing, time is flying! In the Capitol building at Washington one of the clocks is shaped like a winged chariot. Ours is driving fast. Why, we shall have reached the end of the first quarter of our eighth session by the time you read this. (Our school year is thirty-two weeks, and these are divided into four quarters of eight weeks each, seven for lectures and one for examinations.) The first set of quarterly examinations is on now. The quarter system keeps our students "on their toes", as it were. In this way we have done away with the system by which men hibernate for the winter to become ferociously active about the end of April!

The Monday night before the Convention opened we had a delightful Alumni banquet. Mr. J. Scott, the "head boy", proved a good chairman for a programme of speeches, music and general fellowship and inspiration. In the absence of our President, Rev. E. E. Shields gave a delightful address. "A good time was had by all."

But while dinner is served students five days a week, these dinners are work-day affairs. In the sweat of our face we must all eat bread—sometimes so physically, always so intellectually. A number of our students work—outside of class!—hours each week; only so can they continue at the Seminary. One of the men was able to get jobs for four others in one of the stores; this was a veritable life-saver for them. Some of the girls work as waitresses. Of course, so much time being consumed outside of studies makes things harder at school, for the course is laid out for those who can give all their time to it. The difficulty is felt by student pastors, who are carrying the burdens of churches along with their studies.

But to turn to the more spiritual side of things, we are glad to say that the men who returned to the Seminary from summer fields came greatly refreshed in spirit and with a fine determination to make the most of their days of study here.

Mr. T. D. M. Carson had a good summer at Cumberland, P.Q. Formerly this field was an afternoon appointment for a nearby pastor. Through Mr. Carson's efforts the field is to be worked all the year, and Mr. C. Sawyer is now pastor. Some regular gatherings are being carried on in the country around. Special evangelistic meetings were begun ten days ago, with Rev. R. Hisey, of Lachute, P.Q., as preacher.

Pastor R. E. J. Brackstone (who graduated in 1933) has opened a new work at Little Britton in addition to his pastorates at Cannington and Sunderland. A number of unsaved people are attending regularly, which is certainly an encouraging sign.

Rev. H. C. Slade ('30) is having fine times at Timmins. He remarked to us in conversation recently that

on the preceding Sunday night the building had been packed. A number are to be baptized.

Rev. G. W. Searle (class of '30) recently baptized one at Orangeville. A week ago last Sunday he was the special preacher at Courtright and Wilkesport, where Student-pastor J. Watt is doing a good work. At the evening service of this anniversary occasion the congregation numbered about two hundred.

Pastor A. J. Burnham (class of '32) is doing good work in Galt. Considerable opposition is in evidence, but so is the blessing of the Lord.

Rev. E. C. Wood ('32) is enjoying unusual blessing in Chatham. As the report submitted to the Convention stated, during the past year eighteen were baptized, more money was given for missions, and the church was able to become entirely self-supporting. Mr. Wood was elected to the Board of the Union. His counsel will be valued.

So let us pray, so let us work; thus even now we shall receive a reward and also gather fruit unto eternal life.—W. G. B.

THE ILLNESS OF PREMIER HEPBURN

The people of Ontario particularly, and of Canada generally, will have heard with profound regret that the Honourable Mitchell F. Hepburn, Premier of Ontario, has developed such a condition of health as threatens to force his retirement from public life. There is a touch of tragedy about the announcement of the possibility of the curtailment of so spectacular a political career.

We have strongly disapproved of some of Mr. Hepburn's policies, particularly of his administration of the Liquor Control Act; and, on principal, we disapprove of these matters as strongly as ever. But all decent people respect the Red Cross. While Mr. Hepburn is ill, every right-minded Canadian will be his friend and well-wisher. No thoughtful Ontario citizen can be indifferent toward such a positive character as the present Premier of Ontario. A dynamic personality such as his must divide the people into friends and foes. Whether they approve of his direction or not, all will admire the decision of character displayed in his invariably courageous resolution.

Such a man will desire nobody's sympathy. Notwithstanding, Canadians generally will share Mrs. Hepburn's anxiety, and sincerely and earnestly hope that relief from the burdens of public duty in some more congenial climate will effect a complete and speedy recovery of the Premier's health.—T.T.S.

PASTOR W. J. H. BROWN

After an illness of more than a year, a large part of which time his body was racked with pain, Pastor Brown departed to be with Christ on Monday morning, October 28. He was buried from the church that he loved most of all, and in which he had laboured for twenty-three years—"Dear old Annette Street", as he affectionately used to call it. Throngs of people from West Toronto and from the various parts of the city came long before the hour of the service to pay their loving tribute to the one whom they delighted to call "Pastor" Brown, and in his case the addition was no empty title, but the truthful description of the office that he filled in their lives and in the church. He often said during his ministry that he had prayed for the shepherd's heart, and the love and affection that the members of his flock had for him testified that his prayer had been answered in an unusual way.

It was fitting that there should be a note of triumph in the funeral service, for that same note was not absent from his bed of suffering and death in the hospital. Day by day in weakness and in pain he witnessed to his nurses and attendants and to all who came to see him, of the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and in so doing he was but continuing a custom, one might almost say a habit, of his long ministry. Like the apostle he bore testimony that "he had a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better". More than six months ago, when he was still able to be up and around, he said to the writer, "I have no fear of going home, but I have fears of the way that lies between here and there." But though he was called upon to tread a dark and bitter path, he testified that the sweetness of the presence of His Lord more than compensated him for it. Many times during these last days he repeated that the grace and glory of the Lord had never been more real and more blessed to him.

Even down to the minutest details Pastor Brown himself made the arrangements for the funeral service. He specially requested that the service should be presided over by Dr. Shields whom he loved and honoured, and who was his pastor during the last part of his life after he was forced to retire from the active ministry. Two of his "boys" whom he had led out into the ministry were asked to speak. One of them, Rev. James Boyd, of the Dovercourt Road Church, said that he had never known another pastor than Mr. Brown. Through his ministry he had been converted and inspired to give his life to the preaching of the Gospel; Rev. A. J. Lewis, now of the Benton Street Church, Kitchener, and a former Sunday school superintendent under Pastor Brown, told of his beloved pastor's prayer-life, and as the fittest memorial sermon preached the same Gospel and made the same appeal that had been faithfully sounded out from that very pulpit for almost a quarter of a century.

Pastor Brown was a great preacher because he was a great man; and his greatness lay in his transparent honesty of soul, in the goodness and kindness of heart that was so abundantly his, and above all in the intensity and earnestness of his devotion to the Gospel he preached and the Saviour he loved.

Many men and women in the various places in which Mr. Brown has ministered since he began preaching at the age of seventeen will mourn this valiant soldier and loving shepherd of the Lord Jesus as a personal friend and will wish to join with us in extending their deepest sympathy to his two sons, Gordon of the Toronto Baptist Seminary, and Douglas of St. George's Church, Guelph.—W. S. W.

Several of the late Pastor Brown's most used sermons, together with a brief sketch of his life, and a letter he sent to the students and graduates of the Toronto Baptist Seminary just before his death, are to be issued shortly as a small memorial volume. This will be ready in a couple of weeks, and may be secured through THE GOSPEL WITNESS office.

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

Pastors' and People's Conference

On Tuesday, November 12th, the Pastors' and People's Conference of the Hamilton district, will meet in the Bethel Baptist Church, Beech and George Streets, St. Catharines.

Rev. Robt. Guthrie of London, and Rev. H. S. Bennett of Hamilton, will speak in the afternoon, and Rev. W. E. Atkinson, Secretary of the Union, will be the evening speaker. The afternoon session will begin at 2.00 o'clock, and the evening session at 7.30. Supper will be served by the ladies of the Bethel Church, and they would like to know how many they should make preparation for. A postal card to the pastor, Rev. E. E. Hooper, will be appreciated. Everybody welcome.

Bobcaygeon

Rev. M. B. Gillion, pastor of the Bobcaygeon Church, has written the following for the encouragement of other Churches, Home Mission and others:

"For more than a year the Bobcaygeon Church has been praying almost without ceasing for a revival in the village. During the past two years new work has been opened up at Kinmount, Nogies Creek, and Eden, and a number of souls have been saved at each place; but in Bobcaygeon only a few have confessed Christ as Saviour. The burden became so great

for souls that we felt we must have someone come and help us, and hold special meetings. Rev. C. J. Loney was invited to come, and from the first meeting souls were saved at every service almost without exception. Mr. Loney was with us fifteen days, and during that time a number of cold and indifferent Christians were gloriously restored and are proving to be real personal workers. Over thirty confessed Christ under Mr. Loney's ministry, and last Sunday, Mr. Lafamme and Capt. I. B. Brown, both members of Jarvis Street, were used of the Lord to lead a number of souls to Christ. We praise God for these men who are willing to help in such a wonderful way. Rev. A. Penman of Lindsay, also helped with several services.

"Following the meetings in Bobcaygeon we went into a new district eleven miles north-west of Bobcaygeon, and held meetings in a schoolhouse. Rev. W. N. Charlton of Hespeler, came up for four days. We had an average of over one hundred people packed into the little school-house each night. Mr. Charlton sang and preached the gospel in a wonderful way, and eight souls were saved during his short visit with us. We believe if Mr. Loney and Mr. Charlton could have stayed a few weeks longer this whole north country would have been stirred and multitudes would have been saved. God has blessed their ministry in a marvelous way at Bobcaygeon and the districts around. Altogether, seven young married couples have been saved, a number of young men and women, and not a few boys and girls. At least fifty souls have confessed Christ, a large number being men. Several of these conversions have been outstanding, but it would take too much space to tell of the individual cases. Some of the people who have confessed Christ were very bitter toward us, but now are proving to be real Christians. Over twenty have been baptized or have asked for baptism since the meetings began. We are continuing the services in the rural districts, and if the Lord sends in the necessary money and help, we shall carry on with special services all through November. We ask that the people of God will pray for this revival. There are scores of souls who will respond if we go out and tell them of Jesus and His love."

Calvin, Toronto

The members of Calvin Baptist Church are rejoicing that the Lord has blessed their services in a marked way these past few weeks. The Bible School attendance is mounting upwards steadily; Thanksgiving Sunday it reached one hundred and forty-five. The choir had decorated the building with the fruit of the harvest, and the pastor brought real messages of thanksgiving and praise. The evening attendance was the largest we have had, one hundred and twenty-five present. One soul came out for baptism that evening, and four for salvation the previous Sunday evening.

Annual Reports

We still have a number of Annual Reports on hand, and if any friends would care to receive a copy, we shall be glad to send same upon application.

Clergy Certificates, 1936

The Canadian Passenger Association of Montreal, requests us to inform the holders of 1935 Clergy Certificates, to use the application forms found in the back of their certificates in making application for 1936 Certificates. This will avoid unnecessary correspondence and confusion in the issuance of new certificates.

Briscoe St., London

"How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts!" Sunday, October 20th, was an exceptionally good day at Briscoe Street Baptist Church, London. There was a good attendance at the Bible School in the morning and also at the service following, which was broadcast over CFPL. The pastor preached on the Second Coming of Christ, the first sermon on that subject to be broadcast by us. There was one decision in response to the invitation, and letters received reveal the fact that the service was enjoyed far and near.

At the evening service the church was well filled, and the pastor preaching on "Sinner, why tarriest thou?" There was one bright conversion, the daughter of a mother recently converted under Pastor Guthrie's ministry. Both the mother and daughter are looked upon as trophies of God's grace.

At the Communion service which followed, the best attend-

ed Communion service held thus far in Briscoe Street, eight happy believers were given the right hand of fellowship, a fulfilling of the promise, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

Services are largely attended, many unsaved are coming in under the soul of the gospel, and because of the faithful presentation of the Word a true reaping should be experienced this winter.

Courtright

The Courtright Regular Baptist Church held its fifty-sixth Anniversary Services on Sunday, October 27th. Rev. Gordon W. Searle of Orangeville, was the Anniversary Preacher, and his messages were greatly appreciated by all. Miss Mary Jeffery of Toronto, brought special Violin music which added much to the enjoyment of the congregations which taxed the capacity of the Church.

At the evening service four followed the Lord in baptism, and at the Communion service which followed, six were given the right hand of fellowship by the pastor, Mr. J. H. Watt.

REPORT OF THE Eighth Annual Convention

By the Secretary, REV. W. E. ATKINSON

Each year after our Annual Convention the messengers and friends in attendance all say, "This has been the best Convention yet"—and this year has been no exception. October 22nd, 23rd, and 24th, were three days of real fellowship and great spiritual blessing to all. The number of messengers was larger than last year, and the sessions were all well attended.

Our Guest-Speaker, Dr. W. H. Houghton, of Moody Bible Institute, was used of God to stir us all up, and the following resolution was passed concerning his ministry. "We wish to record our gratefulness to God for one who bears the marks of true Christian manhood, and whose messages have sounded an uncompromising wholesome note in the matter of Christian aggressiveness. All have been impressed with Dr. Houghton's sane viewpoint in respect to practical world-problems, and his impassioned conviction that Christ enthroned in the believer's heart will bring about the revival which will result in the salvation of multitudes in our generation. We feel certain that you, Dr. Houghton, will be glad to know that the immediate results of your visit have exceeded expectations that were already high; we have been quickened in mind; uplifted in spirit: but above all we have been encouraged to throw ourselves with renewed vigour into the fray. Truly, your messages will live long in our hearts, and your name will ever command our deepest respect and sincerest love."

Pre-Convention Meeting

On Tuesday afternoon, October 22nd, at 2.30 there was an Inspirational Conference in charge of Rev. P. B. Loney. Rev. John Byers brought us a great message on "The Place of Prayer in Christian life and service", in which he recounted the faithfulness of God in answering prayer concerning the Bethel Baptist Church, Orillia, of which he is Pastor. "Faith and prayer must of necessity go hand in hand", said Mr. Byers. Men of great faith have always been men of prayer. All who listened to the experiences of the pastor and people of Bethel Baptist Church, Orillia, and of how God has honoured their faith, were inspired to ask greater things from God, believing the promise, "Them that honour me I will honour."

First Convention Session

Rev. Alex. Thomson, President of the Convention, was Chairman of this Session, and after welcoming the messengers, declared the Convention open for business. The tentative Constitution was adopted unanimously for another year, and the Committee on Nominations appointed.

Reception of New Churches and Pastors

The pastors of the following churches were called to the platform by Mr. Thomson, and were officially welcomed into the Union: Maple Hill, Pastor John Armstrong; Bethel, St. Catharines, Rev. E. E. Hooper; Calvin, Toronto, Rev. F. Roblin; Stouffville, Pastor Chas. McGrath.

Seven new pastors in the Union were then called to the platform and welcomed by the President, namely: Rev. Frank Roblin, Rev. Bernard Jeffery, Rev. Wilfred Wellington, Rev. Gordon W. Searle, Pastor Bruce Hisey, Pastor J. H. Watt, and Pastor A. J. Burnham.

The Presidential address by Rev. Alex. Thomson, was on, "The Church in the New Testament", based upon Matthew 16:18, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The message was most timely, and was greatly enjoyed by all.

Second Convention Session

At the morning session on Wednesday, the Eighth Annual Report of the Executive Board of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec was presented by the Secretary, Rev. W. E. Atkinson. The Report was most encouraging, and the Executive Board humbly gives thanks for the goodness and grace of the Lord toward His work and workers.

The financial report showed an increase of over five thousand dollars in income in the past year. "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes." Our work has never been more hopeful, and we go forward with renewed vigour and courage.

Foreign Missions

Our Foreign Mission work was the topic of the Third Convention Session. Rev. W. E. Atkinson introduced the Missionaries, giving a brief résumé of the work in Liberia under the Union of Regular Baptist Churches.

Miss Florence Stacey was the first speaker, and told of the difficulties that the native Christians encounter. As she told of their heathen beliefs and superstitions, we realized more than ever their great need of a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Mrs. E. Hancox was the next to speak, and she told of some of the difficulties the Missionaries encounter, especially in their housekeeping affairs.

Rev. E. Hancox, who had just returned from a tour of the Western Provinces, was then called upon. Mr. Hancox took as his text, "When he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then said he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." (Matt. 9:36-38). "The name Liberia signifies liberty," said Mr. Hancox, "but it does not tell of the chains of sin in which Satan holds the people of Liberia." There are in the country surrounding our Mission 150,000 people speaking the Bassa tongue, and they are pleading with our workers to open up mission stations in many other towns. Truly, the harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few. A stirring appeal was made by Mr. Hancox for more workers and more funds with which to carry on and expand the work.

Fourth Convention Session

At this session greetings were brought from Rev. and Mrs. W. J. Thomson, of Vancouver, and from Rev. F. Wellington of Fort William. It was moved by Mr. O. L. Raymer, and seconded by Mr. W. J. Hutchinson, that these greetings be returned by the Convention.

Special music was rendered by the Kinsman Quartet, and the Jarvis Street Choir, which was greatly appreciated.

Fifth Convention Session

Mr. J. E. Jennings, Chairman of the Budget Committee, reported that the Budget already in use had proved so satisfactory that it was decided wise to leave it the same, namely,

| |
|------------------------------|
| 72% Missions |
| 65% Home Missions |
| 35% Foreign Missions |
| 12% Toronto Baptist Seminary |
| 7% French Evangelization |
| 5% Western Missions |
| 3% Publicity |
| 1% Bible School. |

The following resolutions were passed by the Convention at this session:

On Beer and Wine:

WHEREAS there has been no change in the Government's policy which permits the sale of beer and wine, under cir-

cumstances which are offensive to Christian sentiment, and actually destructive of the young manhood and womanhood of our province,

AND WHEREAS such demoralizing conditions have been brought about without the expressed will or wish of the public in general or any appeal to the electorate,

AND WHEREAS in the opinion of all who have an interest in the wholesome development of our national life, violence has been done to the principle of fair play and to the traditional spirit of good sportsmanship in thus ignoring the electoral sentiment,

AND WHEREAS we as Christian men and women have been deeply grieved by the spectacle of beverage rooms crowded with young and old of both sexes,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we as a convention, without committing ourselves to political issues or political parties express

1. Our persistent opposition to the present method of dispensing beer and wine, and

2. Our unqualified determination to go on in our condemnation of the administrative machinery which has apparently sold out to the liquor forces."

Re Hospitality:

WHEREAS the Jarvis Street Baptist Church has placed at our disposal its modern and up-to-date conveniences, and equipment,

AND WHEREAS the spirit of brotherly love which is always so manifest here has made the stay of all messengers so enjoyable,

AND WHEREAS the members of neighbouring churches have likewise opened their homes for our entertainment, and have shown us every kindness

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that we hereby in a very hearty manner express our deep gratitude to this church and to the members and friends of other churches which have in any way contributed to our welfare, praying that our stay in their midst may be the means of bringing a blessing to them as the Master hath said, "He that receiveth an apostle in the name of an apostle, shall receive an apostle's reward."

The next resolution was regarding a letter of greeting to our Brother, Rev. W. J. H. Brown. This was unanimously passed, and later on a telegram was received from Mr. Brown, as follows: "Greetings from heaven's gates. Second Corinthians sixteen, twenty-three and twenty-four." The hearts of all the Messengers were deeply touched at this message, and Rev. F. W. Dyson led us in prayer on behalf of our Brother Brown.

Officers for the Coming Year

President: Rev. Alex. Thomson.
 Vice-Presidents: Rev. Jas. Hall and Rev. W. N. Charlton.
 Home Mission Board: Mr. W. C. Boadway, Rev. John Byers, Mr. J. H. Ratcliff, Mr. O. L. Raymer, Rev. L. Roblin, Dr. T. T. Shields, Rev. W. S. Whitcombe, Rev. E. C. Wood.
 Foreign Mission Board: Mr. A. Baker, Rev. J. F. Dempster, Rev. F. W. Dyson, Mr. J. E. Jennings, Rev. C. J. Loney, Mr. C. S. McGrath, Rev. H. C. Slade, Rev. W. E. Smalley.

Educational Session

The Sixth Convention Session was given over to the work of the Toronto Baptist Seminary, and Miss F. Stacey spoke on "The Seminary and the Foreign Field", Pastor John Armstrong on "The Seminary and the Home Field", and Pastor J. Scott on "The Seminary and the Student". Following this Dr. T. T. Shields delivered the address which appeared in last week's issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS.

Seventh Convention Session

At the Seventh, and last Convention Session, the new officers and Board members of the Convention were introduced.

Greetings were read by Rev. W. S. Whitcombe from French Regular Baptists, and it was moved by Mr. Whitcombe, seconded by Mr. O. L. Raymer, that our Convention return the greetings.

The following resolution was read and moved by Rev. L. Roblin, and adopted by the Convention:

"In view of the fact that this Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec has come into being as the result of our protest against the Modernism of McMaster University, and in particular the retention of Professor L. H.

Marshall on the faculty, despite the evidence of his rejection of the Bible as the infallible, inerrant Word of God; his denial of Christ having born the punishment of our sins; his refusal to accept the authority of Christ when Jesus spoke of the story of the Book of Jonah as literal history;

And in view of the present reappointment to the faculty of McMaster University of the said Professor L. H. Marshall,

Therefore we desire as a Convention to reaffirm our loyalty to the Bible as the infallible, inerrant Word of God; our belief in the substitutionary work of Christ as set forth in the Scripture; "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of

God in Him." And also of our recognition of the authority of Christ in every realm.

And further, that we are unalterable in our protest against the false teaching of Professor L. H. Marshall, and are unchanged in our determination to obey the Word of God, to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

Following Dr. Houghton's eloquent message on "The Missing Note in Present Day Preaching", the Convention came to a close, the great audience of fourteen or fifteen hundred going to their respective homes feeling, "It has been good for us to be here".

WHOLE BIBLE LESSON COURSE FOR THE YEAR 1936

Arranged by Rev. Alex. Thomson, Associate-Editor of THE GOSPEL WITNESS

| Date | Lesson Text | ISAIAH | Golden Text |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|-----------------|
| January | 5 The Divine Appeal to Judah | Chapter 1 | 1:18 |
| | 12 Divine Judgment on Judah | Chapters 2-4 | 2:3 |
| | 19 The Lord's Vineyard | Chapter 5 | 5:20 |
| | 26 The Call of Isaiah | " 6 | 6:5 |
| February | 2 Divine Comfort for Ahaz | Chapters 7, 8 | 8:20 |
| | 9 The Prince of Peace | " 9, 10 | 9:6 |
| | 16 Messianic Rule | " 11, 12 | 12:2 |
| | 23 Divine Judgment on Babylon | " 13, 14 | 13:9 |
| March | 1 Divine Judgment on Moab and Syria | " 15-18 | 16:5 |
| | 8 Divine Judgment on Egypt, Babylon, Judah and Tyre | " 19-23 | 19:20 |
| | 15 Confidence in God | " 24-27 | 26:4 |
| | 22 The Drunkards of Ephraim | " 28, 29 | 28:7 |
| | 29 Condemnation for Trusting in Egypt | " 30-33 | 32:2 |
| April | 5 The Way of Holiness | " 34, 35 | 35:8 |
| | 12 Hezekiah's Deliverance | " 36, 37 | 37:14 |
| | 19 Hezekiah's Recovery from Sickness | " 38, 39 | 38:20 |
| | 26 Zion Comforted | Chapter 40 | 40:29-31 |
| | May | 3 The Divine Promise of Aid | " 41 |
| 10 The Messiah's Mission | | " 42 | 42:6, 7 |
| 17 Divine Omnipresence | | " 43 | 43:2 |
| 24 The Folly of Idolatry | | Chapters 44, 45 | 44:6 |
| 31 Divine Omniscience | | " 46-48 | 48:17 |
| June | | 7 A Light to the Gentiles | " 49, 50 |
| | 14 The Bearer of Good Tidings | " 51, 52 | 52:7 |
| | 21 The Sin-Bearer | Chapter 53 | 53:6 |
| | 28 A Call to the Thirsty | Chapters 54, 55 | 55:1 |
| | July | 5 The Blessing of the Sanctified | " 56, 57 |
| 12 Separated by Iniquity | | " 58, 59 | 59:1, 2 |
| 19 The Messiah's Preaching | | " 60-62 | 60:1 |
| 26 Treading the Winepress | | " 63-66 | 63:1 |
| August | | 2 The Call of Jeremiah | Chapter 1 |
| | 9 Broken Cisterns | " 2 | 2:13 |
| | 16 An Appeal to the Backslider | " 3 | 3:12 |
| | 23 Divine Judgment on Israel | Chapters 4-6 | 6:16 |
| | 30 Preaching at the Temple Gate | " 7-10 | 10:10 |
| September | 6 The Divine Covenant | " 11-13 | 12:5 |
| | 13 Jeremiah's Prayer for Judah | " 14, 15 | 15:20 |
| | 20 Prediction of Judah's Captivity | " 16, 17 | 17:9 |
| | 27 The Potter and the Clay | " 18, 19 | 18:6 |
| October | 4 Prediction of Jerusalem's Destruction | " 20-22 | 22:13 |
| | 11 The Righteous Branch | " 23, 24 | 23:6 |
| | 18 Preaching in the Court of the Temple | " 25-27 | 26:13 |
| | 25 Answering a False Prophet | " 28, 29 | 29:13 |
| November | 1 Prediction of Israel's Return | " 30, 31 | 31:3 |
| | 8 Jeremiah's Prison Prophecies | " 32, 33 | 33:3 |
| | 15 The Rechabites | " 34, 35 | 35:6 |
| | 22 Burning the Roll | " 36-38 | 36:16 |
| | 29 The Capture of Jerusalem | " 39-41 | 39:13 |
| December | 6 The Remnant in Egypt | " 42-45 | 45:5 |
| | 13 Prediction of Egypt's Destruction | " 46-49 | 46:23 |
| | 20 Prediction of Babylon's Destruction | " 50-52 | 51:29 |
| 27 Lamentation over Jerusalem | Chapters 1-5 | 5:1 | |

LAMENTATIONS

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 10

No. 4

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 47

Fourth Quarter

November 24th, 1935

KINGS, FOOLS, AND SLUGGARDS

Lesson Text: Proverbs, chapters 25 to 27.

Golden Text: "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth."—Proverbs 26:20.

Bible School Reading: Proverbs 27:1-27.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Job 7:1-10; Tuesday—Ps. 12:1-8; Wednesday—Matt. 5:38-48; Thursday—Matt. 18:15-20; Friday—Luke 12:13-21; Saturday—Romans 11:29-36.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

The proverbs of this chapter relate to the unsearchableness of God, the way of kings, striving with neighbours (vs. 1-10); the fitly spoken word, the wise reprover, the faithful messenger, the use of the tongue, restraint of appetite, social visitation, the false witness (vs. 11-18); the unfaithful man, the heavy heart, the right treatment of enemies, the backbiting tongue, the brawling woman, the effect of good news, and the necessity for ruling one's own spirit (vs. 19-28).

The unsearchableness of God is referred to by Paul in the words, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33). It is His glory to conceal a thing, but kings require the aid of counsellors. Man cannot find God by searching (Job 11:7). He is the Infinite One Who inhabiteth eternity (Is. 57:15). Man is finite, and limited in knowledge and accomplishment. We know God only through the revelation which He has given us of Himself (Matt. 11:27). Note the divine power and greatness, and the weakness and helplessness of men. In relation to kings, observe further the need for their concealment of state secrets, the necessity for removing the wicked from before them, and the wisdom of adopting a humble attitude in their presence (vs. 2-7). Our Lord's teaching respecting humility further emphasized this (Matt. 18:4; Luke 14:7-11). Proper relations with neighbours is of real importance. We are enjoined not to go forth hastily to strive with them, lest we be put to shame (v. 8). Hasty acts, proceeding from a hasty temper, lead to the doing of many foolish things. The exercise of self-control would prevent much strife. We are directed to debate our cause with our neighbour, and not to talk about the matter to others. The quieter a matter of difference is kept the more likely will be its peaceable solution. And if we deal directly with the one concerned, the less likelihood will there be for further misunderstanding, and the easier will be the path of possible peace. Note our Lord's teaching respecting individual differences in the church (Matt. 18:15-20). Observe further the wisdom of not going too often to a neighbour's house; and the wickedness of bearing false witness against such an one. If we do unto our neighbours as we would like them to do unto us, we shall adopt a safe and sane attitude toward them (Matt. 7:12). The right attitude toward enemies follows the same lines (vs. 21, 22; Matt. 5:44). How may we live wisely in all the relations of life?

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

The proverbs of this chapter relate to the fool (vs. 1-12); the slothful man (vs. 13-16); the meddler, the deceiver, the talebearer, the hater, the pit-digger, and the liar (vs. 17-28). Several things are mentioned respecting the fool: honour is unseemly to him, the rod is needed for him, he should not be answered according to his folly, he should not be entrusted with responsibility; a parable is awkwardly used in his mouth, and God will reward him for his folly. His foolishness affects

his thoughts, words, and deeds; and for all, he is held responsible. There is warning here respecting him, and direction concerning our attitude toward him. Several types of fools are found in Scripture; as the atheist (Ps. 14:1; 53:1); the slanderer (Prov. 10:18); the self-truster (Prov. 28:26); the hypocrite (Matt. 23:17; Luke 11:40); the Christ-neglector (Luke 12:20); the resurrection unbeliever (I. Cor. 15:36); and the false teacher (I. Tim. 6:4). The person who exhibits true wisdom is the one who trusts in, and serves, the Lord Jesus Christ. Self-conceit receives condemnation in the statement that there is more hope of a fool than of one governed by such a spirit (v. 12). Such a person lacks the teachable spirit, believes he knows things better than others, and declines to be taught by others, and eventually suffers the consequences of his foolishness. Respecting the slothful man, there is to be observed his excuse for staying indoors, the futility of his lazy movements, like a door on hinges, moving, but never getting anywhere; the weariness manifest in his movements, and his self-conceit. Such an one must be a weariness unto himself, as he is a perfect nuisance and irritation unto others. Note further the danger of meddling in the affairs of others (v. 17), and the various uses of the tongue in deceiving, tale-bearing, contention, hatred, and lying (vs. 18-28). The tongue may be blessedly used for God; but when out of control it can serve the devil most effectively. Christians especially should be on their guard against a misuse of this member. It must be confessed that some have not been careful in this, and have brought disgrace on the cause of Christ in consequence, much to the sorrow of His heart, and the hindrance of His work. The Christ-controlled life is the remedy for loose-tongued conduct (Eph. 3:17). How may I permit Christ to control my life?

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

The proverbs of this chapter relate to the uncertainty of time, the avoidance of self-praise, the wrath of the fool, the evil effect of jealousy, friendship, friendly conversation (vs. 11-17), the diligent servant, the likeness of heart to heart, the insatiable nature of men's desires, the test of praise, and the necessity for watchfulness in the retention of riches (vs. 18-27). The first proverb of the chapter should always be kept in mind: "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." James intimates that in laying plans for the future we should qualify them with the proviso, "If the Lord will." Both time and events are to us uncertain, and we therefore cannot be sure of anything on the morrow. Note the necessity for humility, submission, and trust, in relation to the affairs of life. God's will, not ours, must be done.

Several of the other proverbs will doubtless claim attention, but among these note may be made of the one respecting jealousy: "Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?" We are informed elsewhere that jealousy is as cruel as the grave (Song of Solomon 8:6). Saul was greatly troubled respecting David, and it led him to act in a foolish and cruel manner (I. Sam. 18:1-15). The same spirit led the enemies of our Lord to deliver Him to Pilate (Matt. 27:18), and to persecute His disciples (Acts 5:17). Even Christian people must guard against this wicked spirit. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." The motive of the friend is good, while the purpose of the enemy is evil. It is sometimes necessary to wound in order to remedy some defects, just as the surgeon operates in order to heal diseases; and attention should be given to the one who acts in this manner. The attitude of such an one, however, should be kind, considerate, and wise. Continuing the subject of friendship, we note the sweetness of friendly counsels, and the advisability of retaining old friends (vs. 8, 9). We gain much from the attitude and counsel of those who love us, and seek our highest welfare. True friends are not great in number, and should be valued highly. Furthermore, friendly conversation promotes intelligence: "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." The fact that God has made the whole creation of one blood (Acts 17:26) is indicated in the likeness of one heart to another: "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." All have the same kind of heart (Jer. 17:9); all have sinned against God (Rom. 3:23); all have come from the same parents (Gen. 3:20); and all manifest the same sinful tendencies. Therefore no one has anything of which to board (Rom. 3:27). How can we secure a new heart?

WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT "OTHER LITTLE SHIPS"

From *THE WITNESS*, London, England,

Rev. Henry Oakley, Editor

Dr. Shields' Latest Book

While we were away Dr. Shields kindly sent us a copy of his new book, with a very honouring inscription in his own handwriting. There are fourteen sermons in the volume; seven are from the Old Testament and seven are from the New Testament, a proportion that discloses at once something of the preacher's mind. "All Scripture" is not a meaningless or out-worn phrase to him. The first sermon, "Other Little Ships", gives the title to the book.

I have read the sermons with the attention and experience of a preacher. I once wrote "The homiletics of Dr. Shields are miles apart from Mr. Spurgeon's". A minister soon after said to me: "I think you are wrong in that," and I straightway said, "I think myself it was a mistake which I discovered almost before the words were in print." Now after reading these sermons right through almost at a sitting, I am sure I was wrong. Dr. Shields handles a text in his own way, but it is certainly in a way that was Mr. Spurgeon's.

These sermons are the sermons of a great preacher. Interesting, clever, instructive, pleasing preachers we have in abundance, but the truly great preacher is terribly scarce to-day. Possibly the first figure would give the number of such in Great Britain. Great preachers differ, of course, in their greatness. There was the greatness of Mr. Spurgeon, and the greatness of Dr. MacLaren, and the greatness of Canon Liddon and Dr. Parker. "One star differeth from another star in glory". Dr. Shields has a greatness after his own order, but greatness it surely is. Select any one of these sermons. Take the one at which the book falls open, "The Swelling of Jordan"—a subject at which most preachers stagger a little. But here Dr. Shields is in full stride. He seizes the principle of the text and applies it in the most masterly way—the philosopher, the theologian, the evangelist, the orator, all appear in him in this sermon. There is no other word in our language that can describe this sermon except the word "great".

The scripturalness of the sermons is one of their marked features. It is remarkable how scriptural they are without being exegetical in the way Bishop Westcott and Dr. MacLaren were exegetical. Some of these sermons Dr. MacLaren could never have preached, and yet even Dr. MacLaren was not more scriptural. It is one of the charms of the sermons that they offer you the finest of the wheat without dissecting the kernels. Sermon number eight, "How to be hospitable to the Truth", is an example of this. Scriptural it is in every part, but in no way exegetical in the way of the exegete.

The spontaneousness of the discourses is a rare delight. When you read the work of a preacher like Dr. J. H. Jowett, for example, however much you take pleasure in the perfection of his phrasing, you cannot rid yourself of the smell of the mid-night oil. There is somehow the reminder of the old hand pump and not of the easy rush and flow of the spring on the hillside. It is perfect ease and naturalness that is characteristic of Dr. Shields' work. The sermons are like the flow of a mountain river that has reached the valley, in which there is no suggestion of toil, or the faintest hint of exertion, or of exhaustion. It just flows and gives you the impression that it could flow

for ever and know no weariness. The greatest matters of life are presented and discussed with perfect ease. Take the sermon on "The Culture of the Soul", on page 209. It is a profound philosophical discourse, but its sunny ease has a charm like the singing of birds.

Another of the delights of the volume for me is the illustrations. They are culled from everywhere, but chiefly from the preacher's own experience, and for me these are illustrations that tell as well as illustrate. You may read through the whole thirty-two volumes of Dr. MacLaren's sermons and never know that he was a man among men and so it is in the sermons of Dean Church. They kept an unchanging severity of impersonality. In the biography of Dr. MacLaren there is a passage in which he defends this, but I believe his great sermons lost much of "the human touch" just because they were so severely impersonal. I do not think there need be any sacrifice of literary grace and ideal in wisely and carefully using our experience in illustration of truth. Dr. Alexander Whyte was a prince among preachers who had given tireless attention to style and he achieved great perfection as a stylist; yet he never excluded illustrations from his life and doings. Personally I think some of the most telling passages in these sermons and passages that will longest linger in the memory and life of the readers are the stories from the Doctor's rich and varied experience. Here is one from the first sermon, "Other Little Ships":—

"I heard Professor George Jackson deliver an address before the Toronto Ministerial Association. The subject was, I think, 'John Morley, the Priest of the Outer Court'. He extolled John Morley, the biographer of Gladstone, he described his blameless character, his wonderfully serviceable life, his amiable disposition and held him up as a kind of superman; being careful to point out that in the production of this character religion had no part; for John Morley was an agnostic. I happened to walk up the street with Dr. Jackson after the meeting and I said, 'Doctor, has it ever occurred to you that Morleyism never yet produced a John Morley, that you cannot find a John Morley when Christ is not preached and His principles unknown? All the influences that made him what he was had their origin in the very religion which he refused to acknowledge.' 'There were also with him other little ships'; and everything that is good in what we call our civilization is there because Jesus sails the seas."

You cannot turn many pages in this attractive book without reaching some aptly quoted verse of a hymn—not a strained passage from a modern poet the meaning of which is difficult to catch, but a verse where the meaning stands at the front door. Again I let the book fall open and within three pages is this verse.

His honour is engaged to save
The meanest of His sheep;
All that His Heavenly Father gave,
His hands securely keep.

The general preaching of to-day refuses such quotations, but the general preaching of to-day is without power and I rather think Dr. Shields can teach us how to get the power back again. But natural and easy quotation needs great ability. How much I have coveted and do covet it, but it seems not for me, admire it and covet it as I do.

I must stop although I would have liked to write upon the originality, the boldness and the splendid evangelicalness of these sermons.

SPECIAL OFFER

In order to introduce "The Gospel Witness" to new subscribers, for \$3.00 we will send the paper for one year and a copy of "Other Little Ships".

Order Blank

"The Gospel Witness,"
130 Gerrard St. E., Toronto 2.

Please find enclosed \$3.00 for which send "The Gospel Witness" for one year, with a copy of "Other Little Ships"; or \$2.00 for one year's subscription to "The Gospel Witness", to the undersigned.

Name _____

Address _____