

The Gospel Witness

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

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"IN CANAAN'S FAIR AND HAPPY LAND"

PROFESSOR W. H. WRIGHTON

Our special speaker was Professor W. H. Wrighton, head of the Department of Philosophy of the University of Georgia.

It seems to us it would have been impossible for any man to have entered more sympathetically into the spirit and aims of the Convention than did Dr. Wrighton. Dr. Wrighton knew something of Jarvis Street Church, having been several years in its membership while attending McMaster University. Dr. Wrighton is an Englishman by birth, and spent the years of his youth and early manhood in that favoured land.

Many Conventions suffer from two impositions: the first, too much discussion about methods and means of doing its business; and, the second, too much emphasis on so-called "inspirational" addresses. The so-called inspirational addresses are sometimes too much of the "yo-heave", barn-raising variety. The fact is, that just as Conventions must be adjourned from time to time to give the delegates an opportunity to get their meals and to relax a little, so the spirits of the delegates need feeding with the Word of Life.

It is sometimes said that a wise woman will choose the time when her husband has been made comfortable by a good dinner, to discuss with him any household problem. Be that as it may, we are certain there is nothing that fits people for the consideration and discussion of ways and means of getting the Lord's work done like a good meal in the King's banqueting-house. This principle Dr. Wrighton evidently understood, for he began Tuesday afternoon with an address on the superlative and symmetrical loveliness of the Lord Jesus Christ, which, delivered in the power of the Spirit of God, set the soul of everyone aglow with spiritual delight.

To attempt a review, or any kind of summary of Dr. Wrighton's addresses, would be so futile as to constitute a misrepresentation. We prefer rather to attempt a general description of the man and his message, and to describe something of the results.

To begin, Dr. Wrighton is endowed with a gracious personality. There are men of fine qualities who, on such occasions, remind one of a tiny electric heater set in the midst of a large hall on a cold day. It may be a very ornamental piece of furniture; the heat-producing element is red and emits a little heat; and if one can get

close enough to it and turn himself about before it like an old-fashioned roasting jack, he may find a little warmth; but the rest of the hall is not appreciably heated by the glowing little element in its midst. So there are men who are good as far as they go—but they do not go very far; and are influential as far as they can reach—but their reach is confined to a very limited radius. There are other men who are more like what they call in England, a "central heating" apparatus: they warm the whole room with their personal influence. Even those who sit in the back seats feel the glow of their personality.

Such a man is Dr. Wrighton. His personality would touch the uttermost limits of an auditorium of any size, and make the largest congregation feel they had been hospitably welcomed by the speaker.

Dr. Wrighton is evidently of a most kindly disposition. He radiates kindness. He can say hard and cutting things kindly. There are physicians—not many of them, we believe, but occasionally we meet them—who do not know how to make little children comfortable, and even the most stoical patient is half afraid of them. We have known another type of physician who enters the home as a friend. His very presence is a comfort to the patient, and before he has done anything in the direction of ascertaining the patient's ailment, much less prescribe a remedy, the patient feels reassured and strengthened by the mere fact that the doctor is there.

Something like that takes possession of a congregation when Dr. Wrighton rises to speak. He puts everyone at ease. He does not need to bid people listen: they are all attention. Dr. Wrighton exemplifies to an unusual extent David's saying, "Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness hath made me great."

Dr. Wrighton's expositions of Scripture are profoundly simple, but simply profound. He always lays a solid philosophical foundation as the major premise from which his argument proceeds. Hence his figures of speech have more than the superficial accuracy of a photograph: they have the perspective and atmosphere of a work of art. His addresses are a fine example of an intellectualized spirituality and a spiritualized intellectuality. As he gives the cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, a child may take it and find refresh-

ment; but the most meticulous dietetic expert will recognize that it is drawn from the deep and eternal spring.

Dr. Wrighton's addresses contain all the spiritual vitamins essential to soul-nourishment, in combination with qualities which minister satisfaction to the hunger of the mind. His style does not discourage a dull appetite by presenting solid food in an unpalatable form. The *hors-d'oeuvre*, the variety of condiments, and the attractively served desserts—to say nothing of the damask and the bits of old silver—whip up the appetite even of those who know little of the meaning of spiritual hunger. In short, Dr. Wrighton's sermonic table provides always a veritable banquet.

And who of us does not know that "a merry heart doeth good like a medicine"? Who does not know that food is more palatable and nourishing when eaten to the accompaniment of wholesome mirth? Dr. Wrighton does not think it is a sin to laugh. Were we to compare his sermons to a lovely landscape, we should have to say that it is all the lovelier because of the rippling laughter of the stream of humour that flows through it.

But the distinguishing mark of Dr. Wrighton's preaching is his exaltation of Christ. To him, Christ is the Centre and Sum of everything. He might have concluded his final address with the context of his first one by saying, "This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem."

The congregations which greeted Dr. Wrighton from day to day completely fell in love with him because he led us all to fall still more deeply in love with Christ. His whole ministry was an exemplification of the title of one of his books, "A Philosopher's Love for Christ". Dr. Wrighton cannot come to Toronto too often, nor stay too long.

MRS. OSCAR RICHER, OF KAPUSKASING, ONTARIO

Another special feature of the Convention was the testimony of Mrs. Oscar Richer of Kapuskasing which we published last week, and reprint in this issue because the supply of last week's issue is completely exhausted.

A few weeks ago it was the Editor's privilege to give several addresses at the Annual Conference of the Northern Regular Baptist Association meeting with the church at Timmins. On that occasion Rev. Robert Brackstone called Mrs. Richer to the platform to give her testimony. She told her story in a very simple and logical way, and it was accompanied with such a flood of spiritual power that it completely overwhelmed the Convention; and we felt that in Mrs. Richer, God had raised up an effective witness to the power of the gospel. After the service we strongly urged that arrangements should be made for Mrs. Richer to attend the Convention in Jarvis Street, which she did.

On Wednesday morning she told her story again with precisely the same electrifying effect. It was a word spoken in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. We requested that the story should be told again at the evening service, to which Mrs. Richer consented. In the evening there was a large congregation, and once more Mrs. Richer told how she had been led from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Again the great congregation was conscious of the presence and power of the Holy Ghost.

Following the service, as in Antioch in Pisidia, after Paul and Barnabas had preached, there were many who "besought that these words might be preached to them

the next sabbath". We therefore prevailed upon Mrs. Richer to remain over Sunday, and Sunday morning we heard her testimony for the fourth time, given to a crowded congregation. But with every repetition the address increased in interest and power. Hundreds of people swarmed around her after the address, to express their appreciation of the blessing received.

Among those who responded to the invitation were two Roman Catholics. Since then many echoes of the blessing experienced by everybody have reached us, and enquiring Romanists, like Oliver Twist, "want more." The reference to Mrs. Richer in the letter which we publish elsewhere in this issue is typical of the response made to this marvellous testimony. The story, full of interest when written as stenographically reported, is published exactly as transcribed. Not a correction was necessary in the transcription. But the story told was accompanied by such spiritual power as defies description. As our correspondent says, it was a mighty testimony to the value of our Home Mission work.

Mrs. Richer was made to feel, both at the Convention, and in Jarvis Street services on Sunday, that though she had lost many Romanist friends, she had made a multitude of new ones.

CONVENTION SPEAKERS IN GENERAL

We have attended many Conventions, but we have never attended one where the speaking ability, judged by any standard, and from any point of view, showed a higher average. In the discussions on French-Canadian Evangelism in the North, followed by the discussion on how to raise money for missions, every speaker seemed to be on fire with the Holy Ghost. As President of Toronto Baptist Seminary, we confess we were proud of our academic sons: Revs. Robt. Brackstone, John Armstrong, H. C. Slade, W. Wellington, John Boyd—seemed everyone of them to be inspired. We would match these men for spiritual and intellectual power with any group of men to be found anywhere. Rev. Robert Guthrie of London, is one of our Jarvis Street men: his great address was positively a gem. We only wish we could have had the record—with that of every other speaker—to have shared with our readers the whole Convention.

Pastor Frey, student-professor of French in the Seminary, from Switzerland, spoke in English with such liberty and accuracy of expression and pronunciation as made it almost impossible to believe that he had acquired such mastery of the English tongue in a year and a half. Rev. A. C. Whitcombe has elsewhere written of the Seminary afternoon, when Revs. John Cunningham, John Knight, and E. C. Wood spoke. These too, aside from, or rather over and above, the spiritual value of their messages, exhibited great ability which promises well for the future of the Union.

Mr. Knight speaks very quietly, but his fine analysis of what the Seminary has meant to him showed that at least to a very considerable extent we have been permitted to achieve, in these men, the object for which the Seminary was founded.

Another speaker who set the assembly on fire with a wholly impromptu address was Deacon G. Aceti, of Timmins. Mr. Aceti is one of the pillars of the Timmins Church, and was converted from Roman Catholicism through the personal ministry of Rev. Morley Hall, when Pastor in Timmins. Brother Aceti is an Italian by birth,

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND THE WAR

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, October 29th, 1939

(Stenographically Reported)

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

"Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

"Nor then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment;

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."—Hebrews 9:24-28.

All human history is related to the two advents of our Lord Jesus Christ. All that occurred before His first advent, is said to belong to the period "before Christ"; all that occurs following that, we write as "in the year of our Lord". When He shall come a second time, time shall be no more. I want you to look very simply this evening at the two advents in relation to each other, and at the history which lies between.

I.

In this text THE PURPOSE OF THE FIRST ADVENT IS VERY CLEARLY DEFINED. It was literally *an appearance of God among men*: "Once in the end of the age hath he appeared." The Invisible became visible. The Unknown made it possible for men to know Him. He was seen of the wise men, He was seen of the shepherds, He was seen by multitudes thereafter. He was seen on the cross, and after His resurrection "he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs." The Apostle Paul rings the changes on that phrase, "He was seen"; "He was seen." He was not an invisible Saviour in the days of His incarnation. He was "God manifest in the flesh".

Let us keep that clearly in mind, that this world has been visited by its Creator; that He has walked among men. His first advent was an *appearance* among men, an *appearance* as God; for we do not know Christ unless and until we receive Him as God.

I remember some years ago reading in an English periodical, an article by an English professor in one of the American universities, in which he spoke of the intellectual difficulties which students found in an attempt to construe Jesus as God. There may be intellectual difficulties. Professor Wrighton last week at our Convention quoted Dr. Howard Taylor. When speaking to him about certain miracles, he said to Dr. Taylor, "How do you explain it? Is it not difficult?" Dr. Taylor answered, "Is it not difficult always to explain a miracle?" The fact that it is a miracle makes it difficult. The fact that Jesus Christ was, and, of course, still is God makes it impossible for us, intellectually, to confine Him within any verbal definition. We cannot measure the Immeasurable; nor verbally, or mathematically define the Infinite. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

He appeared *at the end of the age after long preparation*—"Once in the end of the ages." There never was

such preparation made for the coming of anyone as had been made for the coming of Jesus Christ. Of Him all the prophets spake. The Old Testament was full of predictions of the coming of Christ. He did not appear unheralded. He did not come to a world unprepared for His advent. And it should serve to confirm our faith that in His coming He fulfilled the Scriptures, and proved them to be what they claimed to be, the word of God. He appeared after much preparation, "in the end of the age."

And, contrary to the teaching of the Modernist, He did not come to be a reformer. He did not come primarily to be a teacher. He did not come to establish a new economic order. He did not come in the dispensation which He inaugurated by His birth, to equalize all the social injustices of earth. That is for the future. He came for one specific purpose: from heaven to earth. *He came to "put away sin"*. He came to deal with sin.

Is there such a thing as sin? Is there such a thing as sin, I ask you? Do you hear much about it from the modern pulpit? Is it not almost a forgotten note in modern preaching? Nothing about the sins we have committed against God; nothing about His justice, His righteousness; very little if any do we hear of the need for repentance. We miss the significance of the whole gospel if we do not recognize that He came for one particular purpose—and that was to put away sin. That was the primary object, and in that He was supremely concerned. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."

Are there any here who do not like that doctrine? Are there any here who say, "I do not want to go to church to be reminded of my shortcomings. I know enough about my own defects without being reminded of them in church." I cannot conceive of any other aim that a minister of the gospel should have but to emulate his Master, and deal with that which is fundamental to all the world's woes, the great problem of the universal plague of sin.

If you do not believe there is such a thing ordinarily, surely you must believe that something is wrong in the world as you look abroad upon it to-day. What is it? "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members." War springs out of a sinful human heart,

that gathers to itself other human hearts, and turns a flood of death upon the world.

Do you not see that when Jesus Christ came, He came to apply the most radical treatment? He went to the very root of all human trouble. He came from heaven to earth, not to build great cathedrals, not to establish universities, not to effect social reforms primarily—they were but by-products and the inevitable fruit and consequence of His primary purpose which was to take account of sin, and to put it away. That is why Jesus Christ came in the beginning, to "put away sin", as when, in a divorce one who has proved unfaithful is put away and the binding link is severed. He comes to put away sin; He comes to destroy it, absolutely to remove it. He comes literally to blot it out, so that it shall never be seen again. He came into the world as no one else ever came, for a purpose which never actuated another: He came to "put away sin".

How did He put sin away? "*By the sacrifice of Himself.*" You do not like the doctrine of the blood perhaps? You do not hear much about it. Before our church was opened, we talked of getting a new hymn-book. I sent to England and got the latest hymnbook of every denomination in England, and of every denomination in Canada. I turned them over, and found that while some of the great hymns of the church were included, some of them were so emasculated as to be of little value. There was very little about the blood left in them, little about sin and repentance. I wish we had money enough to publish a hymn book of our own. You say, "That is that peculiar man of Jarvis Street again." Yes: we are so peculiar that we still believe the Bible to be the Word of God. I tell you, He came to put away sin "by the sacrifice of himself", the God-man.

I name it in passing because it is a subject upon which we could discourse every Sunday for years together, "The sacrifice of himself." The Infinite wrapped Himself with the swaddling bands of infancy. The One from Whom no one can escape condescended to the dimensions of the manger. The high and lofty One Who inhabiteth eternity stooped to the lowest depths of the horrible pit, that He might take upon Himself our sin, suffer in our room and stead; and be made sin for us, putting away sin "by the sacrifice of himself".

This He did *once*. Oh the little words of Scripture! I wish I had a bell, and could ring it in such a way that you would never, never forget it. I wish I could make it say this one word: "Once! once! once! once! once in the end of the age He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." God does not need to do a thing twice. Once is enough.

Oh my Romanist friends, you go to Mass every Sunday morning, and your priest tells you that Jesus Christ must be offered again and again and again. No! "Once"! Only "once"! "Once in the end of the age hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Is not that wonderful? Is it not simple? If only we see that Jesus Christ is God, if only we see that His infinite soul—how shall I put it?—had such capacity that into it the sorrows of a world might be poured, if once we see that the perfect righteousness—the absolute righteousness—of God Himself was in Him, we may understand that once He came to put away sin "by the sacrifice of himself".

If your sin is not put away by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, if you had the wealth of a million worlds, you could not have it put away. There is nothing compar-

able to that infinite Sacrifice. "Once in the end of the age hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

It is *in contrast with that* which says, "Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world." Why? There is only one way by which anyone was ever saved in the Old Testament or the New. God deals with all men, in all ages and all dispensations, on exactly the same terms. Why must he have been offered many times before the foundation of the world? Because sin was here from the beginning. And He died "for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament". The arms of His cross span all human history, one arm reaches back to the sin in the garden, and the other reaches forward to the judgment seat; and beneath its shadow all sinful men, of all generations, of all ages and dispensations, may find salvation.

All this He did "once". It was never repeated, for there was never any necessity. We speak of His "finished work". And it was gloriously finished, and He has entered into heaven itself for us.

II.

He is coming again, and WHAT ABOUT HIS SECOND ADVENT? In some respects *it will be like the first*. It is said that His once offering of Himself is analogous to our once dying: "It is appointed unto men once to die", "so Christ was once offered." He died in the room and stead of every one of us who must die, taking the sting from Death, and victory from the Grave.

But His second coming will be *even more manifest than the first*. I know there are some who speak about a secret coming of Christ, as though it were to be a secret. I have read a little tract entitled, "Missing". In the same vein I received a paper from the United States, a year or so ago, an imaginative sheet, supposed to be printed the day after Christ had come for His saints. They were all gone—gone from the office, from the home, from the ships on the sea, from the railroads; from all walks of life the saints had secretly been caught away, and the world was going on just the same. There is not one line of Scripture anywhere that supports that idea.

Jesus Christ will come for His bride, but He will not come secretly. I do not like elopements. I am suspicious of the man who does not want to stand up beside his wife. I do not like young people to come to me and say, "We do not want you to say anything about our marriage; we are not telling anyone." I never do tell anyone—but I am sorry when any young man is not eager to say to the world, "This is my wife", or the wife of her husband. And do you suppose the divine Bridegroom will come secretly to take His bride away? Do you? I do not. His appearance will be manifest. We read of "that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ".

I was in Brussels after the Armistice, and saw King Albert come in. He did not enter by a back street! He had been away for four years, fighting outside in command of his armies. That day in Brussels, it seemed to me there were millions of people. I could not see millions of course, I know; but the streets and squares were packed. They had all the noise-making implements that could be devised; all the lodges were there wearing

their badges, all sorts of bands ready to acclaim the king as he came home.

I managed to get a place of vantage in an office building, on a little balcony overlooking the corner of the street around which the king was to come. Presently units of the Allied Armies were heard—the rolling of the wagons of the artillery, and all the rest of it. Then the heroic King Albert came into view, riding a white horse, his queen, similarly mounted, at his side, his children riding behind him; then units of all the Allied Armies, followed by thousands of the Belgium army. When the king came into view, over that vast multitude—every one of whom had expected to shout—there fell a silence like the silence of death. I saw tears streaming down their faces. A woman standing beside me on a chair which someone had given her that she might see the king, whispered in French under her breath, "Magnificent! Magnificent!" Though not a Belgian, moved with emotion I said to myself, Now I know what the Scripture means when it speaks of rejoicing with "a joy unspeakable, and full of glory".

It would not have been kind of King Albert to come in at night, to come in any other way than he did: he came when all his loyal subjects could see him and welcome him. And some day the Lord Jesus will come after that fashion. There will be no secret rapture.

I was interested in meeting Mrs. Richer who spoke to us last week, and again this morning. I met her in Timmins a few weeks ago, and she told me when speaking about her conflict of spirit before leaving the Roman Catholic Church, that she wrote down a list of questions to submit to the priest when he came to remonstrate with her. She quoted the scripture, "Behold, I have told you before, wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not"; and she enquired "Why do you lock your God up in the sanctuary? You put the wafer in there and lock the door. My God cannot be shut up like that." That was a new application of Scripture. My dear friends, when Jesus Christ shall come a second time, my text says that He will appear, He will be manifest, He will not come secretly.

And He will come "apart from sin", or as our Version has it, "without sin." He came first to be a sin-offering, to put away sin; but when He comes the second time, all that will have been written in the past tense, and He will come "apart from sin". You tell me that Jesus Christ is coming a second time to inaugurate a new era of grace, and that after His coming the greatest revival the world has ever known will take place? So far as I have been able to discover that teaching is contrary to Scripture at every point. The period of grace will end with the coming of Jesus Christ so far as the world is concerned. He will not come to preach the gospel, but "he shall appear the second time apart from sin". He will come to "judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel".

There is nothing in the New Testament to justify such fond, if wild imaginings, as are being entertained by hundreds of supposed evangelicals to-day. Some indeed seem to be setting their minds on the future, and feel little responsibility for the present; and they talk about the great revival that is to take place after the Holy Spirit has been withdrawn, and after the church has been caught away, when they allege the Jews are to be the evangelists of the nations. I am certain no such doctrine is taught in the Scripture. It is a figment of

the imagination. Christ will "appear the second time but apart from sin".

"Unto salvation." That is to say, *His coming is necessary to the completion of the salvation of the believer.* Our salvation is for the whole man. For the soul? Yes; and for the spirit and the body. When He comes, our bodies will be changed, and will be fashioned like unto the body of His glory. The consummation of the age will be the consummation of His divine purpose in the life of the believer, and the work of grace will be completed—and we shall be "without fault" "before the throne of God". That is to say, salvation will be the portion of those who are looking for Him, who have seen Him on the cross, and who live in relation to His first and second comings—glorying in the one, anticipating the other, walking humbly before God until His hour shall strike.

Are you among those who "love his appearing"? Mr. Spurgeon once heard that one of his members, a young woman, had formed the habit of attending certain public dances which he considered was unworthy of a Christian. One day he went to one of the places to see what he could see. The door was at one end of the dance hall, and the orchestra sat on an elevated platform at the other end, giving them a full view of the door. The music was in full swing, and the dancers were on the floor. Mr. Spurgeon was well known, and when he stepped inside the door, the orchestra saw him. Every man at once stopped playing. The dancers necessarily ceased their dancing. They looked about—and espied the great preacher standing in the door. He said in a kindly voice, "My dear friends, if my sudden advent to this hall so fills you with concern, what would you do if the Lord Jesus Christ Himself should come?" They were not looking for the Lord's "appearing"; they did not even welcome the appearing of one of His saints.

In these dark days, you who know the Lord Jesus and love Him, as read your newspapers, is there not a secret peace in your heart in the knowledge that you are able to say, "I do not know how long it will last, but I know what the end will be, whether it be soon or centuries hence, I know that Jesus Christ will come one of these days. I am looking for His appearing; waiting for His coming."

III

What about THE INTERMEDIATE HISTORY? "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." That is *the common lot of men.* "The living know that they shall die." It makes little difference how we die, whether on the sea from a torpedo, by a bomb from the skies, in a hospital bed from some long illness, or suddenly on a street corner from a motor accident—it makes little difference how we die. "It is appointed unto men once to die." Whether by war, or pestilence, or famine, makes little difference; that does not affect the issue. Sooner or later, if the Lord should delay His coming, that will be our portion. Christ died, it is said, once; so men die once, and after that the appraisal of the value of the life, "after this the judgment" for every one of us.

You cannot judge me, I cannot judge you; but the Lord can judge the secrets of men "by Jesus Christ according to my gospel". He will judge us, not for what we appear to be, but for what we really are, when He shall come again.

Our first concern must be to appropriate the benefits.

of His first advent. There is probably only one doctrine that needs more frequent emphasis than that of the second coming of Christ, and that is His first coming. If only you and I have our sins put away by that offering once for all, we need have no apprehension as to our readiness to meet the Lord when He shall come again. The only preparation we need make for the second coming of the Lord, is to take the fullest advantage of all that is provided for us by His first coming.

IV

WHAT RELATION HAVE THESE THINGS TO PRESENT-DAY EVENTS? People carelessly echo things they hear until by and by thousands of people accept as scriptural, teachings which have no biblical foundation at all. When they hear of wars like the present, they say, "It is a sign of the end." I remember that during the Great War twenty years ago certain preachers were positive that the Lord was coming immediately. I have read many books on this subject. I have gone back some hundreds of years, and I find that preachers in those days said of some events that they were a sign of the end. One expositor, sane and conservative in the main, suggested the Franco-Prussian War might be Armageddon. Some suggested Napoleon the Third might be the Antichrist—that little bit of a man, bossed by his wife! It was only a backyard skirmish compared with what we have since seen. Then the World War must surely be it. At all events the next war would be Armageddon. I am not sure: so far we are doing very well, thank you. I read last night the report of the first private British soldier killed in France! That is sad enough, but how many thousands had we lost by this time in the last war? It may be worse farther on, but I point out to you that the Scripture says that wars and rumours of wars are not a sign of the coming of Christ. It says, "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."

That does not mean that Christ is necessarily coming at once, nor yet that His coming will be yet long postponed. It is idle to speculate in advance. I am afraid of these speculations because I am jealous for the authority of God's Word. I have a friend whom I have not seen for some years, an able and prominent man. I have heard him speak on several occasions on, "The Scientific Accuracy of the Sacred Scriptures." I said to him one day, "Did it ever occur to you that you are proving too much?" "No. What do you mean?" "If the Scriptures are perfectly in accord with what you call the latest conclusions of Science, it argues one of two things: either the finality of Science, or the fallibility of the Bible. If you argue the agreement of Science and the Bible today, what can you say if to-morrow Science changes her position? If Science should change its position to-morrow, what becomes of your parallel?"

The Bible does not need the support of Science: the Bible is the word of God, and needs no support. If Science disagrees so much the worse for Science. Revelation must always be far in advance of discoverable human knowledge. And in consonance with that principle I say to brethren who are so fond of looking for something in current history of which they can say, "This the fulfilment of Revelation, or Daniel, or the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew," what will you say when by the mere lapse of time your interpretations are shown to be wrong? The unbeliever will say, "I thought the Bible

was true," and will fail to distinguish between the truth of the Bible and your fanciful interpretation. We must be careful lest by fanciful interpretations we impugn and even discredit the authority of Holy Scripture.

We were never instructed so to do. I do not know whether we are approaching the last great conflict or not, but we read to-night that there will be a day when someone—do not ask me whether he is Hitler, because I do not know. I am inclined to think he or it will be found in Rome rather than in Berlin—but there will be a day when someone will gather up in himself, or an institution under some strong head, will fulfil, this word, "That man of sin (shall) be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." And when that lawless one has been revealed—in all probability he is the beast of Revelation—when he is thus established in his reign over man, then in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, like a flash of lightning from the skies, "behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him"; and He will consume that Antichrist with the spirit of His mouth, and destroy Him with the brightness of His coming. And Jesus Christ will not personally return until then.

You say, "That puts the coming of the Lord in the distance." No, it may bring it nearer. But whether or not, has He not come to us in a real sense? Is he not with us now? Can you not be just as faithful when you know that His eye is upon you, though His presence is not visible, as though He were actually here? I do not need the dread of the coming of Christ to keep me straight, do you? Indeed I do not fear His coming. If I know my own heart, I love His appearing. I long for Him to come. And above all things I desire to be found faithful when He comes. I have not time to speculate. I have not time for these arithmetical calculations that have always proved false. Why will men do the same thing over again?

I knew dear old Brother Blackstone, the author of "Jesus is Coming". When I knew him he was eighty-five or eighty-six years of age. He had already set the date of the Lord's coming several times, and at last he pushed it on to nineteen hundred and thirty-four, saying if He did not come then, he did not know what would become of his Bible. Ah, that is the danger. The Bible warns us against treating the Word of God in that way. The Scripture I read this evening bids us, "Be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." If that is accepted, it will forever put an end to these speculations which have so discounted and discredited the doctrine of Christ's second advent, in the minds of thoughtful people.

I again tell you of Spurgeon. As a young preacher he was walking along the street, and came to the home of one of his members. She was out rubbing the step with freestone—you Old Country people remember it?—polishing the brass on the door, and making the step white with scouring. Spurgeon came along quietly and saw her. He said, "Good morning, Mrs. So-and-So." "O Pastor! If I had only known you were coming!" "What would you have done?" "I would have prepared to re-

ceive you. Excuse me for appearing in my morning dress." "Mrs. So-and-So, that is what a woman ought to be doing, and a man to; always about their duty. See that when the Lord comes, He finds you doing your duty, whatever it is." And if perchance all the programme of the future is not clear to you, God will forgive you for not understanding all the details, and there will be plenty of time to learn it later, if only our hearts are right with God, and we are living between these two great poles, His first and second advents, making the best of the first in our own lives and the lives of those about us, and looking forward with all our hearts to His second appearing. If thus we live, we shall have lived to some purpose, and be ready to meet Him with joy and not with grief.

Are there any here who have not believed on the Lord Jesus Christ? I beg of you to trust Him; cease from your own works, and accept His; cease from your own righteousness, and depend upon His. Let His blood, the wealth of the whole universe in solution, applied to heart and conscience, for ever put away your sins. And then we can look into His face and say,

"I am my Belovéd's
And my Belovéd is mine!
He brings a poor vile sinner
Into His 'house of wine'.
I stand upon His merit,
I know no other stand
Not e'en where glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land.

"I shall sleep sound in Jesus,
Filled with His likeness rise,
To love and to adore Him,
To see Him with these eyes.
'Tween me and resurrection
But Paradise doth stand;
Then—then for glory dwelling
In Immanuel's land."

"IN CANAAN'S FAIR AND HAPPY LAND"

(Continued from page 2)

now a Canadian citizen, and one who is on fire for God. If such addresses on giving as that delivered by Mr. Aceti—who so splendidly practises what he preaches—could be delivered throughout all our churches, our missionary treasury would overflow.

The French Bible Mission

It seems evident to us that the churches are more and more taking the work of the Association of French-speaking Baptist Churches, to heart. A recognition of the efficiency of its administration, of its oneness with the churches of the Union in doctrinal position, and its strategic position in France in this time of war, together, make us feel that we could be engaged in no worthier foreign mission work. It has also been specially commended to the confidence of our people by the quality of its products which we have had opportunity of seeing: Mr. F. Bauman, Déacon and Treasurer of the church at Timmins; his brother, Mr. Paul Bauman, a member of Jarvis Street and a member of the Executive Board of the Union; Mr. F. Buhler, greatly beloved, now in the French Army; and Mr. W. H. Frey, equally beloved, and happily, still with us, are all trophies of grace exhibiting the virtues of solidly-based and symmetrically-developed Christian character.

The Convention as a Whole

Comparisons are proverbially said to be "odious". We have had many great Conventions, many seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. This Convention was, however, in many respects, quite different from others; and in spiritual power and blessing has certainly never been surpassed. We are not much given to emotional displays, but we confess to having experienced such exhilaration of spirit, and to have been so bountifully fed in the King's banqueting house, and so constantly replenished by unreserved and untrammelled fellowship with kindred spirits, that often we were reminded of Paul's saying: "I knew a man in Christ, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven." For all these mercies, which for three days we experienced in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, we shall be forever grateful; and the fragrance of the Convention of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec of nineteen hundred and thirty-nine will remain with us while life shall last.

SEMINARY ALUMNI

By Rev. W. G. Brown, M.A.

The Alumni of Toronto Baptist Seminary had a great homecoming time on the Monday evening preceding the Convention. A fine representation of our men and women graduates and former students, together with the Faculty and Trustees of the Seminary, its present student body and the members of the Board of our Union, sat down to a delicious supper served in the enlarged Banquet Hall, the first banquet to be there served. After happy fellowship round the tables the party, many of whom had not seen through the New Jarvis Street, was conducted by Dr. Shields about our fine "plant", while he explained the most interesting features of this modern building. Then in Greenway Hall, with Alumni President the Rev. Gordon W. Searle presiding, a programme of sacred music and conference on our work took place. The conference Dr. Shields led. Reviewing the movements in the Convention which led to the founding of the Seminary and the formation of our Union, and touching upon the history of the Union itself, our President bared his soul as he could do only in such an intimate gathering as this. It was a holy time. A profitable discussion followed; and when we left, we felt that it had indeed been good for us to be there.

AS USUAL—WE AGREE WITH MR. PUNCH

"NO QUARREL"

"We have no quarrel with the German nation"—

One would not quarrel with the trustful sheep;
But generation after generation

They cough up rulers who disturb our sleep.

"We have no quarrel with the German nation,"

They're fond of music, poetry and beer;

But all the same with tiresome iteration

They choose a fool to govern them—and cheer.

"We have no quarrel with the German nation,"

But no one else upsets the common pot.

They are the cause of every conflagration—

Is it a mere coincidence, or what?

We had no quarrel with the German nation

When Wilhelm was the madman off the chain.

We helped along their rehabilitation—

But now, my hat, they do it all again.

"We have no quarrel with the German nation;"

And Wagner's works are very good indeed;

But if they must repeat this aberration

It might be better if they did not breed.

"We have no quarrel with the German nation";

In their affairs, of course, we have no say;

But it would seem some major operation

(On head and heart) may be the only way.

—A. P. H. (In Punch).

GRACE ABOUNDING

An Account of the Twelfth Annual Convention of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec

Reported by the Secretary, Rev. W. S. Whitcombe, M.A.

Grace Abounding was the theme of the Twelfth Annual Convention of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec. We do not mean that it was so announced in the programme or planned by the Board, but that it was the constant thought of all the speakers and of all the listeners, without any set plan save the leading of the Spirit. Our Twelfth Annual Convention was a symphony of praise uniting many different voices and experiences into one great harmony that lasted for the three days while we feasted together in the heavenly places, and will not cease re-echoing in the hearts and lives of our delegates and friends as they return to their home churches. There was melody in our hearts unto the Lord, and the constant theme of it was:

"Grace! 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear;
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the earth shall hear."

Our special speaker, Professor Wm. H. Wrighton, sounded the note at the first session on Tuesday afternoon. No one but Dr. Wrighton knew the subject he had chosen, for the Board deliberately left him free to select his topics. He could not have chosen his subjects more wisely nor treated them

more effectively. It was good for us to meditate at this first session on the Person of Christ, not merely the things of Christ, as the speaker said, but our blessed Lord and Saviour Himself. And as we gathered in His name we were all conscious that He of Whom we spoke was there and that the Convention was under His direction.

Every message Dr. Wrighton delivered was a glorious exaltation of Christ and the gospel of His grace. Dr. Wrighton is a philosopher and a theologian and there is a richness in his preaching that comes from familiarity with the world's great thinkers. His theology was what that great Baptist theologian, Dr. A. H. Strong, refers to as "pectoral theology": theology that comes from the heart. Without quoting the words from John Bunyan's "Grace Abounding", Dr. Wrighton made his audience feel he too "preached what he felt, what he smartingly did feel". Even a child could understand this professor of philosophy, while the maturest among us rejoiced in the abundance of good things. Dr. Wrighton made a large contribution to our Convention, and on the closing night the great audience welcomed Professor Wrighton's acceptance of Dr. Shields' invitation to preach the sermon in connection with the Spring Convocation of Toronto Baptist Seminary. Dr. Wrighton can not come to visit us too often.



Some of those present at the Wednesday afternoon session, October 25th, of the Twelfth Annual Convention of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec, to Dr. Shields on his right. Mrs. Richer may be recognized as the second lady on the far left.

From Rome to Christ

A large audience gathered on Wednesday morning for the conference on French Canadian Evangelism. Deacon Frédéric Bauman of the Timmins Church was to have spoken on "An Opened Door in Northern Ontario", but was unfortunately detained at home. His pastor, Rev. H. C. Slade, told briefly of the fine work being done in Timmins and the surrounding territory by Mr. Bauman's regular radio message in French. It is impossible to estimate the number of hearers among the French Roman Catholics in Timmins, though a large number have expressed their appreciation of these messages and some have professed faith in Christ. Mr. Bauman was associated with the churches of the Evangelical Association of French-speaking churches in his native Switzerland, and is a brother of Mr. Paul Bauman of the Union Board.

Mrs. Richer's story of her conversion, "From the Darkness of Romanism to the Light of the Gospel", has already been printed in THE GOSPEL WITNESS. The reading of that story will convey something of the blessing brought to us by Mrs. Richer's testimony of Grace Abounding. A solemn hush fell on the entire gathering as we heard of God's dealings with this soul, and like those of old, "we held our peace and glorified God." Mrs. Richer repeated her story to another great gathering in the evening, and again Sunday morning in the Jarvis Street Church service. To churches situated in districts largely French Canadian and Roman Catholic, this story of the on-goings of the Spirit will be a great encouragement for the task that lies at their very doors. To all the churches which have made our home mission work possible, the last sentence of Mrs. Richer's testimony will be of greater value than gold: "I want to thank

the Union, and every one of you who, through your missionary offerings, have made it possible for us to have a minister of the gospel at Kapuskasing. At the time I was at the crossroads and needed help, I do not know where I should have turned; I do not know where I should be this morning, if it had not been for Mr. Brackstone's help—rather the Spirit of God through him."

"See That Ye Abound in This Grace Also"

Following close on such a glorious testimony, the next conference, "How to Raise Money for Missions", could not fail to grip us, and we continued in the heavenlies, as this conference went on under the capable leadership of Rev. H. C. Slade whose church at Timmins sets a fine example of practical missionary interest. Each one of the speakers made a large contribution to the discussion of the subject, and the diversity of their avenues of approach was refreshing. Rev. J. R. Armstrong of Hespeler spoke of missionary giving as a privilege rather than a duty. His fine message was reinforced by the fact that the Hespeler church increased its contributions to the Union by 100% over the preceding year. Rev. R. D. Guthrie of Briscoe St., London, recounted instances in his church of how the Lord had opened windows of heaven upon those who proved Him by bringing the tithes and the offerings into His storehouse. He further told the Convention that he was determined to go back home and lead his church into the way of larger missionary givings, even if it involved putting their own local indebtedness "on the shelf" for a while. When he sat down his good Deacon Watson rose to assure him and the Convention that he would support his pastor's proposal. Happy the church with such a pastor and such a deacon. Mr. Slade then called on Deacon



Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec, in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto. Professor W. H. Wrighton is seated next in a straight line up from Dr. Shields' left shoulder in coat with grey fur collar.

D. G. Aceti of Timmins to give his testimony regarding the blessing of God to him in connection with giving. Mr. Aceti addressed his remarks to the "laymen" present, but we wish that he could be sent into every church of our Convention to tell his story of abounding blessing through abounding liberality, not only to laymen but to pastors as well. The whole spirit of the meeting was such that we all felt it was a time of heart-searching. Several pastors and deacons rose to express their determination to go back home and "do likewise". We have no doubt that this session will bear much fruit during the coming year and that our report at next Convention will show it. A few well-chosen words from our President, Dr. Shields, capped the whole discussion. He pointed the relation of grace abounding to giving, by emphasizing the implication underlying each address on the subject, viz.: that only the sovereign grace of God can lay hold on a man's heart and so transform it that he will love to give as before he loved to receive.

Home and Foreign Missions

The Wednesday afternoon session was devoted to Home and Foreign Missions.

Rev. H. C. Slade of Timmins, Vice-President of the Union, had the unusual privilege of extending to his brother Pastor Russell Slade of Noranda the right hand of fellowship into the Union. Both these fine young men are graduates of the Seminary, one of ten years' standing, and the other of one year, and the younger was converted through his brother's ministry. Now they are comrades in arms in this great northern work. We welcome the Noranda church and its pastor most heartily. Rev. Stanley Wellington, another one of a family of Seminary-trained pastors, was the pioneer pastor of this work, and he built the Noranda church without financial help from our Union, a truly great achievement in the North country. We thank God for his missionary vision and that of those who stood behind him. Mr. Slade also had the joy of extending the right hand of fellowship to Rev. John R. Boyd for the Sudbury church which also comes into our Union membership. How good it is to welcome such missionary churches and pastors into our midst!

Other sparkling facets of the grace of God were displayed when three of our missionary pastors from the North gave an account of the conquests of the gospel in this great northern part of our provinces of Ontario and Quebec. Rev. John R. Boyd of Sudbury told how the new building at Black Lake was erected, of sacrificial labour and giving, and of the salvation and restoration of young men and women. Rev. Robt. E. J. Brackstone gave us the story behind the new building at Kapuskasing. He told of the divine plan for building churches and raising money for missions: Divine Grace laying hold on unsaved men and saving their hands and their pocket books as well as their souls for service in His Kingdom. Rev. Wilfred J. Wellington of Val d'Or told of prospecting for the gold that perisheth not in this new mining settlement and in north-western Quebec. He made an eloquent and moving appeal for \$1,000.00 to erect a suitable building in which to carry on his work. How many things our Board could do if we had the money! We wish a Christian millionaire would write to the investment house at 337 Jarvis Street for advice as to where he could obtain returns on his money unheard of in business circles.

France

Rev. Wm. H. Frey brought us a message from his brethren, and ours, of the French Evangelical Association. Although Mr. Frey has been with us only eighteen months and has learned all the English he knows in that period, he has made himself so much a part of our fellowship that it is hard for most of us to realize that he is Swiss. It was good to hear from the lips of this pastor who gained his experience in Europe that the same gospel that we preach in Canada yields a like harvest in Europe. France does not seem very far away these days, and we shall constantly bear up our French brethren before the throne of grace. We are convinced that this is one of the finest missionary undertakings in existence, and we rejoice in the fellowship of such wise and experienced leaders as Rev. Robert Dubarry of Nimes, France, knowing that we can have the utmost confidence in his fidelity to the Word of God and his wise administration.

Annual Report

Thursday morning was entirely devoted to the presentation of the Annual Report of the Executive Board. It is too long to reproduce here, and contains too many good things to

mangle it by giving a resumé. We shall be glad to let it speak for itself to those who request a copy of it at the Union Office, 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto. The report reviews every department of our missionary undertaking at home and abroad, and has sections covering each of the following interests: Home Missions, including a section on French-Canadian Evangelism, The Evangelical Association of French-speaking Baptist Churches, Western Canada, Toronto Baptist Seminary, and THE GOSPEL WITNESS. If any of our readers have not seen this Report, we urge them to send a note at once requesting it so that they may have a clear understanding of what we have done by the grace of God and what we hope to do in the days to come.

One paragraph of the Report will be of particular interest to all who contribute to our work because it sets forth the Board's established plan of action in investing the funds entrusted to its care. The paragraph follows:

An Apostolic Principle

"In making the Home Mission grants the Board has had as its ideal the apostolic practice of an evangelism that builds up its converts into local, self-governing, self-supporting bodies of believers who practise the scriptural ordinances in the scriptural manner. In a word, our aim has been to establish other Baptist churches of a faith and order like to those churches who contributed the funds. This is both scriptural and logical, and is the only consistent course open to churches which teach and preach our doctrines. Our brethren in the Canadian West, in the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia, together with our French-speaking brethren in Europe all follow the same practice. It is because we know from personal acquaintance that these missionary enterprises at home and abroad are as sound in the scriptural doctrine of the Church as they are in the other great fundamentals of the faith that we cordially commend them to our Union churches without any reservations."

Budget Recommendation

Mr. J. E. Jennings, our Treasurer, presented the Auditor's report, and the Board's recommendation. In doing so he gave another word of exhortation that we wish had been stenographically reported and sent to every church of the Union. The budget recommendation of the Board was unanimously adopted as follows:

Home Missions	60%
French Evangelical Association	20%
Toronto Baptist Seminary	12%
Western Missions	8%

THE SEMINARY AFTERNOON

By Rev. A. C. Whitcombe, B.A.

The afternoon session began appropriately with Mr. H. McBain of Sarnia at the console of the organ and Rev. J. Armstrong of Hespeler in charge of the devotional service as a prelude to the Seminary session. Dr. T. T. Shields, our President, was asked to take the chair and after a brief account of the early days of the Seminary he called on the first of three former students to tell us what the school meant to them as ministers engaged in active service.

These three men now working in fields separated by great distances, and different in character, gave us each in his own way a very definite impression that they considered the Seminary training to be of great value to them, at the present time, where they labour. These men offer a cross-section of the Seminary product over the relatively short period of its existence and the position of their fields indicate something of the wide sphere of influence the institution exerts.

Mr. Knight, who spoke first, is one of the first graduates of the school and is now home for a brief holiday after ten years in Jamaica. Mr. John Cunningham, the second speaker, graduated some half-dozen years ago and at the present time preaches in the busy mining centre of Kirkland Lake. Rev. E. C. Wood, who served his King and Country in the last war, has been for a number of years a good soldier of Jesus Christ, preaching in the beautiful city of Chatham.

Rev. J. Knight, reviewing the difficulties, perplexities and temptations peculiar to his work in Jamaica, was thankful that the Seminary course had warned him against wrong Theological drifts, against extra-Biblical church practices and management, and the folly of lowering standards to attain what appeared to be success.

Mr. Cunningham began by quoting a remark often made by the President of the Seminary to the effect that the school cannot make a man a preacher, that is a Divine work, but that a man being called to preach can be made more useful by proper preparation.

He said that while a good workman does not complain about his tools, a wise workman does keep his tools sharp and in good repair, knowing that with such tools he can do the best work. His course meant much to him because at school he had been taught how to sharpen his tools and how to keep them in repair. Then changing the metaphor, Mr. Cunningham likened the Seminary course to a visit to a new Province which he had learned to love and to return to frequently without feeling lost. It had put a key into his hand to unlock unknown treasures; it had introduced him to the best of the past. Because Christ is kept central he felt that students could confidently explore the wisdom of the past and face the problems of the future.

Dr. T. T. Shields then called on Rev. E. C. Wood the last of the three, to gather up the fragments that remained, and he responded gladly because he felt that on such a subject there were twelve baskets always full. Mr. Wood set forth the value of the Seminary to him under four pictures. It had been a gymnasium in which to get him into good shape for the strenuous campaign of the ministry. It had been an officers' training corp in which he had learned the rudiments of the good fight of faith. It had been a workshop in which as an apprentice he had seen something of the vastness and intricacy of God's salvation and had learned his trade by working at it. It was like the house of God and the gate of heaven where he had learned the wisdom of David's saying "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to enquire in His temple."

So we came to the end of the Seminary session of "the best Convention yet," impressed with the fact that these men, and the others they represented, looked back upon the few years at the Seminary with increasing pleasure and appreciation and the feeling that the acid test of time and circumstances upon the work that the school attempts to do, brings it forth as pure gold.

There lies the true value of any institution of learning. Success is not to be counted by the number of students it graduates; but by the quality of students, after some time of taking their place in life, and by the value those students place on the school and its teaching when they have had an opportunity to apply the teachings in various places and under varied circumstances. The Toronto Baptist Seminary has no fear of this test.

Resolution on the War

On the closing evening Dr. T. T. Shields presented the following resolution on the war:

"In the conviction that every consideration of Christian principle, of national security, and of human well-being, the world over, necessitates the complete mobilization of the moral and physical resources of Canada and the Empire, for the most vigorous possible prosecution of the war against Germany—and this without any reservation or respite—the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec, assembled in Annual Convention, would hereby add its voice to that of other religious bodies in pledge of its unqualified approval of the action of the Governments of Canada and the Empire in declaring war against Germany.

In consonance with the foregoing, we express our opinion that never in any war—at least, within the scope of our historical knowledge—have the issues of a conflict been more clearly defined than in the present war; and that therefore never was a cause more manifestly and wholly right than that for which Britain and France have taken up arms.

While deeply deploring the necessity for the resort to arms, we wholly repudiate the view that war can never be justifiable nor effective. On the contrary, in this instance the record and present course of Germany do such violence to every consideration of morality in world affairs, in international relationships, and in every aspect of national and individual life; thus threatening the security of all nations and the liberty of all individuals, and jeopardizing the lives and possessions of all peoples on earth, that no other course consistent with righteousness, or even with prudence, was open to the Empire Governments but to declare war.

We therefore pledge to the Governments of Canada and the Empire our unreserved support of the Empire's war effort; and express the hope that no pains or expense will be spared to ensure that such effort shall issue in complete victory over the enemy.

Viewing the present European situation as being so charged with menace to the world, we express the conviction that no consideration should be given to proposals of peace from any quarter, or at any time, which does not include a provision that Hitler and all his principal responsible aides shall ultimately, personally, be visited with such judgment as their present manifest blood-guiltiness deserves."

It was appropriate that this should be seconded by Rev. E. C. Wood of Chatham, who served overseas for three and one-half years of the last war. The resolution was unanimously carried by a standing vote, and the whole congregation joined in singing the National Anthem.

The New Board

The following are the names of the Board for the present year. We appeal to all our churches to pray for them and for the Executive Officers as they plan for greater and better things in the future, and above all to see to it that they to whom the Union's work and responsibility is delegated are not required to make bricks without straw. President: Dr. T. T. Shields; Vice-Presidents: Rev. H. C. Slade, Rev. W. W. Fleischer. Home Mission Board: Mr. D. G. Aceti, Rev. J. Fullard, Rev. R. D. Guthrie, Mr. P. J. Jones, Rev. D. Macgregor, Rev. G. W. Searle, Rev. W. S. Whitcombe. Rev. E. C. Wood. Foreign Mission Board: Rev. J. R. Armstrong, Mr. Atner Baker, Mr. P. Bauman, Rev. J. Byers, Mr. J. Fraser, Rev. H. G. Hindry, Rev. B. Jeffery, Mr. J. E. Jennings.

There were fine congregations at all the Convention sessions; the best we have had for some years. The new Jarvis Street proved to be specially built for Conventions, and was certainly made to measure for our Union Convention. Its great auditorium was an ideal place for our gatherings, and the rotunda and other smaller rooms offered fine opportunities for fraternizing between services. Jarvis Street Church and its pastor are past masters in the art of being hosts—they have had ample opportunity to perfect the art—and everything combined to make a perfect setting for a perfect Convention.

As we write, a letter has just come to hand from a church treasurer who attended the Convention. We quote the closing paragraph as an indication of the "aftermath" of our great Convention gathering, for we know that many other delegates have expressed themselves in similar terms, and we feel that this letter is a fair sample of the blessing many delegates carried home with them: "We are sorry to have such a small offering. Surely we need to have our consciences stirred to know our responsibility to both home and foreign missions. God help us to answer our own prayer for missions."

A Convention that sends delegates home to write such letters as this—and there are many of them we are sure—was in the truest sense of the word, a successful Convention. "To God be the glory, great things He hath done!"—W.S.W.

FROM THE DARKNESS OF ROMANISM TO THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL

Testimony of Mrs. Oscar Richer of Kapuskasing, Ont.

Given at the Convention of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec, Meeting in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Wednesday Morning, October 25th, 1939.

(Stenographically Reported)

I am very happy to be here this morning. I am a little nervous, but happy anyway. I have stood on the promises of God for a year and a half, and He has carried me through so many troublous times that I feel I can trust Him this morning to help me give my testimony.

If anyone had told me two years ago that I should be addressing a Baptist Convention to-day, I believe I should have thought of it as many of my former Roman Catholic

friends think of me to-day. However, I am here, and I feel it is wonderful to be saved.

I went to school here in Toronto, to two Catholic schools. I was taught by nuns, and during my school days my main ambition in life was to become a nun. But when I left school and went to work, I heard many things that I had never heard in the Church of Rome. These things led me to doubt my early teaching. I began thinking about them, reasoning about them—and more doubts came. I felt that I was sinning against the faith, and against God. I did not want to do that, and I would resolve that I would be a better Catholic, and would plunge in more earnestly than ever to do my duty. I remember getting up early every morning in order to go to Mass before breakfast. This was during my school days: I felt I should not have any success in the classroom if I did not. However, as I became older I doubted, and this went on through the years, until about two years ago. Then things took a serious turn.

I had a neighbour who had a brother who had left the Roman Catholic Church. This man had given his sister a Bible to read. We were not very intimate, but we were acquainted and we visited each other at times. Things went on for a short while until it came to the ears of the priest. One morning I had a visit from him. I was quite surprised as he had never called on me except his parish visits once a year. He told me that I was to discontinue my friendship with the woman, and the only reason he could give me was that she had a Bible which we read, and an unfaithful brother. We had words—hard words; but I did not give up my friend because I could see no reason for doing so.

After he left, I had a guiltier feeling than I had ever had before. I thought it was my wicked temper, and that perhaps he was right; that I was too stubborn to see it. I resolved to make one more try, a serious one. I went back to church—although I had never really given it up—with a deeper determination to be a really good Catholic. I tried, but every time I went, I came home more disgusted than the last time. Everything they said seemed to disturb and disgust me, and in my disappointment I came home feeling low.

That was about October, two years ago this month. Things went on until February. In February one Sunday I went to Mass, and came home thoroughly disgusted, and said to my husband, "I am not going back." He asked me why, and I told him. He agreed with me—he had up to that time; and this time he told me I was right, and that he was not going back either. He asked me where I was going, and I said, "Nowhere. I am going to stay home. I got fooled once, and will join no other church."

I have two little girls, the eldest was seven at the time. She was to take her first Communion on Easter Sunday, and was attending special Sunday School classes. She said to me, "Mother, do I go to catechism this afternoon?" That was a shock. I had not thought of her side of it. I believed that salvation was in a church, but I was so disappointed with the Church of Rome that I was willing to forfeit that salvation; but I did not want to be responsible for the life of my little girl in the other world. I said, "I do not know whether you should go or not." I did not know how to reach a decision, so told her to stay home that Sunday, and I should have reached a decision before the next week came.

My husband and I talked it over, and suddenly I re-

membered that the Church claimed to get its laws from Christ, that the Bible is the Word of God and of Christ; and I said to myself, Why cannot I find these things in the Bible? Then it flashed through my mind, That is sacrilege; you are not good enough to study the Bible; you are not educated enough to study the Bible. But curiosity got the best of me, and I said, I will do it anyway.

The next day I got a Bible. I did not know where to start reading it. I thought a Bible was a continuous story-book, so I started at the front page, and read the Old Testament. I wanted to read the Bible to prove the Church of Rome right or wrong. In the Old Testament I could find very little I was looking for, but when I got into the New Testament it was a different story. The more I read, the more I was convinced that the Church of Rome was wrong. My husband and I read until all hours of the night. He read so much he got inflammation in his eyes, and had to go around with bandages on his eyes for a week. Then I read aloud—and got a sore throat. I neglected my housework: dust was rolling under the beds, the dishes were stacked in the sink, the floor was unswept. My husband went to work in the morning, and I was left alone with the baby. I forgot to eat, and did not know when meal time came except as she told me she was hungry. I read and read and read.

Someone said to me, "But you are reading a Protestant Bible; you will not get the truth from that." I got a Catholic Bible, one that had a whole string of Roman Catholic signatures in the front, with the Pope's ensign on it. My husband read one, and I read the other; and we would compare. They were the same except perhaps in certain places the text and chapter would be different; otherwise, every word was the same.

I had always been told I could not understand the Bible, therefore I should leave it alone. I was therefore not quite sure whether I understood it, and doubts came back. My husband and I thought it might be a good idea if I would go around and visit the ministers in our town. Which ones to go to, I did not know—so I thought I would try them all. One of my neighbours was a Roman Catholic, and she was particularly riled up one day, and the first thing we talked about when I went in was a sermon we had heard a day or so before. There was a woman present who was not a Catholic, and I told them I had not been to the Catholic Church for some time, and that I was not going back. I told them I had a Bible, and was finding things out for myself. The Protestant woman is a very active member of one of the churches in Kapuskasing, and she asked me whether I understood the Bible. I said, "I do not know whether I do or not, but I think I do. I have not much education, and have been told that you must study it years and years. I think I will go around and visit the ministers and get their viewpoint." She said, "If you want to know the truth about the Bible, do not trouble to go to the other ministers. Go to the Baptist preacher; he knows his Bible." I did not know there was a Baptist preacher in town: that is how interested I was in anything outside the Catholic Church.

This woman told me where Mr. Brackstone lived, and I sat down and made a list of twenty-five questions to ask him about the Bible. I knew if I could get satisfactory answers to those questions I should know whether I understood the Bible or not. One Saturday afternoon

I went with my twenty-five questions to Mr. Brackstone's home. I introduced myself, and told him what I wanted—and we got busy. I think he had to go from one end of the Bible to the other, to explain some of them—and I had to stay for tea! I was supposed to go to a birthday party that afternoon, but I forgot all about it.

In all my reading I still had not seen that salvation was through Christ, and through Christ alone. I had not looked for that, for I had never heard of it. When Mr. Brackstone asked me how I thought I was going to get to heaven, I said, "If I am good enough I shall get there." He quoted Ephesians two, verse eight: "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." That was the most unreasonable thing I had ever heard in my life. I could not believe that. I could read it, I could repeat it; but it did not mean a thing to me.

Just imagine! If you were to go into a store to buy something and on one counter it was worth so much, that it would take all your wealth—and even more than you had—to buy it; and then at the next counter you could get it for nothing, would you not look at the free one pretty carefully in case you were getting something hollow or worthless? I was suspicious of it. I thought, if it is free in one place, and cannot be bought, so priceless is it, in another, there is something wrong; that is not reasonable.

I went home and studied again, and that is when my battle began. It was a real struggle. At times I would see glimpses of the light: at other time everything was pitch black. Mr. Brackstone held meetings in our home; he spared no effort. It was now the middle of winter, with bad roads. I live out of town about a mile and a half, but that did not stop Mr. Brackstone from visiting us as often as he possibly could. Every meeting was a gospel meeting—even if there were just the two of us. I could not see that salvation was through faith. It was impossible for me to grasp that. I cannot say just when the light did dawn upon me: it was such a struggle. It dawned at times, and would disappear again. That went on until the latter part of May of the following year. I was attending the Baptist Church regularly by this time, and the priest heard of it.

On Easter Sunday my husband was at home, and two priests called on us. I thought, I must meet them, and how am I going to do so? I wanted to beat them at their own game, and with the Word of God. I was determined they were not going to win. When my husband went to the door, I called my little girl and said, "Jerry, you and I must pray now as we never prayed before. We have to meet the priests now, and I do not know what to tell them." The two of us sat on the wood-box behind the kitchen stove, and offered up an earnest prayer. In five minutes I felt peace surge through me, and I could have met ten priests!

The priests had brought a stack of books, books about the saints. If they had a Bible with them, I did not see it. They asked me why I was taking the position I was taking, and I told them. One of them said, "You had better give up that Bible: it is leading you astray. You will never get any good out of that. You are throwing away a very precious thing, your Roman Catholic faith." He started out in a very tender manner, but by the time he had gotten half through, he was excited—and so was I. I said to him, "To make a long story short, I will give you a chance to prove you are

right. Can you find auricular confession in the Bible? If you can find me one text where Christ taught anyone to go to confess to an apostle, or where an apostle confessed anyone, I will give you my Bible; I will go back to your church; and will be the best Roman Catholic you ever saw." He shook his head and said he could not. I said, "That settles it. If you cannot show me your doctrines in the Bible, they are worthless. You might as well go because you are wasting your time—and mine." He asked, "May I pray for you?" "I will not stop you." He asked me if I was praying, and I told him I had done little else for months; to which he replied that the devil was answering my prayers.

They left, my own priest promising he would send me books, many books—and he sent them. I read them all, and sent them back. I could not see a thing in them that would change my position. He wrote often, and I told him if he did not stop sending books and letters that I would return them unopened.

All this time I felt as though I were being torn to pieces. I would pray and ask God to give me some comfort. I felt as though being torn to shreds, losing my mind; everything was going around in my head, and I knew if I did not get help from God I could not stand it. One said, "Come here", and another said, "Come to us", and I could only fall down and pray.

One morning after I had written the priest saying I would return his letters unopened, as I was doing my morning work, I felt as though I had all the care of the world on my shoulders. I felt as though I would break down and cry. I dressed my little girl and sent her to the post office, for I had to have quiet that I might pray and seek comfort. She went, and I knelt down beside the bed. I did not pray in words: I cried a prayer. When my little girl came back, she had a letter in a plain envelope, typewritten, postmarked, "Cochrane"—about eighty-five miles from Kapuskasing. My mother lives near there, and I thought I had a letter from home.

I opened it, and there was a letter from the priest. He had gone to the trouble of sending his letter to Cochrane so the postmark would deceive me—and it did: I read it—and he cursed me. He cursed me in that letter for daring to speak against the Church, and the priest of God. He called upon God to execute judgment upon me speedily. He said that after much meditation and prayer, he cursed me!

That letter gave me a great deal of peace! I felt fine after that! I thought, You have shown yourself in your true colours. I had thought that perhaps they were not as bad as I had conceived of their being; after that letter came, I thought they are worse than I had ever believed them to be.

The letter came, I think, in the beginning of May; it was not until the end of May that I saw the light. The priest immediately went around to all my friends and neighbours, and told them that I was a heretic, not fit to associate with them; and therefore they should leave me alone. That was a blessing too! The lawn mower, when I needed it, was not in a neighbour's cellar; I could get my housework done—the neighbours did not interrupt. But the peace I had around me could not compare with the peace in my heart, more especially as my husband took his stand for Christ about a month after I did.

One day I went to buy fresh eggs from the woman who used to supply me—and she informed me that the hens had stopped laying! The man who used to plow

our garden, would not do it any more—and we did not have a garden that year. We suffered a great deal of persecution. My best friend slammed the door in my face one day, would not let me talk with her. She meets me now on the street, and turns her back. It cut at first, but I said, "God, I am standing on Thy promises, and I am going to depend upon Thee." I did—and He has never failed.

One day I met a Catholic woman who was not yet afraid of me, and she asked me, "How do you feel?" "Fine." "Are you sure?" "Oh yes." Several times she asked me how I felt, and finally I asked her what she meant. She mustered up courage to tell me that I was supposed to be shrivelling up, that I had only a month to live—but I am still here! And I have not lost a pound! I had not known, but everyone had been watching me, expecting me to collapse. The priest had told them that in two months' time I would not have strength enough to walk to my adopted church. But I am stronger than ever, and enjoying every bit of the work.

My husband, as I have said, came to Christ about a month after, and then my little girl, and they too have had to put up with a great deal of persecution. We were persecuted also by so-called Protestants—I had not expected that. Even when we were Catholics, we had not experienced that. We had been, "Hail, fellow, well met"; but when we became out-and-out for Christ, and bore a real testimony to His saving power, that changed.

We were baptized in August. The sun shone in our faces—I believe it was the last fine Sunday we had that year. Behind me were two or three hundred people, and I felt my back freeze from their cold stares. I knew every Catholic there. We went into the water together, and were not troubled; we knew we were doing the Lord's will.

I try to reach other Catholics, and will continue to do so; but it is a difficult task. The priest has warned them that they must not have anything to do with me. It is seldom I get a chance to speak to any of them about the Lord Jesus Christ. One woman who was going from door to door talked with me a few minutes. When I spoke of my faith, suddenly she stiffened with fear, and seemed eager to leave my home.

We heard from a stranger, a French-Canadian, who was saved in Quebec, and who because of persecution came up north to farm, of some Catholics we might be able to reach. He told Mr. Brackstone of a possibility of our preaching the gospel to them. The first opportunity we had, we went out to their home and held a meeting, and were able to speak to six or seven French-Canadians. They could not speak English, but we could talk to them in their own language. We asked if we could come back the following Sunday, and they said we might. They were very poor people, and they asked if we could possibly get shoes for the children. We are not very rich ourselves, but said we would try.

The following Sunday I had a feeling we should not go, and when I asked my husband about going, he had the same feeling. We consulted Mr. Brackstone, and decided not to go. I cannot explain it, but we all knew we should not go—I mean, apart from God, I cannot explain it. A couple of days later I received a letter from the man who had directed us there, and he said it was well we had not gone that Sunday, that there were priests there with two carloads of henchmen—and they were going to cry us out, or run us out of the place.

We determined we would go the following Sunday, and went. The priest was not there that day, but we met another member of the family, a girl of about twenty. She was very bitter. When we gave them the shoes—for which they had asked—she said, "You are trying to buy us into your church with shoes." "Buy you? There is only one church where you can buy everything, and that is the Catholic Church. We offer only salvation, the free gift of God."

I forgot to tell you that after I was baptized, I was so happy that I gave my rosary to Mr. Brackstone: it was my last link with the Church of Rome. In spite of persecution, we are very happy in Christ, and our home life happier than it has ever been. And this morning I want to thank the Union, and every one of you who, through your missionary offerings, have made it possible for us to have a minister of the gospel in Kapuskasing. At the time I was at the crossroads, and needed help, I do not know where I should have turned; I do not know where I should be this morning, if it had not been for Mr. Brackstone's help—rather the Spirit of God through him.

AN ECHO-LETTER FROM THE CONVENTION

October 29, 1939.

Rev. T. T. Shields, D.D.,
Jarvis St. Baptist Church, Toronto.

Dear Dr. Shields:

It was my privilege to attend the last two evening sessions of your Convention, and I feel impelled to let you know how greatly I enjoyed them both. They reminded me of the old time Methodist Conferences, from which our ministers returned to their respective "charges", or "circuits", renewed in spirit and quickened in zeal; reflecting in their ministry the spiritual uplift they had received from their meeting together and listening to the inspirational, devotional and soul-searching addresses that were always an outstanding feature of these annual gatherings. I heartily congratulate you and your ministerial associates on your perpetuation of these Godly and God-fearing gatherings in the interests of the spread of the "mystery" kingdom of our blessed Lord.

I would like, too, to congratulate the two brethren you referred to who, by sacrificial giving, made possible the opening up of the work in Kapuskasing. What an investment! and what a blessed reward awaits them at the hand of Him Who so evidently moved on all who played a part in the bringing of Light to this darkened, bewildered soul, already the subject of the gracious Spirit's working and wooing! This is, indeed, true Home Mission work, and by the small contribution enclosed, I would like to have a hand in it myself. I greatly wish I could multiply it.

With regard to Dr. Wrighton, I'll simply say that I greatly enjoyed, and trust I may fully profit by, his simple, yet profound, soul-searching addresses, fitting climaxes to the sessions of the day.

Now, just a word or two regarding your comments on the "75 witnesses" in your sermon on "The Churches and the War." You certainly evidenced a spirit and disposition of kindness, and almost of toleration, toward them; for which, I regret, so many are accustomed to give you little credit these days. I fear, however, that you spoke without very definite, or full, knowledge of what is going on in certain ministerial circles for some considerable time. I may be quite wrong in the view I hold; but I, very decidedly, do not think I am, which is, that there is a decidedly "Red", "Communist" element in the United Church ministry, which has been making itself felt increasingly in recent years; and is definitely represented by the now notorious "75". For years _____ has been openly challenging, exposing and opposing this movement in the annual denominational gatherings; and I am sure he fully shares my views. _____ and _____ are, I believe, prime movers, not to say propagandists, in it all. For the life of me I cannot see wherein these men and their move-

ment differ from Communists and Communism; and, holding this view, I cannot regard them as anything short of disloyal enemies, real enemies of the state, and their signed "Witness" anything else than an acknowledgment thereof in writing; though it would appear that great pains were taken to word the document as inoffensively as possible. My feeling, therefore, is that they should be most thoroughly investigated, and their act dealt with precisely on its merits; even as it would be were it subscribed to by a group of unlettered foreigners in our North Country.

Now, please do not think that I am trying to stir you up to take any other action. I had not intended writing at such length. I'm simply wishing to say that I fear you have judged these men too charitably, shall I say, and that I fear they may take some comfort therefrom.

In hearty good fellowship, I am,

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) _____

Editorial Note on the Above

We endeavoured to make it clear that we had no sympathy with the illogical pacifism of "The Witness Against War", but we refrained from unsparing denunciation in the belief that in this case, such a statement would be well-taken care of by others. For more than twenty-five years Jarvis Street Pulpit has borne consistent testimony against such illogic in religion and morality as is expressed in this innane "Witness" which witnesses only to the moral obtuseness of the signatories.

We agree with our correspondent's kindly questioning. We were moderate in our strictures while awaiting a fuller knowledge of the facts. It is better to say too little than too much. Theodore Roosevelt once said it was unwise to shake one's fist first and his finger afterward. We shook a finger merely as an N.B., but should it be needed we still have a fist. Meanwhile we are grateful to our correspondent for his letter. He has been a true and valued friend of Jarvis Street for a long time although not actually a member of the church.

Bible School Lesson Outline

OLIVE L. CLARK, Ph.D. (Tor.)

Vol. 3 Fourth Quarter Lesson 46 November 12, 1939

Golden Text: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."—John 3:14, 15.

For Reading: John 3.

I. Salvation by God's Sovereign Grace—verses 1 to 9.

The children of Israel intended to follow the route of the spies as they neared Canaan, but King Arad the Canaanites hindered them (Num. 33:40). It would seem that the early defeat and subjection of Israel at the hand of King Arad was due to their lack of fellowship with God, for when they entered into communion with Him, victory became theirs. The Christian will have victory in his life only as he abides in fellowship with the Lord. The people of King Arad were to be regarded as enemies of Jehovah, and Israel was blessed when she treated them as those devoted to destruction (Lev. 27:28, 29).

The children of Israel were hindered also by the Edomites, who refused them passage through the land and thus compelled them to march around that territory (Num. 20:14-21; Judges 11:18). The pilgrim's path is longer and more difficult when the flesh, of which Edom is the type, holds sway (Rom. 6:12-14; 8:5-9; Gal. 5:16, 17).

The weariness and discouragement of the people in the face of the difficulties of the wilderness were but natural, yet they had the privilege of living supernaturally. In a marvellous way God had preserved them, and time after time He had demonstrated His willingness to undertake on their behalf if they would but trust Him (Deut. 8:2-4). All the resources of the grace of God are at the disposal of the Christian who will walk in the Spirit (Rom. 8:12-17).

The complaints of Israel no longer consisted in shy whisperings and murmurs of discontent, but were voiced in open reproach against God and against Moses. They complained that they had no water, and they regarded the manna sent from heaven as "light bread". They loathed the heavenly food. Their souls had become lean while they were pampering their fleshy appetites (Psa. 106:15), and they had no capacity to enjoy spiritual food. It is sadly true that spiritual tastes readily become dull, and that those who seek satisfaction in the spheres of sin will shun the house, the Word and the ways of God.

Israel tempted God in the wilderness (Exod. 17:2; Deut. 6:16; Matt. 4:7; 1 Cor. 10:9). The people put Him to the test to see how far they could sin against Him without being punished. The Lord is holy, and He could not allow them to go on without showing them the sinful character of their complaints. He did so by sending fiery or venomous serpents among them. The serpent is the symbol of Satan (Gen. 3:1, 4; Rev. 12:9; 20:2). Yielding to Satan they had desired the food he could give, and yearned for the flesh-pots of Egypt (Num. 11:5, 6). The Lord allowed them to feel the painful results of contact with the serpent, the physical emblem of Satan, in order that they might realize the spiritual results which would follow their yielding to the Tempter. As physical suffering and death came as a result of the serpent bites, so would spiritual suffering and death follow their sin (Gen. 2:17; Ezek. 18:4; Rom. 6:23).

Sometimes it is necessary for the Lord to allow calamity to come to an individual or a nation that they may realize the folly of living in their own way and rebelling against the control of God (Luke 19:14).

The children of Israel confessed their sin. Those who would be saved must see themselves as God sees them—poor, weak, miserable, lost and blind (Rev. 3:17, 18). They were then willing to call upon the Lord for relief, and to use the good offices of Moses, the prophet whom they had despised (1 Sam. 12:19; 1 Kings 13:6).

The Lord waits to forgive those who acknowledge their need of Him (Psa. 86:5; Jer. 3:12, 13; 31:34). In sovereign grace He provided a remedy for the stricken people, helpless and hopeless had He not intervened.

The serpent of brass set upon a pole was a picture of Christ, uplifted on the cross to save sinners (John 3:14-16). The incident illustrates the Gospel in many ways. Salvation from sin is possible on the basis of Christ crucified (John 8:28; 12:32-34). Brass speaks of judgment, and on the cross Satan was judged (Gen. 3:15; John 12:31).

The method of deliverance was in keeping with the sin. Christianity is a reasonable religion, and it fits the needs of man who was created with freedom of will to receive or to reject the will of God. The Israelites had previously set their wills in defiance against the will of Jehovah, and now they must by an act of will deliberately choose His way. Since sin is lawlessness, salvation can be obtained only by those who exercise their will toward God (1 John 3:4, Revised version; Rev. 22:17).

God made provision for the healing of all, but only those who looked to the brazen serpent would be healed. Our God is the Saviour of all men, but especially of those who believe (1 Tim. 2:4; 4:10).

Salvation is by faith, not by works (Rom. 3:24; 4:5, 16; Eph. 2:8, 9). Those who looked to the serpent demonstrated in that act their belief in the promise of God which Moses had declared. They were convinced that healing would come if they obeyed. Men must repent and believe the Gospel (Mark 1:15).

How profound and yet how simple the way of salvation! The Gospel of grace is an inexhaustible mine of truth, and yet one need only look to Christ to be saved (Isa. 45:22).

Blessed results follow the look of faith. In the case of the Israelites, the progress of the deadly poison was stayed, and they recovered life and health. They who look to Christ in faith, trusting Him to perform His promise to save, will be saved from spiritual death, and will receive everlasting life (John 3:16, 36; 5:24).

II. Refreshment by God's Sovereign Power—verses 10 to 20.

The Edomites dwelt south of the Dead Sea, the Moabites along the east shore, and the Amorites to the north. The river Arnon separated the territory of the Moabites from

that of the Amorites. Arnon was the scene of the Lord's power as was the Red Sea (Exod. 14:21-31).

The Lord is sovereign in His working. He has all power; and He may perform miracles directly, immediately, without human instrument; at other times He chooses to use men or things as channels of His power (Compare Mark 10:51, 52 with John 9:6, 7). At one time He commanded Moses to strike the rock (Exod. 17:6), at another time to speak to the rock (Num. 20:8), yet in each case He provided the water. In this case He acted in sovereign grace, without human co-operation, except that He allowed the princes to dig the well which would hold the water (2 Kings 8:16, 17). The water of life is free to those who will drink of it (Isa. 55:1; Rev. 22:17).

The Israelites offered joyful praise to God for His goodness (Exod. 15:1-3; Psa. 136).

III. Victory by God's Sovereign Will—verses 21 to 35.

The Amorites refused Israel the right of passage, as did the Edomonites. Since they were a wicked people, God was just in allowing them to be destroyed in large numbers. At the same time, the Israelites were now living in communion with God, their sins forgiven and their lives refreshed. They were enabled to capture cities (1 John 5:4).

The victory over Og, King of Bashan, was a triumphant one, for Og was a mighty giant (Deut. 3:1-11; Joshua 12:4; 13:12; Psa. 135:10, 11; 136:20, 21). Those who trust in the Lord may perform exploits.

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