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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"THEREFORE!"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, March 12th, 1950
(Stenographically Reported)

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."—1 Cor. 15:58.

FROM somewhere abroad, I think it must have been from Indonesia, in one of my cables I sent, as usual, a motto for the church year, to reach you January 1st. It has been my custom to do that for nearly forty years, and usually I have followed it with a brief exposition of the text. Someone said to me the other day, "We did not get your exposition of the motto you sent this year. Don't you think you had better give it to us some day?" So my mind turned to that for our morning meditation.

This fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians is one of the weightiest chapters in the Bible, and one of the greatest arguments to be found in all polemic literature. Paul gives written confirmation here of the gospel which he has preached. He declares that he first received it of the Lord, and that then he gave it to them. He sums up that gospel as the central truth of it, in the fact of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, which he declares was "according to the scriptures". Thus he makes the thesis of this chapter an integral part of Holy Scripture as a whole, and the central truth of it all is the death of the Incarnate God, and His resurrection from the dead.

Paul then argues in support of the resurrection, certifying that it was abundantly witnessed. The Lord appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve, then to above five hundred brethren at once. He appeared to Thomas, and to all the apostles, and last of all, said Paul, "He appeared to me also, as of 'one born out of due time.'"

Thus he asserts that the resurrection of Christ is indubitably established—really, actually, factually, Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

From that, as his major premise, he proceeds to the argument that everything is dependent upon the actuality of the resurrection. He is willing to accept the full consequences of the disproof of that as an historic

fact, for "if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins". All that has been contended for the message of the gospel, or for the Person and work of Jesus Christ, must fall to the ground as utterly invalidated, if it be that Christ is not risen from the dead.

He proceeds further to assert it most positively, on the ground of what he has testified: that Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of them that sleep. And so, from the resurrection of Christ, he argues the resurrection of all believers.

From this he proceeds to prophecy, and declares that the time shall come "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory". And, like a triumphant warrior, he utters this victorious cry: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

By an irresistible logic, therefore, which marches like an invincible army, he reaches the magnificent conclusion that that which was prophesied, has come to pass, that He has been manifested Who came to destroy the works of the devil; so that poor, sinful, human nature, may now give thanks because it is always caused to triumph through Jesus Christ.

What an argument!

On the basis of that, he gives us this word of admonition and exhortation, "Therefore". Do not forget the "therefore", for that connects it with this whole argument: because Christ has come, and the gospel is really true, because these matters have been placed beyond the bounds of peradventure, and ultimately accepted as abso-

lutely true, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

I.

WE ARE ADMONISHED, THEREFORE, TO BE "STEDFAST". It is a tonic, an inspiration, to meet with stedfast people. That implies that there is something inherently strong and unchangeable, something that belongs to the character of the man himself. It is not that which is made or fashioned by external influences: but, like a great granite rock that cannot be dissolved, it is always the same. It carries its weight, its abiding, its essential stedfastness, within itself.

"Be ye stedfast." Why? *Because this is true.* This truth must become a part of you. You are not merely to view it objectively, and admiringly; but receive the truth in the love of it. It imparts its own unchangeable nature to the man who has received it. He is rooted and built up in Christ, and established in Him, as he has been taught.

One always knows where to find a "stedfast" man. He can be depended upon. He is always the same, in every emergency. Like a rock he remains in his place, a stedfast soul. We are lacking to-day seriously and sadly in this character of stedfastness. There are so many changeable creatures. There is a word that is very commonly used of certain people—they are "unpredictable". You have them to-day, but where on earth they will be to-morrow, no one knows. They are standing for one thing to-day. To-morrow they may be found standing for the opposite. They have no stedfastness.

What is it that makes that volatility, that changeableness, that mutability, that you cannot depend on people? Do you remember how Peter admonishes his readers to beware that they fall not into the error of the wicked, and thus fall from their own stedfastness. It is opening the mind to error, to all sorts of vagaries, that makes people, as Lord Balfour once described them,—"Wibbly, wobbly, like blanc mange."

A man brought me one day a bundle of books and magazines. There was Mrs. Eddy's *Science and Health*, and also a biography of her, denouncing her, and showing what a charlatan she was. He had something on Seventh Day Adventism, something on Unity—whatever that is. He had a little bit of everything in his basket. He said, "I have been studying it all, and I don't know where I am." I said, "I don't wonder." There could be no "stedfastness" there; he had fallen into a dozen errors, and therefore had fallen from his own "stedfastness".

I used the metaphor of a piece of granite. I don't know whether there is any kind of chemical that could dissolve a piece of granite. I don't suppose there is. But if there were, then I should liken it to that one thing—error which, if a man opens his mind and heart to it, will destroy the foundations of his faith, until by and by he loses his faith.

To what are we coming? I mention something that ought to shock believers, to produce an earthquake in the denomination to which that church belongs. There ought to be a protest of hundreds of thousands against it: In a United Church on Bathurst St., a debate is advertised for their Sunday night forum on—"Is God Necessary?" argued by a humanist, and defended by someone related to the Student Christian Movement.

To what has the professing church come, when it is possible, in a house dedicated to the worship of God,

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

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that the question should even be raised, "Is God Necessary?" It is blasphemy. Give that pastor my compliments, and tell him I said so.

Someone said to me only this last week, "I put my hand on the rail that Spurgeon used to put his hand on as he went into his pulpit, and I wept to see to what place had come." He went on to say, "My wife and I are constantly praying that when you are gone, Jarvis Street Church had better be blotted out, and cease utterly to exist than that it should ever lend itself to influences that would be destructive of the gospel."

"Therefore" don't you know these things are true? Have they not passed beyond the realm of doubt and uncertainty? Are you not absolutely sure that God is, and that He is the Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him? Are you not sure that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh? that He died for you, and was buried, and rose again, and ascended into heaven? Let me give my testimony: I am more sure of that than I am of these material things I touch, this pulpit, these books. It is the one indubitable factor of human existence, that God, as manifest in Christ, is the most real thing in life, the Creator and Preserver of all.

Knowing these things, "Therefore"! That is the logician's word: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast", like the truth you profess to believe:

"Wide as the world is Thy command,
Vast as eternity Thy love;
Firm as a rock Thy truth shall stand,
When rolling years have ceased to move."

Oh, that God would make us "stedfast" by the reception of the truth. Yes; and by what I tried to tell you last Sunday morning, by the indwelling of the immutable Spirit; Who dwells with you, and shall be in you. And if Christ be in you He is the hope of glory, and nothing can extinguish that hope: "Therefore, be ye stedfast".

I say that has to do with the essential character of a man, what we are, what we have become, what we have been made, by the grace of God

II.

THE NEXT WORD IS UNMOVEABLE". That means someone who is not subject to external influences; one who is not driven, or carried, about by every wind of doctrine, driven by the wind, and tossed. Were you ever in the desert, our American deserts—Arizona, for instance? Yonder is a bit of stuff like heather. It has a little life in it. It is superficially rooted in the sand. It draws a little nourishment, I don't know how, that it lives on. Then a strong breeze comes up, and picks it up, and rolls it along the desert sands. The breeze dies down, and it stops. Then it puts out its roots, and stays there till the next breeze comes along. Then it goes travelling on again.

There are some people like that, always on the move, always transplanting themselves. They are not unmoveable: they are always running after some new thing, like the Athenians, who "spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing."

A certain young man, associated with me some years ago, a very fine fellow, but very emotional, came to me one day, and said, "Doctor, I just heard the most wonderful man I ever heard in my life. He is an extraordinary character. What he has done is simply wonderful." I said, "Tell me about him." He told me of the exploits of this marvellous man he had just heard. I said, "I used to think the Apostle Paul was a bit of a man, but this man must even have outclassed Paul. He would be a tyro compared with this fellow." "Oh, but he is a wonder. I wish you could hear him." I said, "I don't know whether I shall have opportunity or not. But, by the way, who told you all this?" He smiled, and he said, "I never thought of that: he told us himself." I said, "Yes." Time proved the man to be far the otherwise than he had represented himself to be.

There are many people like that, who are carried away by the last thing they hear. You have heard the saying, "He always reflects the opinion of the last person who pulled his ear"—one thing to-day, something else to-morrow, a rolling stone that gathers no moss, a bit of heather in the desert that never is rooted and grounded anywhere.

But if the gospel be true, what more do you want? If you are now in Christ, and you have come to know the truth—then stay there. Be "unmoveable"; stand up against all the winds that blow.

It is an inspiration to find people unmoveable.

A lot of strange things passed through my mind when I returned to Toronto recently. I came down Jarvis St., and I stood outside, and looked up, and I said, "I have been in the air for forty thousand miles, or thereabouts, all round the world, but there is the old church still standing just as I left it. It has not moved since I have been away." And I said, "Thank the Lord, I know a lot of people inside just like the building. They have not run away; they have not fallen from their own steadfastness: They are "stedfast, unmoveable".

III.

And thirdly, "ALWAYS ABOUNDING IN THE WORK OF THE LORD". Now if these things be true, then *this work, in which you and I are engaged, is not our work at all: it is the work of the Lord, not yours or mine, but His.* He is the President, and the Proprietor of the Company. Some people think He owns a little of the "stock" in the churches, but He owns it *all*—it is His Church, His enterprise. The revenue is all His. The glory belongs to Him, and to no one else. It is His work, be it Sunday

School, prayer meeting, preaching, teaching, whatever it is, it is His work, and I am glad.

In other enterprises sometimes the genius that created it, passes away. He may have trained other men to walk in his footsteps, and perhaps a-greater enterprise continues. But in some cases, when the man who founded the work passes, it passes with him. The Church throughout the world is not dependent upon men: "Upon this rock"—what rock?—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"—"upon (that) rock will I build my church". It is His work, not yours or mine. We don't own anything of it. We are merely His servants, and the servants of each other for Jesus' sake.

In the work of the Lord we should abound. That is to say, Do as much as you can. You Labour Unionists won't be offended when I say that I fear something of Labour Unionism gets into the church. Someone says, "I have done my 'bit'." We had a saying in the first war of people's doing "their bit". What was that? The man enlisted in the war, put on the king's uniform, and went out to stand in the front line. What was his "bit"? The last drop of his blood, if necessary.

That is our "bit" in the work of the Lord: abounding in the work of the Lord, being dissatisfied with every day's work, if by any means we could have done more than we have done. Do not be afraid of killing yourself with hard work. We all have a long, long way to go before we reach that danger. Hard work never killed anyone: "Abounding in the work of the Lord."

The Apostle Paul said here, "I laboured more abundantly than they all. I tried to do an extra 'bit'." And so he did. That is the way to work. Because of this great enterprise in which we are engaged; because of Him Who is the Head, and the Centre and End of it all; and because of what He has done for us; because of the revenue of glory we have received in our own salvation, and in the salvation of others—therefore, because of all that, let us abound in all good works. We are not saved by good works, but by grace alone. But, over and above the gift of grace, we are to be rewarded for our works.

Then there is another word, "Always abounding in the work of the Lord." Have you not seen it? Someone gets enthusiastic, and comes and says, "I want a class, I want to teach." Metaphorically he takes off his coat and goes to work. A week or so passes, then one day the superintendent says, "Where is So-and-So?" "We don't know." He abounded—but not for long! Like a man I knew of, who had the habit of getting drunk. But he signed a pledge, and resolved that he would drink no more. He did not touch liquor for several weeks. Then someone said to him, "Why, John, I am glad to see you living a sober life." "Yes; I have not touched drink for

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The Gospel Witness

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Canada

so long." "Well now, that is fine. Here is a shilling for keeping sober." "Oh, thank you, sir."

After the man had gone, he said, "I think I will take that shilling to give good resolution a treat." So he went off into the "pub" and got drunk again—sober for a little while, then he had to give his good resolution a treat. Many of the Lord's people do similarly in respect to the work of the Lord. They work, and work, then suddenly they get tired, and you cannot get anything out of them at all.

Now, because these things are true, let us be always abounding in the work of the Lord. That does not mean on Sunday only, but every day in the week, witnessing constantly for Christ.

IV.

WHAT IS OUR REWARD? "Forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." How do you know? Because these things are true. What is true? The word of the Lord is true. What are you doing? Teaching the Word, preaching the Word, disseminating the Word, sowing the seed,—there is life in the seed. The Lord has said that His word shall not return to Him void. Well, then, I am engaged in a job, and I shall never be out of work. I know that in the Lord my labour is not in vain.

There is a lot of vain labour in this world. We have all engaged in it. I have. I wish that I could recall some of the weeks and months that I have spent in doing things which I thought were right, but they did not seem to bear any fruit. Perhaps they will, I don't know. But remember, in the field of the Lord, doing His work, sowing His seed, doing things in His way, by His Spirit, in His own time, is sure to bring forth fruit, and that labour will not be in vain in the Lord.

Are we sure we are labouring in the Lord, not apart from Him, always in His work, and for His glory? If that be true, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

Let us pray:

We thank Thee for the assurance of Thy word, O Lord, that Thy word shall never return to Thee void.

We thank Thee that the ultimate triumph of the gospel, and the coronation and the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ was determined before the foundation of the world, and that no power in earth, or in hell can stay its divinely-ordained progress.

Bless our meditation for Thy name's sake. Amen.

Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
In living echoes of Thy tone;
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thy erring children lost and lone.

Oh, lead me, Lord, that I may lead
The wandering and the wavering feet!
Oh, feed me, Lord, that I may feed
Thy hungering ones with manna sweet!

Oh, strengthen me, that while I stand
Firm on the Rock, and strong in Thee,
I may stretch out a loving hand
To wrestlers with the troubled sea!

"Have you a glimpse of Christ now that you are dying?" was the question asked of an old Scottish saint, who, raising himself, made the emphatic reply, "I'll none o' your glimpses now that I am dying, since that I have had a full look at Christ these forty years gane."

CANADA AND THE VATICAN EMBASSY

A PRESS dispatch from Ottawa informs us that Prime Minister St. Laurent is not yet ready to appoint an envoy to the Vatican on the grounds that it would stir up religious controversy in Canada. The news item reads as follows:

Ottawa, March 10 (CP).—Prime Minister St. Laurent said today he does not believe a Canadian diplomatic representative to the Vatican should be appointed while there is a danger of the move stirring religious controversy in Canada.

He made the statement in an address to a delegation from the Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labor, which urged the appointment.

Mr. St. Laurent said he personally felt it would be advantageous for Canada to have a representative at the Vatican. But in the government's opinion there still were too many people who believed the appointment would be a statement by the government that the Roman Catholic faith was superior.

We note in passing two capital assertions in the Prime Minister's statement: First, he is firmly convinced of the wisdom of having Canadian representation at the Vatican. Second, that he is not at present prepared to run the danger of religious controversy by making the appointment now. This is very well for the present, as the government has something like four years before it must face the people again in a general election, but what would Mr. St. Laurent think if in the next general election his return to power depended on winning a solid block from Roman Catholic Quebec? A policy that is openly founded on expediency gives no guarantee for the future. Indeed, if Mr. St. Laurent is personally convinced of the advantage of a Vatican Embassy, we may be sure that as a loyal Roman Catholic who is dependent upon the good will of Quebec voters, he will do all within his power to change Canadian public opinion in the direction of his own religious convictions and his own political advantage.

An Astonishing Editorial

Commenting on the Prime Minister's statement, *The Toronto Globe and Mail* has an amazing editorial in its issue of March 15, entitled "Astonishing Excuse" from which we quote the following paragraphs:

That the Prime Minister said anything so absurd as that will not be credited. In last year's controversy on this issue several objections to the sending of an envoy were put forward. But no objector ever got so far off the track of common sense as to say that the appointment would put Canada on record as attesting the "superiority" of "the Roman Catholic faith."

What was said was that the appointment would give the Roman Catholic Church a special status in Canada not possessed by other branches of the Christian community. One may presume that this was the objection cited by Mr. St. Laurent and that the Ottawa report was a bad paraphrase. In corrected form, the Prime Minister's statement becomes intelligible but, as an explanation of a policy, it is extremely weak and nearly as absurd as the garbled version.

If the Government thinks that an envoy to the Vatican could serve Canada usefully, it ought to send him. He would certainly have more opportunity to gather valuable information on world affairs than some other diplomats serving us abroad. And that, of course, would be his function. His going would be a recognition that Vatican City is an important political sounding board. It would leave the position of the Catholic Church in Canada unchanged.

It is something that Mr. St. Laurent is convinced of the value of the appointment. The reason he offers for not acting on that opinion is neither adequate nor worthy of Canada.

Thus does Canada's "National Newspaper" venture to speak on this very important matter. We have yet to see an official Roman Catholic organ, and there are many of them that come to our desk, speak more strongly in favour of Canadian representation at the Vatican. Our Toronto daily even presumes to read the Prime Minister a lesson not in politics merely but in the theology of his own Church. It attempts to argue that the official recognition by this Dominion of the Church of Rome would "leave the position of the Catholic Church in Canada unchanged." It says this in spite of the repeated declarations to the contrary made by every Roman Catholic paper in Canada. The one great reason why Roman Catholic priests demand a Vatican Embassy would be a recognition of the strength and importance of the Roman Catholic Church in this country. There is no room for doubt that the sending of an envoy to the Vatican would give the Church of Rome in Canada a status that is not possessed by any other religious body. It would also be a violation of the principle of the separation of Church and State and would serve no useful purpose in the diplomatic realm.

We have printed the paragraphs from *The Toronto Globe and Mail* here as an indication of what Canadians may expect from the Conservative Party with which the said paper is very intimately affiliated. We had hoped that this party would change its line of action after the crushing defeat inflicted on the favourite son of this paper in the last election—we refer to Mr. George Drew, in case our readers have forgotten the name of the defeated Progressive-Conservative candidate in the last general elections. But the above editorial would seem to indicate that so far from repenting of Mr. Drew's abject servility to the Hierarchy of Quebec in order to win the last vote, our Toronto party organ seems to indicate that the same old policy is to be continued in an intensified form. The party has so far sold itself to the priests that it is willing to be more popish than our Roman Catholic Prime Minister. And we venture to prophesy that its servile boot-licking of Quebec will avail it no more than it did in the last election or in the other election when another candidate for power, Dr. Manion, courted Quebec's priests in the name of the good old party that used to boast of its British connection.—W.S.W.

WHAT TO DO WITH OBSTACLES

The first apostles drove through tremendous obstacles. Indeed, they never had the comfort of an open and unimpeded road. Every road was thick with adversaries. What then? Through them or over them! "But, Sire," said a timid and startled officer to Napoleon, on receiving apparently impossible commands, "But Sire, there are the Alps!" "Then there must be no Alps," replied his audacious chief. "There must be no Alps!" That was the very spirit of the first apostles. Mighty antagonisms reared themselves in their way—ecclesiastical prejudices, the prejudices of culture, social hostilities, political experiences, and all the subtle and violent contrivances of the world, the flesh, and the devil. "But, Sire, there are the Alps!" "There must be no Alps!" Through them! Over them! What that coward Peter got through when the fire of God glowed in his soul! When a man has the holy fire of God within him he has a boiling fervency of spirit, and he can drive through anything.

—J. H. JOWETT

THE STRANGE CASE OF ARCHBISHOP CHARBONNEAU

A few weeks ago we discussed in these pages the strange case of Archbishop Charbonneau of Montreal whose "resignation" was announced in Rome on grounds of "ill health." Since that time the French Roman Catholic press of Quebec has been as silent as the grave on the matter, though we have no doubt that queries similar to ours are coursing through the minds of a great many Roman Catholics in Canada. Our daily press informs us, as may be seen in the reprint following this note, that Roman Catholics in England are thinking thoughts about the French-Canadian prelate's dismissal very similar to the ones we expressed in our recent article. In fact, we wonder if the Roman Catholic editor of *The Tablet* had not read our note in THE GOSPEL WITNESS before he wrote the one reported below. It will serve as a reminder that though Roman Catholics seem to keep step with machine like precision to the time and tune set by their ecclesiastical commanders, yet they are subject to the same doubts and questions as to the wisdom and even the perfect sincerity of their superiors that Protestants entertain concerning them.

A few days after the Archbishop's dismissal *The Toronto Daily Star* printed on its front page in its "Stop the Press News" the following brief item, in red:

Victoria, B.C.—Archbishop Charbonneau, resting following resignation, reported in "very good health."

No comment was given, nor was one needed. One of the Montreal dailies also reported that the Archbishop himself had said that his health had never been better. Neither of the two statements received any correction or denial from official sources within the Hierarchy. Apparently even Roman officialdom does not expect its people to take the Vatican explanation of "ill health" as anything but a lame excuse for an outright dismissal.

From the Winnipeg papers we note that Archbishop Sinnott, whom THE GOSPEL WITNESS raised to fame by publicizing his "\$40 Ticket to Heaven" ("Dear Catholic Parents"), still holds the title of his archdiocese though he has retired from the active ministry as the ordinary four years ago. A predecessor of Mgr. Charbonneau in Montreal held the title for almost two decades after he was sick and unable to carry on the administration of his office. But a comparatively young priest who is openly said to be in good health is suddenly and without notice stripped of his high rank and demoted from his important office. Little wonder that even Roman Catholics, habituated as they are to high-handed authoritarian procedures, are shocked.—W.S.W.

BRITISH R.C. PAPER CRITICIZES ARCHBISHOP'S DISMISSAL

From *The Toronto Daily Star*

London, March 18—(CP)—*The Tablet*, a leading British Roman Catholic weekly, to-day terms the handling of Most Rev. Joseph Charbonneau's resignation as Archbishop of Montreal "not satisfactory."

The 58-year-old archbishop's resignation was announced by the Vatican, February 11. The announcement said the Pope accepted the archbishop's resignation which was tendered because of "health reasons."

In to-day's issue *The Tablet* gives a lengthy review of events preceding the resignation. It says that Archbishop Charbonneau was "active in Catholic syndicates and keenly interested in labour problems as a young parish priest in Quebec."

The weekly adds that Bishop P. S. Desranleau of Sherbrooke played a prominent role in last summer's asbestos

strike in the eastern townships, which it says was allegedly behind Archbishop Charbonneau's removal.

(During the four-month asbestos strike last year, denounced by provincial authorities as "illegal," Archbishop Charbonneau and Bishop Desranleau were among the bishops in Quebec who sanctioned church-door collections by union representatives for the relief of strikers' families).

The Tablet says:

"Why it may be asked was such a man (Charbonneau) ever chosen to be an archbishop if the sympathy of Rome is against prelates with such views? Or, if Rome's choice is for such men as he, are we seriously asked to believe that two members of the administration of Monsieur Duplessis (Premier Duplessis of Quebec) in a brief visit to Rome could nevertheless, against Rome's better judgment, secure the removal of an archbishop within a matter of days? As all governments know, the removal of archbishops is not so easily to be obtained.

"Why was it only Msgr. Charbonneau whose dismissal 'asbestos magnates' secured when Msgr. Desranleau in particular played a more prominent part in the strikes and used stronger language in defence of the strikers?

"But Bishop Desranleau still remains in his see. Clearly the situation is not a satisfactory one. There was no advance information that the archbishop's health was deteriorating. A resignation of that kind is a very unusual happening; speculation was inevitable. If it could not have been avoided by more careful handling it should be more fully explained."

The article quotes excerpts from *The Toronto Star*, *Toronto Globe and Mail*, *Time* magazine, *The New Statesman and Nation*, published in London, and Rome's *Civiltà Cattolica*.

(Shortly after the resignation was announced by the Vatican Archbishop Ildebrando Antonutti, apostolic delegate to Canada, said he has "always approved and encouraged the very charitable attitude" the former archbishop of Montreal had towards all victims of war, strikes and social injustice.

(A spokesman for Archbishop Antonutti said the statement had been issued because the apostolic delegate's name had been "ill-advisedly" linked with comment on the resignation).

HOW ROMAN PRIESTS STRETCH STATISTICS

A letter appearing in *The Daily Province of Vancouver*

Sir: In a recent article in your paper, Christy McDevitt refers to the Pope as the spiritual head of 400,000,000 people.

I would like to know how he arrives at this figure, or how the authorities that he quotes arrive at it.

Just who is a Roman Catholic? Is it a person born into a Roman Catholic family? Married by a priest? Member of a Roman Catholic church?

For instance, Mexico is a predominantly Roman Catholic country. In the taking of a church census in this country would the whole nation be lumped as belonging to this church?

There would be millions who never have and never will darken the door of a Roman Catholic institution, who can neither read nor write; millions more who are atheists, savages in the jungles, thousands of criminals, etc. The same could be said of every like nation—Spain, Portugal, Italy, Eire, Brazil, Argentine, Peru, Bolivia, Chili, etc.

It's just about time that all these loose figures about the number of Roman Catholics in the world were backed up by some concrete proof, and the best way is to list the number of people attending this particular church.

One would suppose that a person who recognizes the Pope as his or her spiritual head would be a person who at least once in a while presented themselves at a Roman Catholic place of worship, and I doubt very much if there are 100,000,000 such people in the world to-day."

Vancouver.

W. T. FUNSTON.

What makes the Dead Sea dead? Because it is all the time receiving, never giving out anything. Why is it that many Christians are cold? Because they are all the time receiving, never giving out anything.

—D. L. MOODY.

SEMINARY STUDENTS WRITE

An Editorial from *The Seminarian*, March, 1950

The March issue of *The Seminarian*, the paper written and published by the students of Toronto Baptist Seminary is just off the press and we are proud of both its matter and manner. The following editorial from the pen of student-pastor Geoffrey Adams of Harriston will serve as an introduction to the work our ministers-in-training are capable of doing.

ADDISON, in one of his essays, once wrote about the adventures of a shilling. In the course of the coin's history it was even used to disinherit a young man who somehow had fallen from parental favour so that he was "cut off with a shilling." We found the coin had a most interesting life. The travels of the various copies of *The Seminarian* if they could in some way be tabulated, likewise would make interesting reading. Although the circulation is not large, they no doubt at times are to be found in coaches, trains, homes, churches, etc. Eyes, friendly and others perhaps not so friendly, scan the contents. Should the attention of some stranger light on these pages this month we want you to know that our principal reason for publication is that others may "taste and see that the Lord is good." (Psalm 34:8).

The moon in itself is but an inert mass but catching the glory of the sun it rules in solitary splendour the silent watches of the night. We are but a group of students sitting at the feet of various professors but our boast is in the Lord Who made heaven and earth. Thus with confidence we say that we have a message even for kings, governors, and statesmen. Some of our readers will not know our Lord. Trained in religion, they may still not have entered a personal relationship with Christ Jesus. They may have failed to grasp the pivotal importance of the death of this God-Man. Not comprehending these matters, the blessing of knowing that the sinner's substitute has made full atonement leaves them under the torture of trying to fulfil the law's requirement. Others of our readers may be young men and women who even now have the desire to equip themselves for the Lord's service. To you we would suggest an institution which has for final authority, in faith and practice, the Holy Scriptures. Let it be an institution bearing the reproach of the Cross, one whose stand against modernism, heresy, and other pernicious evils is well known. Let it be one in which some modern Elisha, hated and feared by the forces of wickedness, exerts a Godly influence. In other words, let it be the Seminary.

Others of our readers will be Christians. Of you we would request prayer support, for this training of ministers and missionaries is a spiritual work of the greatest consequence to the world at large. God does not need hordes of preachers; rather He desires a Moses or a Joshua. So support us, fellow believers, in ways both spiritual and temporal and be assured that you are doing something of vital significance.

As this issue comes off the press may the savour of Christ be in its pages. Amen.

—G. A. ADAMS.

FRENCH GOSPEL SERVICE NEXT SUNDAY

The usual French Gospel Service will be held next Sunday at 3 o'clock in Greenway Hall. Mr. Etienne Huser will be the preacher. Make this service as widely known as possible among all interested in the French language and in the preaching of the Gospel.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"Their Sins Will I Remember No More"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, March 5th, 1950
(Stenographically Reported)

"I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins, and their iniquities will I remember no more."—Hebrews 8:12.

"Their sins, and their iniquities will I remember no more."

THIS text brings before us one of the mysteries of the divine mind, as all the qualities of Deity, infinite and unfathomable, must be mysteries to our finite understandings.

Here we are reminded of the divine memory. There are many passages in scripture which suggest the far reach, and retentiveness of the divine memory. God does not forget. He remembers the judgments which He has promised. If you read the record of the operations of divine Providence, you will find, again and again, as the centuries pass, in His time the judgment falls. So did He promise that whosoever should rebuild the accursed city of Jericho, should "lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it." Centuries later this came to pass. Many judgments are promised in the word of God, and we are assured that not one jot or tittle of the law shall fail until all shall be fulfilled.

Equally the scripture abounds with promises of mercy. He says again and again, "I will remember my covenant." "I set my bow in the clouds." "I will remember." And so through the generations, promises which He had made through various tribes and families, in His own time He mercifully fulfilled. There are passages such as this: "I will remember thee, the kindnesses of thy youth, the love of thine espousals." "God is not unrighteous to forget your work of faith and labour of love." God remembers as we should expect.

But here, if I may say it without irreverence, some kind of revolution is promised in the Godhead. God will forget! He will irradicate certain things from His memory, to remember them again no more.

I suppose our memories often fail us, and yet, sometimes, we could all wish they would fail us more frequently, for there are things in the lives of people which we would fain forget. Memory is a very important faculty of the mind. It is that which assures us of the conscious continuity of life. It is the faculty which relates yesterday to to-day, and which makes the occurrences of to-day to be the record of our yesterday when a new day shall come.

You will have observed how painful, how distressing it is when the evening time is well advanced, and the faculties begin to falter even before they wholly fail; and the memory is intermittent, the aged man or the aged woman remembers something to-day that happened fifty years ago, or more. To-morrow the mind may be a blank. He or she may not be able to connect to-morrow with to-day. It is memory which makes life to be as

one continuous stream, relating our yesterdays to to-day, and to-day to all our to-morrows.

What things are stored for ourselves in memory! Oh, memory may become like a cage of ugly, unclean, birds, or like a den of ferocious beasts. Some day, among the shadows we hear the owl of the nightwatches, and sometimes, perhaps, something escapes from memory's chamber like a loathsome bat. "Oh," we say, "why was that door opened? Why had I to think of that?" There is a colloquialism, "Why bring that up?" "Why open that door?" Another day, perhaps it is a recollection that would rend us as a beast of prey. There are experiences of life painful, disappointing, and disillusioning, with a tendency to embitterment, and we would fain forget them, and go on.

In different places that I visited in my recent tour, I talked with hosts of people who had experienced all the horrors of the concentration camp, particularly under the Japanese. They were reluctant to say anything about it. I don't know how many said to me, "Dr. Shields, it is the constant effort of all of us to try to forget that these things ever happened. The horror of it all is so disturbing that we should like, if possible, to blot it out."

Well, we can understand that, and yet you would not like to lose your memory! How enriched we are by recollections of the past! How very often the door is opened into some kind of paradise, where the birds sing, and the flowers bloom, and the memory of fellowship with God is very real, very precious. We should not like to forget that.

There are experiences with our fellows—I know there are many disappointing people. I know there are many who lose their loyalties, and friends become enemies; but on the other hand, how rich life is, with the memory of happy fellowships with people who are always true, and always kind.

Sometimes if I am a little bit depressed—perhaps bowed down a little with the spirit of heaviness—instead of taking down a book, I like to put out the lights, or dim them, and recall the past, and say to multitudes of people I have known, "Oh, come and visit me." I see a long procession of men and women who love the Lord, who lived for Him, and who served Him in anticipation of the heavenly life, almost day and night in His temple. I can recall hundreds, I believe thousands of persons, of whom I can say, I give thanks to God upon every remembrance of them. My life was inestimably richer because I knew them. They were a benediction to me, and to others.

Yes; memory can be very sweet. The mother, when her children are grown, thinks of the days when they

were little tots and how they used to climb up into her lap, and put their arms about her. How lovely, and loving they all were! And, of course, if they continued, grown up, in faithfulness and affection, that happy memory is perpetuated. But if they have wandered, still mother likes to think of what the boy used to be; of what the girl used to be in the days gone by. We should not like to be without our memories. And yet I can conceive of life being rich and blessed if some things could forever be blotted out.

But what a miracle we have here! The record of your life and mind, with all its frailties, and follies, and faults,—all written down. It would be so easy for God to read it if He needed to do so. It would be so easy, would it not, for Him to remember! There are things in our lives that are not lovely, for "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Our idle words are recorded. We seem to think that the principle of recording electrically is something new. No; for "every idle word which men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." There must be a record somewhere; and it is all before God! There is not one of us who would like to meet Him face to face, knowing that at that moment all the darkest things in our lives were present to His view. How uncomfortable we should be if that were so!

But here is the thing which surpasses my understanding—that is not unusual, because there are ten thousand things within this Book of wisdom, which none of us can understand as yet—but I say this thing passes my understanding, how God, Whose faculties never fail, Who is the Source of all perfections, how He could absolutely banish something from His mind, blot it out, and say, "I will remember it no more."

Are you not glad He can do that? Are you not glad He has promised to do it? so that we may anticipate the heavenly life with comfort and composure; and that when we stand before Him at last, He will not be thinking what sinners we were. No; He will be thinking what saints we are, by His grace. "Their sins, and their iniquities will I remember no more."

I believe in the survival of personality after death, don't you? When the body perishes, the soul does not. The scripture abounds with teaching to that effect. The future life will be, in some way, a continuation of this life, both for the just, and for the unjust. Oh, memory will be one of the lashes which will lacerate the souls of those who have rejected the divine mercy: "'Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus evil things: now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.' Remember, you had your day; you had your opportunity. You might have been on this side of the gulf which now has become impassable." Too late for anyone to cross! And the memory of that fact will be a torturing experience.

But don't you think there are many things in life that you and I, if we are redeemed, will carry through with us into the other life? Many good things will not perish with the dissolution of the body. They will be carried forward. I think there is abundant reason to believe, from the teaching of scripture, in the continuity of the life of the redeemed people, and the enlargement of capacities, here in some respects disciplined and prepared for heavenly enjoyment.

I have told you of rather an abrupt old minister to whom his wife said one day, "My dear, do you think we

shall remember each other, and recognize each other in heaven?" "Well," he said, "don't I recognize you now, and don't I remember you?" "Yes." "Well, am I going to be a bigger fool in heaven?"

Moses will be there: "They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." There will be a multitude of the redeemed from all nations, and peoples and tongues; and your friends and mine will be there. Heaven would not be much of a place if we could not revive the happy memories of earth, the fellowships here begun, the experiences here enjoyed. I am looking forward to it.

I am looking forward to next Tuesday night. I have not seen the pictures to be shown. I want to live over that tour we had around the world, to all those different countries. I am in some of them myself! Too bad! I always ruin every picture, and nearly break every camera. But that you will have to put up with. It just makes it a little personal.

But I am actually looking forward to seeing the pictures, that I may live over some things. There are some things I don't want to live over; some places I don't want to go again; some meals I tried to eat. I don't want to see them again, or even smell them! These pictures will be interesting, I am sure, and I don't think there will be anything I should want to forget in them.

When we get to heaven I think there will be pictures in our minds of experiences of life. We shall meet people, and say, "When did you come?" "Oh, I have been here for centuries. When did you arrive?" "Just a little while ago." We shall talk together. I am going to have a great time with Moses, and Paul, and some of the rest, some day. I think they will condescend to give me some attention when we sit down together to talk about the things of God.

But there are things we don't want to carry with us; and the Lord has graciously promised to relieve us all of these impedimenta. He says, "I won't remember them;" "Their sins, and their iniquities will I remember no more."

May I dare to offer a suggestion. I hope it will not seem irreverent. I speak after the manner of men. I try in my own mind to understand that mystery—how can God forget? You know He promised never—never—never to remember my sins? What strange revolution in the divine mind takes place to make that possible?

That question is worth asking. You have heard of the great Dr. Chalmers' famous sermon on The Expulsive Power of a New Affection? He got the idea when being driven along a country lane somewhere in Scotland in a trap. The horse was a bit skittish. Something fluttered in the hedgerow, and the horse shied in the opposite direction. The driver, an experienced horseman, gave it a sharp cut with the whip on that side, and said, "I will give you something else to think of, sir."

Could it be possible that God decided to select something else to think of? and that He allowed His mind to be so absorbed that He could say, "I have forgotten"? What was the great thing? What was the divine masterpiece? Not the creation of man, but the redemption of man, the Incarnation, God manifest in the flesh, and all the implications of that unparalleled transaction. He came—He wrought—He obeyed—He suffered—He died—He offered to divine justice a *quid pro quo* for all our sins. He Who weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, weighed His infinite merit against the world's immeasurable guilt, and blotted it all out,

cancelled it, by the payment with His precious blood, of the debt, that otherwise never would have been paid. This I know that in heaven the Lamb is all the glory. This I know that the heavens, which formerly declared the glory of God, will need to do so no more, for they have no need of the sun, nor of the moon to shine therein for the glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

I don't really think I am irreverent when I try to imagine our Gracious God's saying, "Instead of dwelling upon your sin, I think upon your Saviour; and I will remember all that He has done for you, and so then 'Your sins, and your iniquities will I remember no more.'"

Why have I suggested that subject this evening? Because we are to come to the Table of the Lord. He said, "This do in remembrance of me." He admonished us to remember Him; and in all this, to remember Him in these symbols which speak of His death, His broken body, and His shed blood.

I wonder, could He have meant, You keep on remembering me, and then you will remember that by which I am enabled to forget your sins? Anyway, we are to keep in everlasting remembrance this great act of redemption. The focal point of all history, the greatest manifestation of divine power was when Almightyness, the hands that laid the foundation of the world, that meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure—when He the Omnipotent yielded His hands to the nails of Caesar's soldiers. It required Almightyness to keep Almightyness in check, when by a word, with the glance of His eye, He could have annihilated them all. Instead of that, He died the just for the unjust to bring us to God; and because of that, our sins and our iniquities He will remember no more. We may now, as did the dying thief, pray, "Lord, remember—remember—remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." And we may be sure of His answer: "Some day, some lovely day, some glorious day of the future 'Thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.'"

Let us pray:

O Lord, we thank Thee for the full assurance of faith which Thou dost work in the hearts of the believer, so that here and now we may rejoice in Thee as in God our Saviour.

Oh, as we come to Thy table to-night, may this sacrifice, which Thou didst offer, and of which we do but keep in remembrance, may this sacrifice be very real, and very precious to us! Send us away this evening by and by with a song in our hearts, because though Thou wast angry, thine anger is turned away, and now Thou dost comfort us. Amen.

OUR TRIUMPH IS PREPARED

In ancient times vast numbers of people, to obtain a simple crown of leaves, refused no toil, no pain, no trouble; nay, it even cost them nothing to die, and yet every one of them fought for a peradventure, not knowing whether he was to gain or to lose the prize. God holds forth to us the immortal crown by which we may become partakers of His glory: He does not mean us to fight at haphazard, but all of us have a promise of the prize for which we strive. Have we any cause then to decline the struggle? Do we think it has been said in vain that if we die with Jesus Christ we shall also live with Him? Our triumph is prepared, and yet we do all we can to shun the combat.

—JOHN CALVIN

REMARKABLE ACT TO CENSOR PRESS

From *The Peterborough Examiner*

The legislative assembly of Quebec has adopted by a vote of 73 to 8 a new "Act Respecting Publications and Public Morals"; its chief purpose appears to be to ban any "immoral illustration", which is defined as "any illustration . . . which evokes real or fictitious scenes of crime or of the habitual life of criminals, or morbid or obscene situations or attitudes, tending to corrupt youth and to pervert morals." On the face of it this seems to be a sensible act, for no one defends the publication of morbid or obscene pictures. It is interesting, however, that Quebec should feel the need for such an act, for unless we are much mistaken, the present laws provide means of suppressing such pictures. The question which the act arouses in the mind is whether the Quebec board of censors (who are empowered to act under the bill) will use it to suppress matter which would not at first appear to come under the provisions of the bill. Premier Duplessis is quoted as saying that one of the aims of the law is to rid the province of "Atheists, Bolshevists and Communists."

This is an interesting remark, for it is not unusual for atheists, bolshevists or Communists to spread their beliefs by means of pictures which would impress most people as morbid or obscene. But what Premier Duplessis has said suggests that a very wide interpretation may be given to the terms "scenes of crime or of the habitual life of criminals"; if "atheists, bolshevists and Communists" are meant the terms may easily be extended to cover any people of whom the Quebec board of censors disapproves. And it will be observed that there is no appeal from the decision of the board.

It will be interesting to watch how this act works and in what cases it is invoked. It constitutes, in effect, a government control on printing—not merely on illustrations but upon printing of any publications except those included under the Newspaper Declaration Act. Under the new act any publication except a newspaper must make a declaration to the provincial secretary; the attorney general may, at any time, instruct the board of censors to examine such a publication to see if any of its illustrations contravene the act; if the censors decide that this is so—and there is no appeal from their decision—the provincial police may seize all copies of the offending publication.

This act could work indirectly, at times. For instance, if an article in a publication offended the Quebec government the board of censors could order the confiscation of all copies of that publication because of an illustration which had nothing whatever to do with the offensive article. It must be remembered that most magazines carry advertisements of a kind which could offend censors of delicate sensibilities.

It is a remarkable act, giving the government remarkable arbitrary powers to control opinion.

SIMPLE, SLOTH AND PRESUMPTION

I saw then in my dream, that he went on thus, even until he came at a bottom, where he saw, a little out of the way, three men fast asleep, with fetters upon their heels. The name of the one was Simple, another Sloth, and the third Presumption.

Christian then seeing them lie in this case, went to them, if peradventure he might awake them, and cried, You are like them that sleep on the top of a mast, for the dead sea is under you, a gulf that hath no bottom: awake, therefore, and come away; be willing also, and I will help you off with your irons. He also told them, If he that goeth about like a roaring lion come by, you will certainly become a prey to his teeth. With that they looked upon him, and began to reply in this sort: Simple said, I see no danger; Sloth said, Yet a little more sleep; and Presumption said, Every vat must stand upon his own bottom. And so they lay down to sleep again, and Christian went on his way.—*Pilgrim's Progress*.

THE EMERGENCY MISSIONARY AND EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE

By Rev. H. C. Slade

THE Emergency Missionary and Educational Committee of The Union of Regular Baptist Churches, which was formed following the Convention of last October, is carrying on every department of the work formerly carried on by the Union.

The budget adopted in February of this year, provides for Home Missions, (English and French), Foreign Missions, and Religious Education, and is made up as follows:

Home Missions (English and French-Canadian)	60%
Toronto Baptist Seminary	20%
Foreign Missions (French Bible Mission, and Jamaica)	15%
Western Missions	5%
	100%

This worthy missionary programme, which was announced before, in a recent issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS (February 16th, 1950) has evidently commended itself to a goodly number of the Lord's people within the Union, as well as to not a few of our churches. Our many friends who so strongly urged us to adopt the budget, and undertake a definite missionary programme, will be delighted to learn that on one single day last week we received in gifts the handsome sum of one thousand and ninety-seven dollars and sixty cents.

We are happy to announce that this amount was made up entirely of gifts from various smaller churches and individuals: not a penny of this amount came from the Jarvis Street treasury.

The above is only one of the many tokens of God's goodness, which He has shown recently, and we cannot but accept His bountiful mercies, as an indication of divine favour, and leading to go forward.

The infamous non-confidence document, signed last year by forty-nine pastors, including most of those who at present constitute the Union Board, against one of God's ablest and most devoted servants, Dr. T. T. Shields, is most regrettable. Undoubtedly this act was the greatest single factor in producing the present breach in the fellowship of our Union. It is, sincerely hoped that by the next Convention some of these men will have become sufficiently convicted of their error as to make public apology for this nefarious act. Until that time such a Society as The Emergency Committee is not only abundantly justified, but has proved to be absolutely necessary.

In the meantime we are determined to stand by our noble Home Mission pastors and missionaries, who find it impossible, on principle, conscientiously to accept one dollar from the Board as now constituted, and, with them, advance in the great work of spreading the glorious gospel to a needy and dying world.

News from Jamaica

In a recent letter from Jamaica, Rev. John Knight tells of the splendid attendances at all services. A number have recently professed faith in Christ. Concerning one young man, Mr. Knight writes as follows: "A young man who came to Christ here a few weeks ago, got up in a testimony meeting in a district meeting recently, and said, among other things, 'I bucked up with God two weeks ago.' To all appearances he really had."

TWO LETTERS FROM THE PACIFIC COAST

TWO letters recently came in from friends in British Columbia, and we venture to share them with our readers, since we found them so encouraging. They are a few of many that we receive in this office, and we remind our subscribers that it is such letters and the financial support they bring that make it possible to continue this paper despite ever increasing costs of printing and publishing. (The printers who work on THE GOSPEL WITNESS were awarded a wage increase last week. We sincerely, and we trust heartily, congratulate them! The same week the company passed the increase along to us in the form of a higher charge!) The first letter comes from Vancouver:

Dear Sir:

Your reminder at the top of page six of THE GOSPEL WITNESS of February 2 re "The Editor's Annual Letter" is herewith answered with an enclosure of one dollar. I would make it much more, but I am a pensioner. I always pray for the editors of THE GOSPEL WITNESS. That paragraph on page five of the same issue: "The Duty of Warning the Unwary"—the contents of that could be multiplied many times. Dr. Shields has done his share sure enough.

As for your "Portrait of the Pope" on page eleven, I have heard nothing so good since I used to listen to Father Chiniquy describing him away back in 1890. Herewith are some clippings from our Vancouver papers. The pope doesn't need any official papers of his own as long as he has the editors here of our daily papers.

Yours sincerely,

Signed

Another Letter

Dear Brother Whitcombe:

Please find enclosed postal money order for \$11.00. I have been delayed unavoidably in forwarding this, I was sending \$10.00, to use as you may best see fit. It is but a small mite although not a widow's. But there is a happy thought that God loves a cheerful giver. I added an extra \$1.00 in order to ask if you could send me back numbers of THE GOSPEL WITNESS from the first one in December. I will be sending them to a friend who is anxious to follow up the World Tour. I would also like to have them for future reference.

Now, Dear Brother, which also includes Brother Shields and Brother Slade, and all connected with the work at Jarvis Street, it is a "must" for me to send my Christian love and prayer for you in your work of faith and labour of love for the Saviour. I read the sermons by Dr. Shields and others, week by week and there comes a great joy to me, and often I feel that I would like to have been at Jarvis Street to hear them firsthand, not forgetting that preparation hour Saturday night:

And Heaven comes down our souls to greet,
And glory crowns the mercy-seat.

With God's blessing for you, I am yours in Christian love

We thank these two correspondents and a host of others who have replied to the Editor's Annual Letter and thus have helped to face another year with renewed confidence. And to those who have not yet answered that letter, we would remind them that the time is growing short before our fiscal year ends. May we hear from you soon? Write to-day and give practical expression to your desire to see the work of this paper continued.—W.S.W.

HAVE YOU ANSWERED THE EDITOR'S ANNUAL LETTER?

THE TRUTH ABOUT SPAIN

A plea for liberty as appearing in *World Dominion*

THERE has recently been a lot of discussion in newspapers and periodicals, both secular and religious, concerning the religious situation in Spain, especially in regard to the alleged persecution of Protestants. The American Roman Catholic *Register* said on 19 December, 1947: "It can be stated categorically that Franco's Spain does not practise religious persecution . . .", and Pastor R. Bryn Williams, after a visit to Barcelona, affirmed in a letter to the London *Catholic Herald* that Protestants meet with no obstacles in the exercise of their worship in Spain. Similar statements have been made by others. On the other hand, responsible journalists, authors, clergymen and others, after visiting Spain, have affirmed the contrary. Protestants "are being hounded and persecuted, tormented physically and mentally . . ." "This instance of persecution (referring to a brutal assault by Catholic Action in Linares) is only one of thousands of cases that happen daily in Spain." There have even been reports of Protestants being burned to death and that persecution to-day is "worse than the Inquisition."

What are we to make of these conflicting statements? Is it possible to get at the truth? Let us admit first of all that there has been a good deal of exaggeration in some of these reports. I have had excellent opportunities to find out the truth, and I am sure that no Protestant has been burned of recent years because of his faith, nor do outrages occur daily in thousands. Such exaggerated reports do much disservice to the Protestant cause, for they tend to discredit those reports that are true. There are, however, facts that cannot be denied. The International Committee on the Evangelization of Spain meets annually in Paris and is a very responsible body; it has taken particular care to sort out the facts. The results of their scrutiny were published last August by *Pro Hispania* in a brochure entitled *Religious Liberty in Peril*. Also in 1948, a statement was drawn up by some of the leading Evangelicals of Spain for presentation to the Amsterdam Assembly of the World Council of Churches. Most of the facts given below are taken from these documents, supplemented and checked by knowledge gained during several visits to Spain under the Franco régime. None of the incidents given are previous to the proclamation of the Spanish Bill of Rights, July, 1945.

To-day, the Evangelical Christian in Spain is suffering severe disabilities. Let me mention some of these:—

Jailed for Attending Church

1. *Lack of facilities for worship.* While most places of worship have been able to resume services, there are at least twenty-five to thirty that cannot be opened because the authorities will not give permission. In many of these places the believers are not even allowed to meet privately in spite of Article 6 of the Bill of Rights. They do meet, but at the risk of imprisonment or fine or both. In Archena, eight believers who could not get permission met privately for worship. They were imprisoned for four days. In San Clodio, Gutierrez and Muras, fines of 1,000 pesetas (£10) were imposed on the owner of each house where a private meeting had been held. In Medina del Campo fourteen people were fined altogether nearly £200, and four suffered a brief imprisonment for the same crime. Many other instances could be given.

In this matter of the closure of Protestant places of

worship there has been some confusion. It should be made clear that all foreign churches for the use of foreigners have been open all the time. The British properties referred to recently in the House of Commons were places of worship for the use of Spaniards but owned by Britishers. The great majority of Evangelical places of worship in Spain are owned or rented by Spaniards.

Protestant Schools Closed

2. *Education.* When Franco assumed power in 1939 there were a number of Protestant day-schools, mainly elementary, with nearly 8,000 scholars. These were immediately closed and no permission has been given for opening them as yet. In the whole of Spain there is only one Evangelical school which has been allowed to continue. This creates a serious problem for Evangelical parents. They either have to teach their children themselves, which in most cases is not possible, or send them to the State school where they must study the Roman Catholic catechism and worship the image of the Virgin. In some cases children are threatened with dismissal if they attend the Protestant Sunday School. In one town that I know well, those who were convicted of attending the Protestant Sunday School were lined up before the other children who then sang:—

"Away, away, Protestant children! We don't want you, and will have nothing to do with you." They were then dismissed from the school.

In this connection it should be noted that all education in Spain is under the control of the Roman Catholic Church. In the recent Apologetics Congress in Vich, General Franco stated:

" . . . We have taken the religious principle as the basis for all individual and national culture . . . we have endeavoured to make our laws improve the cultural training and formation of our people in all the kinds and grades of education in our country . . . the cultural value of religion in Spain to-day has a place and an action in education side by side with all the specialties of human knowledge, from high scientific research to *Universities, Institutes, and schools of all grades and kinds . . .*" (Italics mine.)

A student of medicine, law, or engineering, has to study the Roman Catholic religion as well, and it is almost impossible for a known Protestant to pass his examinations. As can be imagined, this is a serious handicap for Protestant youth. All Protestant school teachers, unless they deny their faith, have had to give up their calling and seek some other means of livelihood. This also applies to the secondary schools. Theological schools of other faiths are not legal though in two cities attempts are being made to train Evangelical students for pastoral work. So far the authorities have turned a blind eye on these activities.

The Bible a Forbidden Book

3. *Literature.* It is forbidden to print, import or circulate copies of the Scriptures without Roman Catholic notes. This has practically put a stop to the Bible Societies' work and their colporteurs have had to be dismissed. Some private distribution is going on and has not been seriously interfered with. This means that there is a dearth of the Word of God as the Roman Catholic versions are mainly scarce and expensive.

All Evangelical magazines are forbidden, though a number are published clandestinely and, except in one case, have not been stopped. No Evangelical tracts,

pamphlets or books may be published or circulated, as every publication needs the *imprimatur* of the Roman Catholic Church which cannot be obtained for Evangelical literature. Even calendars with Bible texts have been confiscated at the frontier.

No Permission for Protestant Marriages and Funerals

4. *Marriage.* A decree was issued on 10 March, 1941, stating that civil marriages would only be authorized where the parties could prove by documents that they were not of the Catholic faith. This was later explained in a letter from the Ministry of Justice as follows:—

“The Director-General informs you that, in accordance with the decree of the Minister of Justice of the 10th of March, 1941, no civil marriage in Spain can take place if either of the parties has been baptized in the Roman Catholic religion. The fact of belonging to another religion, or of practising no religion at all, does not exempt the party who has received Catholic Baptism, since this Sacrament of Baptism cannot be effaced.”

Even in the rare cases where both parties have not been baptized in the Roman Catholic Church, many difficulties are often placed in the way, and I know personally of several cases where marriage, except by a priest, has been impossible. One condition for marriage by a priest is to renounce publicly the Protestant religion. In one case, the bridegroom was forced to go from door to door in the village announcing his affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church. This raises a serious problem for our young people. Either they must renounce their faith, which very few are prepared to do, or they must give up the idea of marriage or be married with an Evangelical service only. This, of course, is not legal and the children are regarded as illegitimate and lose their allowances and insurance, and possibly attendance at school. The husband can usually only obtain a bachelor's wage. It is only right to say that in some places the authorities do give facilities for marriage, in spite of the decree.

5. *Funerals.* In many districts it is impossible to bury our dead with decency and with the usual Evangelical rites. As with marriages, these restrictions are not universal—it depends upon the extent to which the local and provincial authorities are under the influence of the Roman Catholic Church.

6. *Employment.* It is almost impossible for a Protestant to obtain a post under the State or under State-controlled organizations. Qualified Protestant nurses have been dismissed from hospitals just because they were Protestants. I am personally acquainted with two who were dismissed in this way in 1939 and are still not allowed to resume work, not even private nursing.

In agricultural districts the local authorities often apportion the jobs for casual labour and Evangelical labourers are excluded. Most private employers refuse to employ a Protestant and many of the members of our Churches are in sore straits for this reason.

Religious Coercion

7. *Religious Coercion.* Conscripts in the Army or Navy are, in many cases, forced to attend Mass or worship the Host. In 1948 a young soldier of the Marines, José Morado, died as a result of ill-treatment received when, in November, 1945, he was imprisoned for refusing to worship the Host. In 1947, Isidro Rocabert, of Sabadell, was sentenced to ten months' imprisonment for the same crime. A young officer was converted; immedi-

ately he was degraded and set to navy work. Some have suffered in other ways.

In civil life it is the same. In November, 1945, Patricio Ponciano, of Badajoz, was badly treated and fined £50 for refusing to worship the Host in procession. The case was taken to Madrid and the fine reduced to £5. Custodio Apolo returned from the United States to his village, Hornachos, after being assured by the Spanish Consul in New York that the Bill of Rights guaranteed that he would not be molested on account of his Protestant convictions. Soon after arrival he began to speak to some of the neighbours about his religious experiences, and at the end of October, 1947, he was expelled from the village. In Gador, in 1947, a woman was imprisoned for twenty-five days because she had conversed on religious subjects with some of her neighbours. I could quote other instances, but space forbids. Everywhere it is difficult for Evangelicals to obtain the benefits of the social welfare services of the State, as generally those in need must show their Catholic baptismal certificate or a permit from the local priest.

How Can Romanists Claim Freedom in Other Countries?

I have given facts guaranteed by responsible leaders of the Evangelical Church in Spain, many of which I have been able to confirm personally. I think my readers will agree that such a state of affairs is a disgrace to a country professing to be civilized. Many sincere Roman Catholics in more enlightened lands have expressed their disapproval, including the editor of the *Catholic Herald*, who recently said:

“We do not see how any Catholic can in fairness claim freedom and toleration of Catholics either in secularist or atheist countries, if he is content to remain silent when Protestants are denied such freedom and toleration by Catholics. . . .”

I have not space to say more than a few words about the Evangelical Church itself. Persecution has strengthened the Church. In spite of very heavy losses, the Church as a whole has gained both in numbers and influence. Some local Churches have been almost or quite destroyed through persecution, but others, especially in the big cities, have more than doubled their membership and are showing a keen missionary spirit. It is impossible to give exact statistics, but probably the net gains in the last ten years would amount to at least 1 000 communicant members, making a total of more than 7,000 communicants to-day, with perhaps 25,000 adherents. If a fair amount of liberty were allowed we believe that the Churches in Spain would make rapid progress.

WESLEY AND PROPHETS OF DOOM

From *The Journal of John Wesley*

For near seventy years I have observed, that before any war, or public calamity, England abounds with prophets, who confidently foretell many terrible things. They generally believe themselves, but are carried away by a vain imagination; and they are seldom undeceived, even by the failure of their predictions, but still believe they will be fulfilled some time or other.

Thursday, January 1, 1789. If this is to be the last year of my life, according to some of those prophecies, I hope it will be the best. I am not careful about it, but heartily receive the advice of the angel in Milton:

“How well, is thine: how long, permit to Heaven.”

BLESSING AT MALARTIC, QUEBEC

Pastor Yvon Hurtubise writes from Malartic, North West Quebec:

The Lord has been pleased to bless our little Church by adding three to the membership since last summer, and leading two to follow Him in the waters of baptism. Another young man is waiting to be received into our fellowship. Our bilingual Sunday School has attained to a record attendance of 57, and it is our prayer that many more of these youngsters will soon yield their hearts to the Lord.

We have had much cause to rejoice in God's dealings with the B family. We found this young couple awaiting our arrival, full of many questions concerning the way of salvation. They had already been reading from the New Testament, comparing it with a copy of the Gospels which they had received from the local priest, who it seems had distributed a number of copies of this "Catholic" book thinking that it might counteract the influence of the New Testaments given to his parishioners by "those Baptists." Mr. & Mrs. B., not finding any difference in the teachings of these two books, began to question many of the doctrines of the R.C. Church, and we had many profitable and encouraging discussions with them in their home, finding the answers to their many questions in the Word of God. They finally both accepted it as the Word of Truth, and believed in Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

Another young woman who has been seeking after God and His eternal peace since she was a child, is Mrs. B. The Lord gave us the privilege last summer of being the first to present to her the Word of God which she received with an open heart and such intelligence and understanding that we at first wondered how one who had been brought up as a strict Roman Catholic could so readily respond to the Gospel and grasp the meaning of the eternal truths of His Word. In her testimony she tells of once going to see the priest in Sudbury and imploring him to give her the Bible. Upon his replying, "It is not good for you, my girl," she left his office with a very heavy heart, but with a firm determination to get the long-desired book somewhere. Mrs. B has been a great blessing to every member of the little church here, daily witnessing for her Lord and Saviour. Her zeal and faithfulness are extremely encouraging, and they have resulted in the salvation of her husband who at first showed some opposition but now loves the Lord and the lost souls round about him so much that he makes special appointments to bring me to visit some of his friends and teach them these same precious truths. Thus through this young couple, some interesting new contacts have been made.

A very interesting member of our French congregation is Mr. D who first heard the Gospel through the French paper, *La Voix de l'Evangile*, which was sent out from Sudbury. This man lived in an entirely French Roman Catholic community near Three Rivers, and after corresponding with Mr. Boyd concerning spiritual matters, for some three years, he sought a place where he could have fellowship in the Gospel. He was led of the Lord to come to Malartic, and with his wife has been a regular attender at our services. For years this man had gone from one Roman Catholic Order to another, seeking satisfaction for his heart yearnings, but becoming more and more skeptical and disgusted after every "closed retreat" he attended. He says that his final break with Rome came after he had been with the Jesuits for some time. It was then that God directed

into his hands the French paper, with its glad message of salvation.

Lately it has been my joy to spend two weeks visiting in the lumber camps, where in times past I had often worked, not knowing the way of life. This time, under the Shantymen's Christian Association, I went to bring to these lumbermen the Word of Life, and we praise God for the way He opened unto us doors that were closed in previous years. It was a great blessing to my soul to be able to preach to the men crowded into bunkhouses or cookeries and to see them listen so attentively. In seven days we distributed over 200 Gospels of John and 135 New Testaments to these French-Canadian Roman Catholic men. I realize that these are just fleeting contacts and yet know that God's Word will enter into the hearts of some and bring them to Himself. I well remember how my own brother first heard the Gospel in a lumber camp and it would not let him go until years later he yielded to Christ Who had sought and found him.

REPLACING ONE SET OF IDOLS BY ANOTHER

A MISSIONARY of the Canadian Presbyterian Mission in India sends us a circular printed by the Roman Catholic Church in Jhansi Prefecture announcing "The Visit of the 'Pilgrim Virgin' to Jhansi Prefecture." The official Programme includes the following:

FRIDAY, 3rd MARCH

11-30 P.M. The "PILGRIM VIRGIN" arrives by the Grand Trunk from Nagpur.
Reception at the Railway Station.
Car Procession from the Railway Station to St. Jude's Shrine (64 Cantonment).
Holy Hour at Midnight.

SATURDAY, 4th MARCH

At St. Jude's Shrine 1 o'clock Fifteen Masses will be said round the "PILGRIM VIRGIN" to commemorate the fifteen mysteries of the HOLY ROSARY. Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament after the masses.

NOTE:—The statue will remain at St. Jude's Shrine all day and the faithful are requested to visit the chapel and pray to HER.

We note the last sentence in the above excerpt from the official programme: "The statue will remain at St. Jude's Shrine all day and the faithful are requested to visit the chapel and pray to HER." The capitalization as given is found in the original document. Ordinary grammatical sense would indicate that the prayer is to be made to the statue, which is, as in all Romanist announcements of this sort, identified with the virgin. Even if prayer is to be offered to the Virgin Mary, rather than to her idol, it is nothing less than blasphemous to attempt to approach God through any other than the One Mediator, who in the days of His flesh said, "If ye ask anything in MY name, I will do it."

As our missionary correspondent wrote, Rome in these darkened pagan lands is "replacing one set of idols for another." Religion of this sort is always bound to have a following for it appeals to the world and the flesh, and is not opposed by the devil. Thus does Rome "evangelize."

"I WILL PRAISE THEE"

Alas, for that capital crime of the Lord's people—barrenness in praises! Oh, how fully I am persuaded that a line of praises is worth a leaf of prayer, and an hour of praises is worth a day of fasting and mourning.

—JOHN LIVINGSTONE, 1603-1672.

BIRDS' NESTS

By JOSEPH PARKER

"If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground, whether they be young ones, or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young; but thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, and take the young to thee; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days."—Deut. xxii. 6, 7.

A SINGULAR word to be in a Book which we might have expected to be wholly occupied with spiritual revelation. Men are anxious to know something about the unseen worlds, and the mystery which lies at the heart of things and palpitates throughout the whole circle of observable nature, and yet they are called upon to pay attention to the treatment of birds' nests. Is this any departure from the benevolent and redeeming spirit of the Book? On the contrary, this is a vivid illustration of the minuteness of divine government, and as such it affords the beginning of an argument which must for ever accumulate in volume and force, on the ground that if God is so careful of a bird's nest He must be proportionately careful of all things of higher quality. Jesus Christ so used nature. "If then God so clothe the grass," said He, "how much more will He clothe you, O ye of little faith?" So we may add, "If God is so careful of birds' nests, what must He be of human hearts, and human homes, and the destinies of the human family? It is not enough to keep the law in great aspects, such as appeal to the public eye, and by keeping which reputation is sometimes unjustly gained. We are called upon to pay attention to minute and hardly discernible features of character, for these often indicate the real quality of the man. God's beneficence is wonderfully displayed in the care of the birds' nest. God is kind in little things as well as in great. The quality of His love is one, whether it be shown in the redemption of the race, in numbering the hairs of our head, in ordering our steps, or giving His beloved sleep. Did we but know it we should find that all law is beneficent—the law of restriction as well as the law of liberty. The law which would keep a man from doing injury to himself, though it may appear to impair the prerogative of human will, is profoundly beneficent. Was not man to have dominion over the fowls of the air? Truly so; but dominion is to be exercised in mercy. Power that is uncontrolled by kindness soon becomes despotism. The psalmist heard that power belonged unto God; at that point he might have trembled with awe or bowed himself down in servile fear, for little and frail is the strength of man; but the psalmist seems to have heard at the same time the other and comforting truth—namely, "Also unto Thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy." This is completeness of sovereignty: this is not only a hand that can rule but a heart that can love. We are apt to think that right and wrong are terms which only apply to great concerns, and so we lose the element of morality in things that are comparatively insignificant in volume and temporary in duration. The Bible insists that right and wrong are terms which belong to everything in life. There is a right way of appropriating the contents of a bird's nest, and there is a way that is equally wrong. We may do the right thing in the wrong way. All men know what it is to speak the right word in the wrong tone, and so deprive the word of all its natural music and proper value as a moral instrument. There is a right way of chiding, and there is a chastisement which becomes mere malice, or the wanton expres-

sion of superior physical force. The morality of the Bible goes down to every root and fibre of life. In offering a salutation, in opening a door, in uttering a wish, in writing a letter, in using titles of deference, in every possible exercise of human thought and power the moral element is present. Phebe was to be received by the Christians at Rome "as becometh saints." A New Testament injunction is "Be courteous." Charity itself is courteous, graceful, savoured with the highest degree of refinement, and expressive of the completest reach of dignity. So the Bible will not allow our life to fray itself out in loose ends, content if the middle portion of the web be comparatively well-connected and serviceable; every thread-end is to be attended to, every fibre is to be considered of value, and conscience is not satisfied until every question which righteousness can ask has been answered in a satisfactory manner. The treatment of birds' nests is a sure indication of the man's whole character. The act does not begin and end in itself. He who can wantonly destroy a bird's nest can wantonly do a hundred other things of the same kind. It is here, that we see the value of all such moral restriction and injunction. To be cruel at all is to be cruel all through and through the substance and quality of the character. Men cannot be cruel to birds' nests and gentle to children's cradles. The man who can take care of a bird's nest because it is right to do so—not because of any pleasure which he has in a bird's nest—is a man who cannot be indifferent to the homes of children and the circumstances of his fellow-creatures generally. It is a mistake to suppose that we can be wanton up to a given point, and then begin to be considerate and benevolent. We are all apt scholars in a bad school, and learn more in one lesson there than we can learn through much discipline in the school of God. The little tyrannies of childhood often explain the great despotism of mature life. Is not kindness an influence that penetrates the whole life, having manifold expression, alike upward, downward, and laterally, touching all human things, all inferiors and dependants, and every harmless and defenceless life? On the other hand, we are to be most careful not to encourage any merely pedantic feeling. Hence the caution I have before given respecting the purpose for which a man considerably handles even a bird's nest. Every day we see how possible it is for a man to be very careful of his horse, and yet to hold the comfort of his servant very lightly. We have all seen, too, how possible it is for a man to be more careful of his dogs than of his children. But the care which is thus lavished upon horse or dog is not the care dictated by moral considerations, or inspired by benevolence; it is what I have termed a pedantic feeling, it is a mere expression of vanity; it is not an obedience to conscience or moral law. There are men who would not on any account break up a bird's nest in the garden who yet would allow a human creature to die of hunger. The bird's nest may be regarded as an ornament of the garden, or an object of interest, or a centre round which various influences may gather; so whatever care may be bestowed upon it, it is not to be regarded as concerning the conscience or the higher nature. We must beware of decorative morality; hand-painted feeling; calculated consideration for inferior things; for selfishness is very subtle in its operation, and sometimes it assumes with perfect hypocrisy the airs of benevolence and religion. What if in all our carefulness for dumb animals we think little of breaking a human heart by sternness or neglect? According to an ancient authority it was

better to be Herod's pig than to be Herod's child; an anomaly which in literature is impossible, but in actual experience is an indisputable and tragical fact.

Kindness to the lower should become still tenderer kindness to the higher. This is Christ's own argument when He bids us behold the fowls of the air that in their life we may see, our Father's kindness. He adds, "Are ye not much better than they?" When He points out how carefully a man would look after the life of his cattle, he adds, "How much then is a man better than a sheep?" It ought to be considered a presumptive argument in favour of any man's spirit that he is kind to the inferior creatures that are around him; if this presumption be not realized in his case, then is his kindness bitterest wrong.

It is true that all such injunctions are not literally repeated in the Christian economy. We have not in the Christian Church to guard ourselves by sections and sub-sections of technical precepts. How then does the case stand with us who have come into a complete inheritance of so-called liberty? We have passed from the letter to the spirit; God has put within us a clean heart, so that we are, no longer true, or kind, or noble; merely because of a literal direction which is guarded by solemn unction, but because the Holy Ghost has sanctified us, made our hearts His dwelling-place. It is utterly in vain for us to attempt to satisfy even our own sense of right by attending merely to what is known as duty or propriety. If we have not within us the Holy Spirit as our Teacher and Ruler, the efforts of our hand will but disappoint and mock our expectation. We cannot build a great character with the hand. At first the hand was called into active requisition; and was made to do a great deal in the way of moral industry, but he who called the hand into such service intended through it to find a way into the heart. Again and again we must repeat, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." If we pass by a bird's nest and forbear to destroy it simply because a law has forbidden its destruction, we are in our souls as if we had torn the little home to pieces and slain its helpless occupant. We do the things which we would do, even though they be not accomplished by the action of the hand. We pass through the wheat-field and do not touch a single ear of corn, yet if in our heart we covet the produce, or begrudge the farmer the result of his labour, we are in the sight of God spiritually guilty of having burned the wheat-field and thus destroyed the bread of man. The morality of Christianity is intensely spiritual. To hate is to murder. To covet is to steal. To desire is to appropriate. We are prone to measure things by vulgar aspects and broad appeals to human attention; consequently we have come to think that thieving can only be accomplished by the hand, whereas Christ teaches us that without laying our hands upon a single article of property belonging to another man we may in reality be guilty of the most wicked appropriation. Our prayer should continually be, "Creatè in me a clean heart, O God." The hand may commit mistakes, it is the heart that commits sin. No matter how pedantically we may fulfil the literal law, if the spirit of righteousness is not in us we are not credited with obedience; the light that is within us is darkness, and when that is the case, who can estimate the gloom of so terrible a night?

HAVE YOU ANSWERED THE EDITOR'S ANNUAL LETTER?

BOOK REVIEW

Helps for Priming the Pump

SPURGEON'S SERMON NOTES, by C. H. Spurgeon. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 2 Volumes; price in Canada, \$5.00.

When these volumes came in they were welcomed by this reviewer under the mistaken impression that they were sermons by Spurgeon. Sermon Notes have never appealed to us as anything else than crutches for a lame man, and like most preachers we were unwilling, or at least ashamed, to admit our need of such aids. However, the great name of the author constrained us to glance at them before consigning them to the limbo of unread books. As a result of what we saw, they will occupy an honourable place on our shelves along with other Spurgeon productions. These volumes contain notes of sermons as used by the Prince of Preachers in the Metropolitan Tabernacle pulpit, to which are added, in the words of the author, "certain pieces of my own, or extracts from the works of others, which are intended to brighten up the sermon." If preachers of this generation are too proud to lean on Spurgeon for sermon outlines, they can at least profit by seeing this master of homiletics at work by examining the framework that he gives. The illustrations are, like those in *Feather for Arrows*, most useful not only for what they put under a preacher's hand ready to use, but also for the methods they suggest of finding or inventing one's own stock of illustrative materials.

We are sure that there are few preachers who will be unable to draw profit and inspiration from these notes that were put out to prime the pump when it runs dry, an unhappy condition not unknown to either the greatest or the least among us. We should add, for the sake of preachers who remain unconvinced by this review, that Spurgeon avows that his Sermon Notes were intended primarily for the Lord's servants whom he names "the right honourables of the pulpit", men who are "called lay-brethren by those who believe in a special priesthood."—W.S.W.

The prosperity which some welcome as an unmixed favor may far more rightly be regarded as an intense form of test.

—C. H. SPURGEON

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 15 Second Quarter Lesson 1 April 2, 1950

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

AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST

Lesson Text: 2 Corinthians 5:6-21.

Golden Text: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."—2 Cor. 5:20.

I. The Ambassador's Confidence: verses 6-13.

To speak forth the message of the Lord effectively, the ambassador must himself be fully assured of the truth (2 Tim. 3:14, 15): "He who has the truth at his heart need never fear the want of persuasion on his tongue" (Ruskin). The Apostle's confidence was based upon his faith in God Himself, in His Word and in His promises. Paul frequently prefaced his teaching with the words "we know" (vv. 1, 6, 11; Rom. 8:28; 2 Cor. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:12).

The Apostle's confidence was unshaken by circumstances: he was "always confident" in view of the promise of eternal glory. His sufferings as an ambassador of Christ were "light" and "for a moment," compared with the "eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4:14-18). The hope of eternal glory included the assurance of receiving a resurrection body (verses 1-5).

It is the eternal purpose of God that we who believe upon Him should one day be completely redeemed in body, soul and spirit (Rom. 8:29, 30; 1 Thess. 5:23, 24). As a token that His will is to be fulfilled in that regard, He has given to us the earnest of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:14). Earnest money is money given as a guarantee that an obligation will be fully met. The Holy Spirit indwells the body here (1 Cor. 3:16;

6:19), but over yonder He will have full possession and control, as in the case of the glorified body of Christ after His resurrection (John 20:26; Rom. 8:11). While we dwell on earth, the body is in its native sphere, it is at home; but the spirit, which desires to be with the Lord, is away from home (Phil. 1:23). Our life is governed by this hope of immortality, not by the things of time and sense (Rom. 8:24, 25).

Paul made it his ambition to live in such a way as to deserve the approval of the Lord at His coming (Col. 1:28; 1 John 2:28; 4:17), whether he should be "present," that is, in his natural body and among those who were alive and remained, or whether he should be "absent" in the sense of having passed through death (1 Thess. 4:14-17). We are responsible for the way in which we live, and Christians will be judged for their works after being saved, and they will be given rewards at the judgment seat of Christ (Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 3:13-15). It is not a judgment to decide whether they would be saved or lost, and it is not a judgment unto condemnation, for believers shall not come into condemnation (John 5:24; Rom. 5:1; 8:1).

Since Paul had a holy, reverent fear of the Lord and dreaded lest he should do anything which would displease Him (Eccl. 12:13, 14; Acts 9:31; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:21), he was faithful in persuading men to come to the Lord (Acts 20:31; 26:28). The Lord was witness to his sincerity, and so also were the Corinthians (2 Cor. 4:2; 11:6). Paul called attention to his sincerity, in order that the Corinthians might use it as an argument against his self-righteous enemies, who were speaking of him as one who was out of his mind (Acts 26:24, 25; 1 Cor. 1:23; 2:14; 4:10; 2 Cor. 11:1, 16-19, 23).

II. The Ambassador's Motives: verses 14-21.

An ambassador may be constrained to do his duty because of patriotism, the love of his country, but the Apostle Paul was constrained by the love of Christ—the love of Christ for him and also his love for Christ (1 John 4:19). There was a holy urgency about his service, and nothing else seemed worthy of consideration (Gen. 19:16; John 4:4; 1 Cor. 9:16). The love of Christ for us was made manifest in His death for us on the cross (Rom. 5:8; 1 John 3:16; 4:9). Since Christ died for all, then all died in Him and rose again in Him (Rom. 5:15; 6:3-10; 8:10; Eph. 2:4-6) and the believer who is united to Christ will reckon himself to have died with Christ and risen with Him. All are counted as having died to sin and to self, and being alive, they are not to live for themselves, but for Christ (Rom. 6:11-13; Col. 3:1-10). The ambassador has no authority to live as he pleases: he must ever remember that he is the representative of his King, Whose will he must obey.

How do we regard our fellow-men? How do we regard those whom we teach? Do we see them just as they are, or do we see in them souls for whom Christ died? After Paul's conversion he no longer regarded men according to external relationships, and he regarded Christ Himself in a higher spiritual way.

All who truly believe in the Christ Who died for them and rose again are united to Him by life as the branch is to the vine (John 15:5); they are described as being "in Christ" (Rom. 16:7; 1 Cor. 6:17; 2 Cor. 12:2; Gal. 1:22). This is a new relationship, and it results from the new birth, the new spiritual creation (John 3:5, 7; Gal. 6:15; Eph. 2:15). All life takes on a different aspect for the one who has been born again of the Spirit of God (Eph. 4:20-24).

All our privileges as members of the new creation are from God, and they come to us as the result of our reconciliation with Him (Rom. 5:10, 11; 1 John 2:2; 4:10). God did not impute our sins unto us (Rom. 3:23-26); but laid them upon Christ, the spotless Lamb of God (Isa. 53:4-12; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 9:28), bestowing upon us His own righteousness (Rom. 1:17; 5:21, 22).

This is the message committed unto the ambassador to deliver in the name of the Lord (Eph. 6:20). He is to be the mouthpiece of God, beseeching men to be reconciled to God by accepting the salvation which He has provided for them (2 Cor. 6:1). May the Lord help us to be faithful in discharging this solemn obligation.

FOR JUNIOR CLASSES:

Illustrate the truth that we find joy in doing things to please those whom we love (John 15:14; 1 John 3:18). Show how even the smallest child may do that which is pleasing to the Lord.

This lesson speaks of God's love to us in sending His Son to die for our sins (John 3:16). Emphasize the way of salvation and illustrate by reference to Christ as the Lamb of God (Exod. 12:3; Isa. 53; John 1:29).

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

- Mar. 27—A Faithful Ambassador Prov. 13:9-22.
- Mar. 28—An Ambassador in Bonds Eph. 6:10-20.
- Mar. 29—Ambassadors of Peace Isa. 33:5-17.
- Mar. 30—The Ambassador's Message Eph. 2:11-22.
- Mar. 31—The Ambassador's Confidence 2 Cor. 10.
- Apr. 1—The Ambassador's Hardships 2 Cor. 11:18-30.
- Apr. 2—The Ambassador's Reward 1 Cor. 9:16-27.

SUGGESTED HYMNS

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