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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"None Like Unto Ahab Which Did Sell Himself"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Ont., Sunday Evening, November 19th, 1950
(Electrically Recorded)

"But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up."—1 Kings 21:25.

SOME years ago I knew a noted surgeon in Toronto who was meticulously careful about his dress. He always appeared as though he had come from the hands of two or three valets, he was so immaculately, so perfectly attired. He was really good to look at. He was one of the most eminent surgeons in Canada. I suppose some people, looking upon him, might have said, "I think I should like to be a physician myself, or a surgeon." But there is another side to the life of a man of that sort. Sometimes he is dressed in white; sometimes he is at work in an operating room; sometimes he has to come into contact with most repulsive sights, and has to deal with horrible things. All physicians must. They must know something about all kinds of diseases, something of their genesis, of their development and progress, and of their ultimate issue; and in order to become expert in healing diseases, they must live among and have contact with many things that are utterly loathsome and repugnant.

So is it with the Christian minister. I have an unpleasant text. I do not know why I have it, except that out of the air apparently it was laid heavily upon my mind, this afternoon, as though it were necessary that we should think of it this evening for our profit.

It is the story of Ahab, who is noted among all the kings of Israel, who were, without a single exception, a bad lot—idolaters, all of them, who walked in the ways of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who did sin and who made Israel to sin: in this company of wicked men Ahab is noted by the pen of Divine inspiration as the worst of them all. There was not one who compared with him for the wickedness he wrought in the sight of the Lord.

This story is a study in the moral deterioration of human character into a condition of ultimate abject sa-

tanic servitude. His history is sufficiently familiar, I feel sure, to most of you, to obviate the necessity of a detailed rehearsal of it. The text is an inspired summary of his tragic history, couched in pictorial, and yet in terrible language: "There was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up."

I.

I think we may regard it AS A PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPLANATION, AS A DIVINE ANALYSIS OF HUMAN TURPITUDE. There are those who question the old fashioned theological doctrine of total human depravity;—which of course does not mean that every man is as bad as he might be, but that human nature, untouched by the Spirit of God, is so biased toward evil that there is no faculty of the mind, no power of the body, which is not subject to evil direction and control.

What a striking figure this is! "*He sold himself.*" In a sale one relinquishes all title to his former property, he sells it to another; it becomes the possession of the purchaser, to do whatever he likes with it. A slave, in the old days of slave-owning and slave-dealing in the United States—when a slave was sold for money to a new master he had nothing to say as to where he should live, where he should go, what he should do; he became his new master's property, and thenceforth he had to do whatever he was told, and go wherever he was directed to go. Ahab is described as a man who had sold himself, not someone else, but he had sold himself, sold out to another. His affections, his desires, his ambitions, his conscience, his will, all the elements of his complex mental and moral and physical nature he had sold out; it was no longer his; he was no longer his own, no longer his own

master; his freedom of action, his freedom to plan, even to think, was gone. His mind, everything belonged to another; he was completely abandoned to the sovereign power of another master than himself.

What a contrast to God's plan and purpose for the man whom He made in His own image, and after His own likeness! He put a crown upon his brow; He put a sceptre in his hand, and He said to him, "Have dominion." He was made to be a master, made to be a sovereign, not a serf, and he was given a kingdom, he was commissioned to exercise dominion over all the beasts of the field, over all the earth: "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas." He was to be an unusual king, subject to no one except the King of kings; he was to find his freedom, his felicity, his largest and fullest and richest life in obedience to the law of God, and in the service of his Divine King.

But here is a man, who has so far descended from that exalted position, from that noble ideal of life, that he has become the meanest slave to the most tyrannical master; he has surrendered his kingdom, everything, and has sold himself; bartered his inheritance for a mess of pottage; sold all the interests of eternity for the evanescent values of time.

Ahab sold himself to somebody, but he did not sell himself to God. They cannot sell themselves who are already bought with a price, and who belong to someone else, but to another kind of master. Ahab might have yielded himself unto God, and his members as instruments of righteousness, but instead of that he sold himself.

My friends, this is not ancient history. Here you have an explanation of many phenomena to-day, for on every hand we see men descending to such low levels of life, to such depths of infamy, as once upon a time we could scarcely have conceived was possible.

I heard a professor discount the doctrine of natural human depravity, and say, "Don't tell me that my little boy is depraved; he isn't." Little did he know. I knew a mother once who had that notion. She had a little boy who was as meek as Moses is said to have been. He was never naughty, and he always did exactly as he was told when ordered. A perfect little gentleman, the admiration of everybody. When his mother was complimented on his docility she said, "Well, you know, it all depends on their upbringing. I have very carefully disciplined my little boy and brought him up well." But after a while she had another boy. He belonged to the same family, with the same father and mother, but no one could discipline him. He would have his own way, no matter what happened. I remember on one occasion that mother doing what, in my humble judgment, was a very foolish and dangerous thing. She shut him in a dark closet, with just enough air to breathe, and told him that he must stay there until he promised to do a certain thing, which she had commanded, and which he had refused to do. She left him there for hours, and at last she opened the door. As soon as the door opened he turned his head away from the light, and stuck his head in the corner. "Well," she said, "and will you do as you are told now?" He was only a little bit of a fellow about four years old. He turned around defiantly,

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and

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

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clenched his fist and stamped his foot, and he said, "Me 'on't! Me 'on't!" And he went back into his corner. She had an entirely different view of human depravity before she got through with that boy.

Look abroad upon the world to-day, and it is not difficult to find multitudinous illustrations of men and almost of nations, who seem to have sold themselves to work wickedness.

To whom did Ahab sell himself? He sold himself to one who is always in the market for those who are willing to sell out. He sold himself to Satan, beyond all doubt. He is always in the market for the purchase of human souls. You remember that description of Babylon in the Book of Revelation, when Babylon falls, and the merchants of the earth weep for the loss of a customer. There is a detailed description of all the precious things that were found in her, things that she had bought for herself, things that she hoped she owned, and the last item in the category is "bodies and souls of men," sold, sold out to another. Beyond doubt Ahab sold himself to the author of all wickedness.

There is one outstanding illustration recorded in the Scripture of how the devil tries to buy men. He came upon the Son of man, hungered in the wilderness, and said, "If thou be the Son of God, if you are all you profess to be, show your power, command these stones that they be made bread." But the Son of man would not sell out. He took him to the pinnacle of the temple and said, "Here is a chance to show what you are; cast thyself down from hence: For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, and you will be miraculously preserved; all your enemies will thereafter be afraid to attempt your life." The Son of man answered, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Then by some strange means he took Him into a high mountain. Personally, I think it was an appeal to the imagination. One temptation was in the plane of the physical, the other was in the realm of the spiritual—"Cast thyself down." The third was in the

realm of the intellectual, the mental. Somehow he showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and he said, "You may have them all; that is the price, the reward I will give you if you fall down and worship me, if you become my servant. Sell out to me, and I will give you all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them." But His complex, sinless human nature was immune to all the shafts of the enemy; every door was locked against his entrance, as later He said, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."

How often since then has the devil offered the kingdoms of the world and their glory to men! I suppose to the Caesars, to all the conquerors of early days, to Napoleon, to the Kaiser, to Hitler and Mussolini, and I suppose to Stalin, and they all sold out to the devil, to accept in return his promised reward. What a foolish thing that is, isn't it, thus to sell-out?

What was it for? What did the devil want him for? When a man goes to an auction sale to buy a horse he considers what he wants. If he wants a team of horses for heavy work on the farm he may buy some prize heavy Clydesdales, or something of that sort. I don't know much about horses. But if he wants a riding horse he will probably buy one of a lighter and more agile frame, but he will buy what he wants to do the job he wants. Now when the devil went to market, what did he want? He wanted somebody to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord. That was his job; that is his work in the world. He is always looking for men and women who will work wickedness in the sight of the Lord! He found Ahab, and seemed somehow to recognize that he had great potentialities for evil, and he bought him to be his bond slave, to do in the earth whatever the master of hell told him to do.

He was to work wickedness, it is a significant phrase, not merely among men—he was not thus purchased to do violence to ordinary standards of human conduct, but he was bought to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord. "I want somebody," said the devil, "who will defy God to His face. You seem to be a likely subject, Ahab. Will you sell out?" And he did. Not always do men see it, but that, in the ultimate analysis of things, is what sin really is, rebellion against God—not primarily the violation of a moral precept, not only the transgression of the precepts of the Decalog—that may all be involved, but sin is an act of rebellion against God, when the man says, "I will not submit to the will of God", when, like that little boy to his mother, even still standing in the darkness, dares to say, "Me 'on't," to God. When the Psalmist at last saw the sin of which he was guilty in its true light he exclaimed, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight."

My dear friends, as I reminded you last Thursday night, I believe, that runs all through the Old Testament: "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord; He did that which was wrong, or evil, in the sight of the Lord." There are many things which are right enough in the sight of men that are entirely wrong in the sight of God. What this new master wanted in Ahab was a man who, without compunction or reluctance, would give himself up to do evil, to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord. Can you imagine a man's abandoning himself to evil after that fashion? O yes, men do.

Then there is another thing—"Whom Jezebel his wife stirred up." Let me read a verse to you: "And Ahab

the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him." Don't blame Jezebel for everything, because before ever he met Jezebel, Ahab had sold himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord. Then there is this significant verse: "And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat" as though that were not enough, "he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him." He married a heathen wife, the daughter of a man who bore the name of the very god he worshipped, Ethbaal, and she brought into the family all her idolatry, to add that to the idolatry of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. "And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria." What a fool he was! Bad as he was himself, it seemed as though he felt that he hadn't quite all the evil capacity he would like, and so, like a man buying a larger house, he married Jezebel, to augment his capacity for evil! I have seen men do that. Better be on the lookout for Jezebel. I dare say that Jezebel was quite attractive; I dare say that she knew how to dress. I know she did in the end, she knew how to tire her head and paint her face, and make herself presentable. But I have no doubt that when she was young she was a bit of a beauty you know. They say that beauty is only skin deep. That proverb is worn out; it isn't always as deep as that now. But anyhow, Ahab married Jezebel. I do not know where you can find such a pair. The only redeeming thing about it was that each married the other, and neither of them married somebody else. I have heard some cynics say, after a wedding of which they did not approve, "O well, one good thing about it anyway, it won't spoil two houses." Well, what a household that was, Ahab and Jezebel! "Whom Jezebel his wife stirred up." She liked it, she was in perfect sympathy with Ahab, one with him in his determination to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord. I have often said, when I have heard somebody express sympathy for Ahab, "Don't waste it on him, because even Jezebel never stirred him up in any other direction than that of his own evil nature; nobody ever stirred him to do good." You young women, listen, listen to the conversation of the man who is interested in you. See what in desultory talk in an unguarded moment comes out of his mouth, and if it is evil, shun him, shun him, as you would a plague. And you young men do the same with young women. It isn't gentlemanly to speak disrespectfully of any woman, is it? But I do not know how else to speak of Jezebel, do you? Frankly, I have known many women who were not entitled to the respect of decent people, men or women, because they were sold to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, and had entered into partnership with some Ahab.

II.

Now what of it? Follow me a moment will you? THIS TRAGIC BARTER RENDERED AHAB IMMUNE TO ALL REMEDIAL INFLUENCES. Oh, praise be to God, I have seen some of the worst sinners saved by redeeming grace—men who had sunk so low that they seemed to be utterly beyond anybody's reach. Yet the strong arm of Sovereign Grace has laid hold upon them and lifted them up, at last to the level of the angels. If there is any poor sinner here to-night, I suggest to you that you need not despair. God can break the shackles, He can redeem you, even though you have sold yourself; He can recapture you,

and make you His own happy bond-slave, if you are willing to yield to Him.

But often we have observed how *Ahab rendered himself incapable of believing the truth*. We can shut our minds against the truth; we can shut our minds against the Gospel if we want to. The Gospel is the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death, and if people hear the Gospel long enough and often enough they may become actually what is called, mistakenly I think, Gospel hardened. No they are not hardened by the Gospel, they are hardened by their refusal to believe it, — through "an evil heart of unbelief." They want a lie, they ask for a lie, and they believe a lie. Nothing is easier than to persuade people to believe a lie. I remember when Dr. Torrey was here many years ago speaking in Massey Hall. He imagined a dialogue between Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Brown, and they were talking in subdued tones about a third person. For the sake of keeping to colour, I will call her Mrs. White. But anyway, one of these women reported to the other in a whisper what she had heard about Mrs. White, and she said, "You know I was so surprised. Isn't it too bad; I never would have thought such a thing possible. Oh, you know I am so sorry." Then Dr. Torrey paused, raised himself up to full height, pulled out all the stops, and thundered, "Mrs. Smith, you are a liar! If you were sorry you would never have repeated it, especially when you did not even know whether it was true or not." Tell a lie and people will believe it; you do not need to prove it. Moody used to say that a lie would travel around the world while truth was getting its boots on, and that is true, because a lie is on its native heath, this is its own country. You know better how to get about in your own city than you do in a strange city, don't you? You know all the short cuts. And a lie in this wicked world is perfectly at home. The whole world lieth in the wicked one, who was a liar from the beginning. Anybody who wants to tell a lie will find all circumstances and people to help spread it; multitudes will believe it, and you can never catch up with it. Don't I know? I do not believe there is any man in Canada who has been more lied about. I cannot help it, cannot correct it. But you know, people can so accustom themselves to believe a lie that after a while that is all they can believe, they cannot believe the truth at all. Ahab was one of them, and as we have seen very often, and shall see again on Thursday night, he tried to silence every voice that dared to tell him the truth. He cut off the heads of all the faithful prophets, and said, "I don't want to hear the truth at all," until at last the Lord said, "All right, if you want a lie, have it," and He released a lying spirit that sent him to his doom.

But here is the most extraordinary thing about this story — that *both Ahab and Jezebel invoked the aid of religion to help them in their iniquity*. Ahab was a very religious man. He had four hundred prophets all his own, and four hundred prophets of the groves. It took a lot of people to try to keep him straight, didn't it? And Jezebel was a very religious woman, so much so that she brought idols from her father's house, and she and Ahab between them built a house to Baal, and they worshipped him. Has it occurred to you that some of the worst men in history have been the most religious? The greatest crimes, the most diabolical actions have been performed in the name of religion. Do not assume that a man is a Christian because he is religious; do not assume that he is saved because he is a member of the

church. I am positive that that is the mightiest hindrance to the Gospel to-day, that Christian churches, so called, are filled with men and women who have never known Christ, and in whose life the Word of God is not a factor at all. They go to church on Sunday, and sit as though they were very devout, and go back to business tomorrow and play the very devil. Thousands of people will do that in Toronto tomorrow, religious people, and I would not exempt even all those who stand in the pulpit. As for the "priests" of religion, as for that dreadful institution that has counterfeited Christianity, the devil's chief agency,—what wickedness in the sight of the Lord that institution is effecting to-day everywhere!

We were all sorry to hear of the crash of the Canadian Pilgrim in the Alps. I have flown over the Alps several times, and taken that very route. They are lower there. The last time the pilot said to me, "We are going right over the top this time; we will be up twenty-one thousand feet, or more." So we went right over the Swiss Alps, and I looked down upon them, and I didn't want to get any nearer to them than I was, not a bit. We were sorry to hear of that crash. I hope when you go on a journey you ask the Lord to bless you, do you? I hope when you take your car out you take time to ask the Lord to see you safely through. A friend of mine in the United States told me, "Whenever I go on a tour with my wife and children we always have a little prayer meeting before leaving, to ask the Lord to give us journeying mercies. One day," he said, "I was just going down town with my little boy in the car. I started the car, and he said, 'Wait, Daddy, what about that prayer?' " Do you pray before you go down town? That is a good thing too, and we may ask the Lord to give us journeying mercies, if it is His will, and it may not be His will, and we may suffer an accident just as they did, a disaster of some sort. Nobody is immune. But I could not help thinking when I saw the picture of three priests blessing the plane and all who were in it, I said to myself, "Why, their blessing was no more efficacious than mine would have been, not a bit." They were delayed five hours in order to get the pope's blessing, and because of the five hours they were late, and they crashed. One Roman Catholic said, "What better end to a Christian life, than to have enjoyed the graces of the holy year, and to have received the pope's blessing!" Cardinal McGuigan said, "I will say a special mass for them, although I feel sure they were purified and spiritualized by their experiences in Rome." I cannot understand it. It is the filthiest city on earth, I think. However, all this in the name of religion. Wickedness abounding!

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The Gospel Witness

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You cannot trust in religion, my dear friends. You can be the most religious person in the world, and the worst scamp at the same time. You study at your leisure the record of Ahab, and see how a gracious God erected barricades along the road, sent a prophet, and another prophet, and another prophet—filled the road with hurdles. We have them, with a red light, "no-through traffic". The Lord did that, put it across the path of Ahab, with a red light, and said, "No through traffic. Ahab, turn back, turn back." But the poor blind fool leaped over every one of them, until he took the last and the fatal leap over the precipice and into the abyss. Horrible, wasn't it? He sold himself to the wrong master.

III.

AND WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM AT LAST? He just went to the dogs. He mocked at the word of God, and when at last they came to wash his chariot at the pool of Siloam, the dogs licked the blood of Ahab, listen—"according to the word of the Lord": "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine." And the prophecy was fulfilled in the end of the day.

I will leave Jezebel for later consideration, except just to say that she fared no better. Perhaps I might speak to you some night on a woman with a painted face, and tell you what happened to that woman who tried to disguise herself from God and man. She did not disguise herself from the dogs, and when at last they went to look for her all they could find was her skull, her feet, and the palms of her hands. Her wicked feet and hands were too much even for the dogs to stomach!

Sin is a horrible disease. It is a horrible thing! I should not dare speak to you of it, could I not speak of Another who came, and of Whom it was said, "He was made sin for us". That is one of the profoundest statements of Scripture. I cannot understand it. I know the Lord laid upon Him the iniquity of us all, and I know that in Himself, in His own proper person, He was sinless; and yet somehow He was made sin for us, and when the world's iniquity was laid upon Him even God could not look at Him. That was a terrible thing. "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." When He took our sin upon Him, and was made sin for us, exploring the outer darkness that lies behind the back of God, in that awful hour of desolation He cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Dare I say that He had allowed Himself, by taking your place and mine, to become obnoxious, to become as a thing abominable in the sight of God, so that God could not look upon Him! All that, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Simple as that statement is, familiar as I am, and have been these many years with these principles, I never give expression to it without amazement, almost stupefaction—how could it be? Oh, how could it be that the Holy One could take my sin in order that I might receive His holiness?

"And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Saviour's blood?
Died He for me who caused Him pain,
For me who Him to death pursued?
Amazing grace! How could it be
That Thou, my God, should'st die for me?"

I often contemplate that scene on Calvary. When most of the people had gone home I think there was still one man gazing upon that central cross. Perhaps the

few who passed by him may have noticed that he was deeply and emotionally moved. I can fancy tears were rolling down his cheeks, the fountains of the great deep were broken up. I can fancy his sobbing audibly; but he could not tear himself away from that view of the central cross. A couple of passers-by may have said—"One of His disciples maybe?" No, not His disciple—"But listen to what he says," and they listen. Between his sobs he lisps it out, "He died, he died, instead of me." As they listen the other said, "I know now who it is, that is Barabbas; that is Barabbas!

Let us pray.

O Lord, we thank Thee that there is help and there is hope for the worst of us, there is strength for the weakest of us. O help us to-night, and if there is one who has not yet given himself or herself to Jesus Christ, may that decision be made before this service shall close, for Thy Name's sake, Amen.

ABOUT PETER VARONOF

(The following announcement was made Sunday morning, November 19 from Jarvis Street Church Pulpit. Mr. Varonof was very persistent but he was not allowed to enter the Pulpit, or to speak).

The Pastor regrets to announce that since the advertisement of this morning's service appeared, he has received a number of long distance calls—including one from Ottawa—as well as several local calls, relative to the notice in the papers that Mr. Peter Varonof was to speak this morning. It is not necessary to go into details. It is enough to say that the appointment for this gentleman to speak was made in good faith, but the information since received was of such a character that the Pastor, who had made the appointment on his own responsibility, felt it necessary to cancel the arrangement.

It was not possible for us to discover where Mr. Varonof was staying, hence we could not communicate with him until this morning.

On his arrival at the church the facts were presented to him, and he was informed that on the Pastor's order the appointment for him to speak in Jarvis St. was cancelled.

Mr. Slade kindly consented at the Pastor's urgent request to take the morning service, and Dr. Shields will preach this evening.

Announcement of the cancellation of this morning's appointment will be made through THE GOSPEL WITNESS issuing next Thursday, and in the public press on Saturday.

THE GIVER GREATER THAN HIS GIFTS

There is such a difference between coming out of sorrow thankful for relief, and coming out of sorrow full of sympathy with and trust in Him who has released us. Nine lepers hurry off to show themselves with their white skins to the priest. One leper only waits to cast himself at the feet of Jesus and worship Him. Tell me, will not those nine be different from that one if ever a new disease should fall upon them all?

Let that one leper be the type of the soul to whom the whole blessedness of a blessing from Christ has come. Not only the health but the Healer he delights in. Not only the salvation but the Saviour is his glory and his joy.

—PHILLIPS BROOKS

THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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

Preached in Jarvis St. Church, Toronto, on a
Sunday morning.

(Stenographically Reported)

"He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back and stood by the bank of Jordan;

"And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over."

—II Kings 2:13-14.

ELIJAH was, as you know, on our Lord's authority, a type of Christ: He referred to his ministry as being illustrative of His own. We read this morning the opening verses of the Acts of the Apostles, in which Luke refers to his Gospel as a treatise of all that Jesus "began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up." Before Elijah went home to God, he said to his disciple Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for you before I am taken away." Our Lord taught His disciples that it was their privilege to ask things of Him; and He gave them certain promises, declaring that in His name those promises should be fulfilled. And the one great prayer of Elisha was, "Grant that a double portion of thy spirit may be given to me." He wanted the spirit of his master. And Elijah promised that he should have it: he promised that his ministry should not end with his departure; but that it should be continued after he had gone. And our Lord Jesus laid the foundation upon which His people are to build: He began a ministry which the Church of Christ is left in the world to continue. He promised to His disciples that He would give them of His Spirit.

I believe there is no more important doctrine in the Book than that. It is necessary that we should know "that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures"; it is necessary also that we should clearly understand that we are not worshipping and serving an absent Saviour, but that He is still present in the midst of His people; He has given us His Spirit to carry on the work He began. Again and again in the church of to-day, you hear men discussing their programmes and planning their organizations, and laying much emphasis on the importance of various forms of Christian activities—and all this, too often, without reference to the necessity of all these endeavours being energized by the Spirit of God. Elisha had kept company with Elijah: he had seen something of the power of God which rested upon him. In his view, Elijah had been more to the nation than "the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." He saw that the mighty power of God had been exercised by this prophet; and now he says, "Grant that this power may be given to me, that thy spirit may rest upon me, that I may be enabled to carry on the work thou hast begun."

The Promise of the Spirit

I want to talk to you a few minutes this morning about the gifts of the Spirit, finding our illustrations in this story. Elijah said, "You shall have what you ask, on one condition, 'If thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.'" The condition upon which the spirit of

the master was to rest upon the servant, was that he was to look to the master himself.

I speak very carefully this morning, and I ask you to follow me with equal care. There is a tendency nowadays to magnify some aspects of the ministry of the Holy Ghost, and to talk more about the Holy Spirit than about Jesus Christ. And yet it is said of the Holy Ghost: "He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." The supreme ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus Christ; and the Holy Ghost is most certainly present where Jesus is being glorified. The need of this present hour, as of every other, is, that we should fix our thought upon Christ, that we should believe in Him, that we should acknowledge His pre-eminence,—and as our eyes are unto the Lord, this gift of the Holy Ghost shall be received.

Elisha Believed the Promise

Elijah was separated from Elisha, and he went up by a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha saw him just as the disciples saw their Master swallowed up by the cloud when it received Him out of their sight. Elisha's eyes were toward Elijah; the condition which Elijah had named was fulfilled; and as he went up, his mantle dropped from his shoulders and came fluttering back to earth. Then Elisha did not pray longer, but took up the mantle of Elijah. He took his master at his word. He had seen him go; he had no ecstatic experience; he accepted the promise that had been given; and he took the mantle of Elijah and as he came to the waters of Jordan, he smote the waters as he had seen Elijah do, and said, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" The waters parted asunder; and Elisha passed over by the exercise of the same power as he had seen exercised in his master's ministry. The point is this, that Elisha believed the promise and acted upon it—and at that moment the power of God was given him.

Need Not Tarry But Take the Mantle

Now there is a theory abroad to-day that we must tarry at Jerusalem until we be endued with power from on high. There are many who talk of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. As I read my Bible, we have no right to talk about the baptism of the Holy Ghost. It is not mentioned in one of the Epistles. The promise was given by our Lord that He would pray the Father, and He would send them another Comforter, that He would Himself baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire. That promise was fulfilled at Pentecost. It has never been repeated. It never will be repeated. The Church of Christ was baptized with the Holy Ghost—the Mantle of the ascended Lord descending upon His Church. The Holy Ghost took up the administration of the Church; and from that day until now, the Holy Spirit has always been in the midst of His people. It is for us now, by faith, to take the Mantle of our Elijah; it is for us to believe the promise of God, that we are to "receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." This whole doctrine of tarrying at Jerusalem, tarrying until some extraordinary physical manifestation is given, is contrary to Scripture. It has wrought ruin—ruin in the lives of thousands of people; and has resulted in spiritual death, and the destruction of faith in multitudes.

The Holy Ghost is here, my friends. He is to be re-

ceived. Ah, yes! there are many believers who ignore the Mantle; there are many believers who do not appropriate the blessings that are theirs; there are many of God's children who live on the carnal plane, who have not learned that it is their privilege to appropriate the power of the Spirit. We are to receive the promise of the Spirit through faith—through faith, mind you! If you want to be cured of that "tarrying" doctrine, read the Epistle to the Galatians. I do not mean we should not wait upon God for the Spirit; I do not mean that we should not ask for all the power of the Holy Ghost; I do not mean that it is not necessary for us sometimes to spend long seasons waiting upon God in prayer—I say that this idea of the baptism of the Spirit as an individual experience is contrary to Scripture. The baptism of the Holy Ghost came on the day of Pentecost: it has never been repeated. He is here now, my brethren, in all His fulness; and He is ready to take possession of you—of your mind; of the powers of your mind, of your body, all there is of you—and use you for God's glory. And you have not to wait as the disciples did at Pentecost. He is here; and God is most honoured when we take Him at His word, and believe His promise, and act upon it.

The Spirit's Ministry Indispensable

I want all you young Christians, very especially you who have just believed in Christ, to open your hearts to the truth of the Spirit's ministry. You have not believed in a dead Christ, nor have you trusted in an absent Christ. You are not called merely to follow an ideal—though you are called to that, for Christ should be your ideal; you are not called to strive in your own strength after conformity to the image of Christ—though you are called to strive. We are to seek to be like Christ; we are to bend all our energies towards that end, but in doing so—as we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling—we are to remember it is God that worketh in us "both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Learn to Depend Upon the Holy Ghost

If you are a Christian, in some measure you have already received the Spirit. If you have not received the Spirit, you are not even born again; for "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost". "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." If we are saved at all, the Spirit of God is with us. Now then, give Him the keys to every room in the house; make Him Lord, submit to Him, obey Him, make use of the promise, lay hold of the Mantle. Remember that our Lord Jesus has said: "Greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." What does it mean to depend on the Holy Ghost? It means exactly what Elisha did. Have I some Jordan to cross,—how am I to cross it? Have I some task to perform,—how am I to perform it? Have I some word to speak in the name of the Lord,—how shall I speak it? Have I anything, anywhere, to do for the Lord,—how shall I do it? Never in my own strength, but believing in my ascended Lord, and believing that He has kept His word; and believing that "he hath shed forth this" as Peter said on the day of Pentecost. The Holy Ghost is come, and He is come to abide with us according to His promise: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I

have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always—all the days—even unto the end of the world." All the days? Until when? Even unto the end of the age. What did He mean? He meant that He is with His people in the presence and power of His Spirit all the days—until the consummation of the age. And there never has been a day since He ascended unto glory, since Pentecost—there never has been a day when any man or woman who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, might not have received the fulness of the Holy Ghost by just receiving the promise of God and depending upon it.

The Holy Spirit Received By Faith

Another thing: We are to receive the Holy Ghost exactly as we receive Christ. How do you know you are a Christian? How did you know in the beginning? Some of you, perhaps, rested on John 3:16—"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And you believed, you claimed the promise, you rested upon it; and on the authority of God's word, and nothing else, you believed that you were saved. If anyone had asked you to prove it you would have had to go back to the Scriptures: you would have said that God has said it, and therefore it must be true. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." Where—where in all the Word of God is there a single passage to justify the theory that no one has received the Holy Ghost until, for instance, they have received the gift of tongues, until they have the power to work miracles? Many who received the Holy Ghost did speak with tongues, and others wrought miracles; but nowhere in Scripture is it taught that only such as speak with tongues or work miracles have received the Spirit.

Were the Mighty Preachers of the Cross Without the Spirit?

And yet that teaching which works havoc among believers would imply that such a man as Hudson Taylor, whom God used to found the China Inland Mission, knew nothing about the Holy Ghost? That D. L. Moody, whom God used to bring millions to Christ, never had the Holy Spirit? And they would have me believe that Spurgeon, who reached three hundred millions of people in his life-time, did it all without the Holy Ghost? They would have me believe that Wesley, and Whitfield, and Luther, and Knox, and the great fathers and heroes of the church, did all they did without the power of the Holy Ghost? I do not say that among those who are thus led astray by this doctrine, there are not a great many who sincerely love the Lord—in fact, it makes its appeal to the most devoted people—but I am persuaded that the teaching is erroneous. And what God wants us to do to-day is to take the Mantle of our Elijah and claim the promise of the Holy Ghost by faith.

Do you know some unconverted people whom you want saved? What are you to do? You are to commit their case to God. You are to go to that person, counting upon the power of the Holy Spirit to make your message effective. You Sunday School teachers, don't dishonour

your Lord by asking for a sign. "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas." Our great sign is the burial, and resurrection, and ascension of our Lord. We need ask for no other. We have his promise: the Holy Ghost is given. Now, count upon Him in your ministry.

The Spirit Is Given For Life As Well As Service

Then, the Spirit is not given for service only. The hardest task for any one of us is merely to live, is it not? You women in the kitchen, you say, "The preacher has an easy time preaching: it ought to be easy to be a Christian under those circumstances. If I were to live in the pulpit, and deal with things on the spiritual plane, I could be a good Christian, too." Well, it might be easy if he had not to deal with a lot of people—well—like you! But you know what I mean. You know where the trial is, my friends: it is not in the big things of life: it is in the little things. It is the ministering to the children, the washing of dishes, getting dinner, going down to work—in the office, the shop, or wherever it may be, putting up with a thousand trials during the day—so many irritations, so many things that cross your path at every turn—that is where the real trial of life is experienced. Did you ever have a day like that, when everything went wrong? Well, what is the Holy Spirit for? Just to come upon us in public meetings? I cannot spend all the time in meetings. (Compared with some churches, I spend a good deal of time in that way. We all do around here.) But if you reckon up the time you spend in public assemblies, it is a comparatively small part of your time. Most of our time is spent in other ways. The Holy Spirit is given us to enable us to exemplify Jesus Christ in all these relationships. What I want to say to you housewives is: To-morrow morning—early in the morning—remember this lesson, and take up the Mantle of Elijah; and when some Jordan comes across your path, and you feel you will never get through it, just say, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah? Where is the promise of the Holy Spirit? He is here. He is with me. I depend upon Him. The Lord will help me to-day." And He will give you the victory just as you commit yourself to Him. It would be a bad job for us if we had to tarry for His coming. When we need the Lord most, we have no time to tarry at all. We need Him on the moment; and He is always at our side. That is what His name implies. And it is for us to rely upon the Holy Ghost, to wear the Mantle of our Elijah.

The People Saw It

And the people saw it—the people saw it! And Elisha did not tell about his experience. Elisha did not call a meeting, and say, "I have had a wonderful experience; and if you will sit down there, I will talk down to you, and tell you about my wonderful experience." Did you ever meet people like that? They have had a marvellous experience; they forget all about Christ in talking about their "experience." They magnify some experience of mental or physical ecstasy they have had, and insist that everybody else must have this same marvellous experience. Elisha did not say anything about it; he simply took the mantle of Elijah, and smote the waters and said, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" And the people saw it, and said, "The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha."

When you have the Holy Ghost, other people will find it out; you need not go around talking about it, boasting about it—they will find it out. Don't display your proud superiority. Walk humbly before God. Keep your eyes toward the Master, use His Mantle; and everyone will know you "have been with Jesus." There will be no difficulty about it. Keep your eyes on the Master and they will know that it is possible by the power of the Holy Ghost to live the life that God requires us to live.

An Appeal to the Unconverted

Are there any unconverted people here this morning? I do not call you to a hard road, to climb a steep hill, alone. Rather I would tell you that salvation means Christ in you. It means that the Holy Spirit is with you and in you; and you can count upon Him from this very moment to purify your hearts, to conform you to the image and likeness of Christ; to make it possible for you to do what hitherto you have found impossible to do. The Spirit of Jesus is our possession if we believe. Shall we who are His, seek, by His grace, to live victoriously—to triumph where we have failed, to be conquerors where we have been defeated? May the Lord bless us every one for His name's sake.

THE TORONTO MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

ONLY one who has lived in Toronto for many years can, perhaps, fully appraise the steady moral deterioration of the city. Things that would have shocked the moral sense of the people of Toronto, and inspired the protest of a vast multitude, even no longer than twenty-five years ago, are now allowed to pass as a matter of course.

We are flooded with liquor, which fills our police courts and jails with its victims, which occasions numerous highway accidents, resulting in the maiming of many, and the death of not a few, the break-up of families by divorce, and not a few murders; and these are all the fruits of the alcoholic flood. Winnipeg was flooded with the Red River, which did great damage to property; and the mud and other things that were left, when the flood subsided, must have required a great deal of cleaning up. But by whom, and by what means, can the devastating flood be cleaned up—the moral ruin which liquor has caused in Toronto alone?

And as though that were not bad enough, we now have an open Sunday. Gambling and vice are rampant everywhere. It is the most arrant hypocrisy for Toronto to call itself "good".

How has it all come about? First, by spiritual declension in the churches. Modernism has destroyed the moral fibre of the major elements in organized religion. It is now easy to find ministers of religion who are not teetotalers. The deleterious effect of Modernism upon the message of the pulpit, which has made the average sermon appropriate to the text: "Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise; why shouldst thou destroy thyself?" has lowered the moral standards of every community, and, indeed, of the whole nation. It has had its effect in municipal affairs. Men have been elected to the Council and Board of Control, who, years ago, would scarcely have polled a thousand votes. Of course, we have had some good men, but unfortunately a sufficient number of moral ciphers can out-vote a better man every time.

The Two-Year Term

This year the Council has the temerity to ask the electors to elect them for a two-year term. In many cases a one-year term is eleven months too long. No man is known until he has been tried. If the Council proposed that any candidate, having already proved his worth in the City Council for four years, on securing a fifth nomination, might be elected for two years, that would have some show of reason. But every year there are unknown men. No one knows what mischief they can do. It is almost too much to expect Councillors to do any good. We have learned to count ourselves very fortunate, if they don't do much harm. But to elect an untried man for two whole years would be folly. In what troubles, in what debts, in what moral hazards could a two-year term Council involve us! By all means let us kill that two-year term. If so many do so badly when they know they must give an annual account, what damage would they do if we were to lengthen their leash by another year!

We suggest to all our Toronto readers that they cast their vote against a two-year term for anyone.

Candidates for Board of Control

By all odds in our opinion Controller Leslie Saunders is the best man in sight. He is a man of conviction and principle, and a man of courage, too. It seems to us there could be no two opinions among Christians, and especially Christians who are convinced and pronounced Protestants, that Leslie Saunders should be placed at the head of the poll.

The next man we would vote for is Alderman Collings. *The Toronto Star* disapproves of Alderman Collings on this ground. It says:

"Alderman Collings, a good citizen, but with, in our opinion, less ability than Mr. Saunders, is the man who has led the fight in council in 1946 against a civic reception to Cardinal McGuigan and said (Globe report): 'It is proposed to single out for glorification a Church which has segregated itself even to refusing to participate in armistice services at which our beloved old hymns are sung and the Lord's Prayer is said.'"

Alderman Collings is marked by *The Toronto Star* for slaughter because he led the fight in opposing the giving of a civic reception to Cardinal McGuigan. *That surely is one reason why every Protestant in Toronto ought to vote for him.*

The Roman Catholic Church is the biggest social parasite in the world. It is a veritable horseleech. It sucks the economic lifeblood out of every community where it gains the ascendancy. The personnel of the Hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church are equally parasitical. Although Cardinal McGuigan lives in a "palace," like all other priests in Canada, he does not pay a dollar of income tax. They receive no salaries, but live like millionaires, and pay no income tax! They are the greatest menace to the prosperity of any country that has ever been known.

We are glad that Alderman Collings had the discernment and the courage to register a vigorous protest against paying special honour to Cardinal McGuigan. What he said according to the report quoted by *The Star*, is not only true of Toronto, but true of the Roman Catholic Church throughout the Dominion. Therefore we would venture to urge our Toronto readers to *plump* for Controller Leslie Saunders and Alderman Collings.

If we had a hundred votes we would not vote for either Brand or Balfour.

Mr. Balfour's record in the Council, is that he is always ready to vote with both hands for the world, the flesh and the devil. He is practically always on the wrong side of any moral issue. We hope the electors will leave Controller Balfour at home this year.

About Controller Lamport

Balfour and Lamport together are very largely responsible for the deteriorating moral tone of the city of Toronto. We have been informed that Controller Lamport is, or was, some sort of Baptist. We are afraid that is true. But we find it difficult to understand how even the most Modernistic and spiritually decadent Baptist Church could produce such fruit. Certainly the tree upon which it grew had not been effectually sprayed. We can think of scarcely any greater calamity than to have a man like Lamport elected Mayor of the City of Toronto. He outdoes even Controller Balfour in his moral and religious iconoclast attitudes.

Toronto is bad enough. Let us not make it ten times worse by putting Controller Lamport into the Mayor's Chair.

In our judgment the present Mayor has done very well, and is deserving of the support of the electorate for another term.

Having said all this, we must add another word: we feel so strongly on the matter that we would venture to urge our Toronto readers, not only to plump their Controller vote for Saunders and Collings, but to talk about it to their friends to vote for these two men—Saunders and Collings for Controllers.

Further, not only to use their vote, but their utmost influence with everyone whom they can reach, to defeat Controller Lamport as a Mayoralty candidate, by rolling up the biggest possible majority for Mayor McCallum.

WESTERN CANADA—BEWARE!

This will be the title of a special issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS which will be published in the very near future. Efforts are being made to introduce Separate Schools into British Columbia, Alberta, and we suppose it will not be long before an attempt is made to bring them in, or multiply them, in Saskatchewan, and even to restore them to Manitoba.

A Separate School becomes a positive pest house. It sows the seed of disunity, of disloyalty, and everywhere exalts the Pope above our lawful King.

In the Special Edition which we shall issue, we shall thoroughly discuss the Separate School evil as it applies in Ontario, and Quebec, and as its propagating function is grafted on to the Public School System of the Maritime Provinces at public expense.

The reason for this announcement is this:

We are receiving inquiries from public men in the Western Provinces asking for information that they may know how to combat this evil. We shall, of course, supply them with information, but we appeal to all our readers in the four Western Provinces to send us lists of names to whom we may mail the Special Issue.

We should like to have the names of all the Ministers of all Denominations, the names of all municipal councillors, reeves, and mayors. We already have the names of all the Members of all the Legislatures. We should like to have also the names of influential persons, busi-

nessmen, professional men of all sorts, doctors, and particularly lawyers. Send us names by the thousands. If you are able to send a contribution to help pay for at least the postage, we shall appreciate it, but please do not condition the sending of the names upon your ability to send a contribution. Send us the names whether or no, and any contribution you may be able to send will, of course, be much appreciated; for the reason that THE GOSPEL WITNESS has no income from advertising. It has to depend upon the good will of its readers, and sometimes when we find ourselves compelled to oppose popular measures, we may incur the displeasure of some of our own subscribers. Therefore, we appeal to all readers in the West, who approve of the principles for which THE GOSPEL WITNESS stands, to assist us by sending in these lists of names at once. It will help us to have the names in advance of the publication, so that we may form some idea of how many we need to issue in a special edition.

For example, the demand for copies of November 2nd issue—"The Pope's 'Definition' of the Doctrine of the Assumption", and November 9th—"In view of the Pope's Pronouncement, November 1, How Can Bible-Believing Protestants be Silent?" has been on such a scale that our surplus is rapidly declining, and it may be necessary for us to reprint these issues to supply the demand. We may say that applications were received from practically all parts of the North American Continent. We believe the Separate School matter will be of interest also to our American subscribers, because this pestilential rodent is trying to gnaw its way into every educational system on the Continent. Do your best to help us to fight it by sending us thousands of names.

HOW R.C. CHURCH PLAYS POLITICS IN SCHOOL MATTERS

IN the spirit of "now-it-can-be-told" a Roman Catholic paper of Montreal reveals the inside story of how the priests a quarter of a century ago outwitted one of the most astute English-speaking politicians that the Province of Ontario has ever known. We translate the "inside story" from *Le Devoir* not only for its own interest but also because of its timeliness on the eve of the long-awaited report of the present Royal Commission on Education. This story provides one more example out of many which goes to prove that in politics, especially when they are concerned with matters in which the Roman Church has a special interest, things are not always what they seem to be.

A Sectarian and Racial Propaganda Centre

Twenty-five years ago, says *Le Devoir*, there was, legally speaking, no normal school in Ontario specifically destined for the training of bilingual, that is to say French-Canadian, Roman Catholic primary school teachers. Those who wished to obtain a certificate in advance of the third class had to go to the official normal schools which were, as this paper says, "English and non-confessional", by which it means that they were neither French nor Roman Catholic, and hence not directly controlled and staffed by priests. One of the first things that French-Canadians in Ontario did in their campaign to obtain larger grants for their French Roman Catholic schools was to establish a bilingual normal school under the auspices of the *Université d'Ottawa*, a Roman Catho-

lic school founded and directed by a religious order known as "The Oblates of Mary Immaculate". Then follows this interesting confession, which we give in the words of our French paper from Montreal:

The Merchant-Scott-Côté enquiry had lasted two years, from the autumn of 1925 to the autumn of 1927. The commissioners, who were particularly instructed to enquire into the situation of bilingual schools, had visited all the French groups and those partly French. When the time came to write the report, Monsieur Louis Côté, who represented the French element on the commission, said to the leaders of the *Association canadienne-française d'Éducation* (French-Canadian Education Association), with whom he kept in regular contact: "This is what my English colleagues are ready to recommend. It is not all that we might desire nor all to which we actually have a right. I am ready, if you think it preferable, to prepare a minority report. What do you think I ought to do? (Qu'en pensez-vous?)"

The leaders judged that an unanimous report was better because the government would not be likely to refuse to accept it and to apply its recommendations, while two reports would likely prolong the discussion indefinitely. It was decided to accept the concessions granted in order to make them the point of departure for new progress.

Monsieur Côté, who had the advantage of being of the same political colour as Mr. Ferguson (the Prime Minister), thus making their relations considerably easier, saw the latter and said to him, "I am ready to sign the report, but on one condition . . ."

"What is it?"

"That you should grant legal recognition to the Normal School of *l'Université d'Ottawa*."

"The Prime Minister was wearied, and probably also enlightened by the strenuous campaigns that he had been compelled to undergo, and by the protests which came from all the French groups of the country, and by the growing movement of sympathy which Mr. Belcourt had been able to raise by means of The Unity League in support of the French minority in Ontario. The Premier was glad to be finished with the business.

But he saw an objection to the last proposition of Monsieur Côté: "That," he said to his interlocutor, "is not legally possible."

"But it is!"

"Well then, prove it to me and we shall agree upon the matter."

Monsieur Côté evidently furnished a satisfactory proof, since the school was legally recognized.

Thus, after a quarter of a century, does a Roman Catholic paper gloat over the conquests of the priests and their tools upon the public purse of this predominantly English and Protestant province. It does not allude to the irony of the situation by pointing out that Mr. Ferguson, the Ontario Premier of that epoch, was an Orangeman who had been elected, partly at least, on the plea that he would stand guard against further Romanist encroachments on the Department of Education. But Mr. Ferguson put his politics before his Protestant convictions, whatever they may have been, when he discovered that there were more votes to be won by following the dictates of the Hierarchy.

What It Cost the Public

As a result of the abject surrender made by the Ontario government of that day to the priests, the taxpayers of this province have been saddled for a quarter of a century with the huge cost of maintaining an additional Normal School, which is not only French-speaking but Roman Catholic.

According to *The Public Accounts of Ontario*, in 1946 this institution cost taxpayers \$67,400.43, that is to say

almost one fifth of the total cost of all the Normal Schools of the province which is reported at \$351,560.38. Or to put it in another way, the French and Roman Catholic minority in this province are endowed with a sectarian and racial training school for their teachers that cost almost one quarter of the amount spent on training teachers for all the other normal schools of the province. And French-Canadians are very far indeed from constituting a minority that is one quarter of the total population. This is the only sectarian Normal School in the province, as it is the only separate racial and foreign language Normal School here.

Furthermore, we note that in that same year, i.e., 1946, the "Board and Travelling Expenses of Students" for this school amounted to \$20,810.00. The only other Normal School to report an item of this sort was the North Bay School where the amount was only \$593.55. All the other Normal Schools, those at Toronto, Ottawa (the English-language and non-sectarian school), London, Hamilton, Peterborough, Stratford, have no entry of this kind. Student-teachers at these schools paid their own travelling expenses to and from school and their board and fees while there. But at the sectarian and French-language Ecole Normal de l'Université d'Ottawa, student-teachers enjoyed the signal advantage of having the government pay their expenses. Of what other school of any sort in the entire province may this be said? We know of none other. And let it be remembered that these teachers in training are the future *gauleiters* of French-Canadian nationalism in Ontario and the lay members are just as specifically religious leaders and teachers as are the sisters and brothers who wear the garb of their religious orders. French-Canadians have the right to segregate themselves in separate religious and racial groups if they wish, but it is utterly unjust that they should compel the rest of us to foot the bill for their expensive scheme to disrupt the unity of this province.

In *The Public Accounts of Ontario* for 1945-1946, from which the above figures are taken, we also note that a salary is paid by the government of this province as follows: "Sister St. Paul (Berthe Renaud) \$1,950.00". We also note another item for \$4,850.00 to a certain R. Lamoureux. This gentleman, if we mistake not, is the principal of the school, a robed "religieux", a member of the order known as the "Oblates of Mary Immaculate". Even Spain could not do more for the priests than the government of the Province of Ontario does for the Romanist training centre for racial and religious propaganda.

Continual Increases in Grants

Since the French and Roman Catholic Normal School was recognized and supported by government grants, ever-growing increases have been made by successive governments in the hope of placating the Roman Catholic Hierarchy. But it is never satisfied and will never cry "Enough" until it has sucked the last drop of blood from the body corporate to maintain its huge corporation that is in turn under orders from a foreign potentate in Italy.

Documentary proof of our last statement will be found in the various resolutions passed by *L'Association canadienne-française d'Éducation d'Ontario* recently held in Ottawa. A Roman Catholic press agency notes that this Association has conducted epic struggles for the conquest of the rights of minorities. The account continues:

Knowing, however, that the fight is not yet finished and that it must continue to fight the good fight, the Association held several study sessions . . . After having given their homage to the Pope on the occasion of the Holy Year, and having thanked all the Canadian clergy for their collaboration in the defense of the right of the minorities, the congress deplores the loss of Their Eminences, Our Lordships, Courchesne and Lafortune, and also the loss of the Canadian pilgrims who were wrecked in the Alps . . . Then by a series of resolutions, "the members of the twelfth congress recommend to the council and central committee that they continue the fight to obtain a treatment for the separate schools and bilingual teaching which may be increasingly equitable and more in keeping with good sense and justice and the rights acquired by three centuries of unceasing contribution of the French and Catholic group to the progress and the greatness of our province and the whole country.

We do not see in the above report any mention made of the signal services rendered to the progress of Canada and of liberty by the riots at Shawinigan Falls or by the persecution of street preachers in Northern Quebec, but this may have been a slight oversight on the part of the priests who prepared the agenda for the lay members of the French Association!

French R.C. Schools Are Poor—So We Pay Again!

Then we come to this resolution:

With this purpose in view it is recommended that the executive committee should study, together with the Association of Bilingual Trustees, the question of school grants and take the necessary steps to obtain for urban schools a fairer distribution of governmental grants which ought to be directly proportional to the school population and inversely proportional to the assessment.

Let not the gentle reader suppose that this French and Roman Catholic Association is suggesting that French-Canadian Roman Catholics ought to pay higher school taxes. Far from it! They are coolly suggesting that English-speaking Protestants should pay more in order to give more to French and Roman Catholic sectarian and racial schools! It is not a question of local rates, it is a matter of governmental grants that is under discussion. English-speaking Protestants pay the larger part of federal taxes in order to subsidize the huge families the priests demand of their people, and then they pay a second time to educate them in the papal faith in Romanist schools since their parents are too poor to do so. It is little wonder that Protestants are inclined to sum up the policy of the priests by saying that the Church of Rome keeps its people in poverty, endows them with large families and then seeks to compel the rest of the people to pay the expenses.

Priests in Public and High Schools

But this is not all. Another resolution passed by this body included the following:

It is recommended that with this end in view the school boards should invite the priests and their assistants to visit the schools and to give this instruction, if it is necessary, especially in public schools, primary and secondary, where the teaching staff can not give this instruction in an adequate fashion. . . .

We note two, salient points in the above resolution: Priests are to be invited into *public* schools to give religious instruction. They already have full and free entry into *separate* schools, which they control more or less directly. And secondly, they are to be invited into

secondary schools, that is high schools, which up to now have been kept non-sectarian.

We mention these matters in view of the forthcoming Report of the Royal Commission, which has already been used as a football to be kicked around by politicians, though we greatly fear that the priests will again make off with the ball after having tossed some golden apple to avidly hungry politicians to occupy them elsewhere. It is for the Protestants of this province to awake if they wish to maintain their heritage of a public school system and not to be compelled to pay still more heavily for a Roman Catholic school system that is designed to enslave this country to the pope of Rome.—W.S.W.

"O LORD, REVIVE THY WORK"

By Rev. John Cunningham of Westbourne Church,
Calgary, Alberta

The following article is taken from *The Westbourne Messenger*, a weekly publication issued by the church of that name in Calgary. This paper contains meaty and suggestive messages from the able pen of the pastor, Rev. John Cunningham, one of the early graduates of Toronto Baptist Seminary, who is doing a fine work in Calgary as he did in earlier pastorates in Ontario and in Manitoba. We reprint his article here because of its timely importance: Modernism is beginning to reap the bitter harvest that it has sown, hence the need, greater than ever before, of an uncompromising testimony to the truth and power of the Gospel of Grace. The hands of some grow slack in the unending battle for the Book, but Toronto Baptist Seminary stands, as it has since its foundation a quarter of a century ago, for the whole counsel of God, and we are happy to know that its contribution in trained men has provided valuable reinforcements to the ranks of faithful warriors.

WHENEVER we see the mighty fallen from their high places—churches and denominations which once were true to the message of the gospel of redeeming grace—our hearts are pained. When we see churches proclaiming a gospel which fails to magnify the grace of God and has no place for the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and when we see spiritual coldness come upon the hearts of others and spiritual darkness upon their minds, so that souls are no longer led in the paths of a consecrated and separated Christian life, we cry with Habukkuk of old, "O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy."

It leads us to pray earnestly unto the Lord that He might preserve not only our souls but also our minds against the powers of spiritual darkness, that we might be kept true to that message which centres around the perfect sacrifice of Christ upon Calvary's cross, whereby alone lost souls can be reconciled to a holy God in heaven.

For the past two years more particularly certain things relative to our Baptist work have been impressed on our mind, and we should like to pass them on to you. These things have come from our own personal observation, from the testimony of others who have been well acquainted with them and from the observations of fellow pastors. Thus we are not alone in what we have now to say, but we feel that these observations have been confirmed by others.

The first thing that we should like to say is this—there exists today among the ranks of the churches of the Western Baptist Union a wide-spread dissatisfaction which almost borders upon disgust. There is a feeling

with many that all things are not right in their beloved denomination, and they are in a quandary, not knowing which way to turn. The result is that many old-time Baptists have turned to other churches and sects, seeking among these the preaching of the old gospel and that spiritual warmth for which they yearn. At the present time there are churches contemplating some move, either into some independent body or outright undenominationalism. Old Convention Baptist Churches are losing out in many places, of this there is not the slightest doubt in the world.

During the past two years evidence of this dissatisfaction has come to us from at least five independent and widespread sources. So our observations are not merely an irresponsible fancy; the evidence supports them.

The fact is that many old-line churches no longer find that McMaster students are acceptable to them because of their modernism. We have heard apologists for this former Baptist institution—for it is now Baptist only in name—say that there is nothing wrong with McMaster. We wish we could believe it, and we know that there are a good many Baptists in the Western Union who wish that they could say "Amen" to it too! The truth is that McMaster is no better than when our Regular Baptist work was first organized, but rather it grows worse. It is our firm conviction that the enemy of evangelical Christianity, under the guise of modernism, has now completely captured that institution which once trained men to preach salvation through the blood of Christ, and through the blood alone.

There is a feeling among some of these Baptists that the controversy which raged among us some twenty-five years ago was a clash of personalities, rather than a battle for the authority of God's Word; and so there is expressed a hope that when certain ones have passed on—principally Dr. Shields!—that there will be a reconciliation among us and tranquility and peace will be restored to bless the dying years of the old Baptist denomination. Let this be said of that mighty man of God: he has through the Toronto Baptist Seminary raised a generation of preachers who see the issue clearly, and who are filled with the same uncompromising spirit that he has shown toward infidelity in whatever form it reveals itself. There may be some among us who would sell out for the sake of material advantage—although we can think of none at the present who might—but the graduates of the Seminary are determined to stand for those vital principles of the gospel of Christ which **Modernism** seeks to destroy. Barring a mighty Holy Ghost revival in the Old Convention that would turn that body back into the way from which it has departed, there will never be a reconciliation. We believe that God has given to us the responsibility of preserving those principles of the gospel for which Baptists have always stood, and we intend to be true to Him. Thus many of us have vowed unto the Lord.

Now *The Westbourne Messenger* is a rather humble production, designed primarily for our own local needs. Nevertheless it has turned up in the most surprising places, and we feel that this issue will fall into the hands of some Old Convention Baptists. If so we should like to address this word of caution to you: let nothing rob your church of its traditional Baptist independence. Guard that as jealously as you would your own personal freedom. We know that some churches in the Old Convention have been approached to deed their property to

the Convention, to insure of course that it will never fall out of its control. Seeing the dissatisfaction of the churches the Baptist hierarchy has assailed one of the most vital of the principles for which we have always stood, in an effort to save itself. Baptist churches ought to keep the title to their own property, which was paid for, not by a Convention, but by those who loved the gospel, so that they are free to act independent of any outside influence, and according to their own conscience. Let nothing mortgage the freedom and independence of your church.

It is just here that our Regular Baptist Fellowship meets the needs of the hour among Baptists. Our pastors are sound as far as the preaching of the gospel is concerned; there is not the least taint of modernism upon any one of them. Ours is an organization upon strictly biblical principles. We recognize no authority higher than that of the local church, and our elected board does not interfere in the affairs of any one of them. Each of our churches is autonomous, managing its own affairs according to the will of the majority of its members. More than that, our pastors seek to lead their people in the paths of true holiness, believing that no true Christian can serve the interests of the world and of Jesus Christ at the same time.

Ours is a Fellowship of Regular Baptist Churches, and it is just that. Among our pastors there is nothing but the sweetest of fellowship, and that is because we are one in adherence to Jesus Christ as the "Head over all things to the church." We are sure that if many knew us better they would be glad to join hands with us in our endeavour to establish true New Testament churches throughout the prairies. There is much ignorance of us and our work and not a little prejudice against us; but we say again that if others could see that we stand for the old traditional Baptist principles they would be happy to cast in their lot with us, rather than allow their churches to be taken over by the undenominational movement of our day. Baptists need not surrender their principles in order to remain evangelical. One of the soundest deductions of it all is this, that the Fellowship needs the services of a competent, spiritually minded secretary who would tour the West on our behalf. We need some one capable of presenting the Baptist message, which after all is simply the message of the Bible, in these prairie provinces.

This leads us to our second observation: there are many who are hungering for a sound, biblical testimony, and by that we mean what homiletics calls expository preaching. Those trained in modernistic institutions cannot give that. If theirs was a biblical ministry they could not hold the tenets of modernism.

But even among our evangelical churches today there is a lack of good expository preaching. Most preaching among evangelicals is topical rather than expository, and while such sermons may be quite sound doctrinally there is not much food in them for one who has a healthy spiritual appetite. In our own opinion they are what some lunch counters advertise as "light lunches". Baptists generally have never taken very well to these, for from our number God has been pleased to call some of the ablest exponents and preachers of the gospel of His grace. We have been a people accustomed to good fare, so that we have become spiritual connoisseurs of good sermons.

There are some denominations which have laid great

stress upon an educated ministry, and we are not the least opposed to that if education does not rob a man of his faith in God. We as Regular Baptists must insist upon an educated ministry as well, but we would have our men skilled in the understanding of the scriptures, rather than in the sciences and arts. These are days of specialists, and our ministers must be specialists in their understanding and preaching of the Word of God. That not only requires thoroughly sound institutions where our young men may be trained, but pastors who are eager to delve deeper into the mine of revealed truth for themselves, that out of its treasures they may bring forth riches for their people. When we have more men like that we shall find that God has a large place for us in His service, and He will be pleased to use us to feed the souls that hunger for His truth.

AMONG THE CHURCHES

By H. C. Slade

The Bishop of the North

UNDERSTANDING the term "bishop" to mean a spiritual overseer, we know of no one more worthy of that title than Rev. J. R. Boyd of Sudbury. Not only is he pastor of several churches in the Sudbury area, but by means of his extensive radio ministry he has become a spiritual instructor to many, and through his monthly paper, *La Voix de L'Evangile* (The Voice of the Gospel) hundreds of French-Canadians are shown the way of life and regularly taught the Word of God.

Mr. Boyd is "in journeyings oft". In a letter which we print below, he gives news of his own local work, which continues to flourish, as well as a brief account of some of his recent visits to other fields.

Mr. Boyd writes:

"We had another joyful experience last Friday night as we responded to an invitation from Kirkland Lake Christians and had the privilege of baptizing seven believers there. Certainly this work, and particularly the Heaslip end of it, gives real cause for rejoicing, and I believe for confident expectation of very worthwhile progress in coming days.

"The Lord has encouraged our hearts in our continued ministry through the French paper. Feeling very keenly the preposterous wickedness of the recent proclamation about the Virgin Mary, we felt it advisable to devote a large part of our most recent issue of *La Voix de L'Evangile* to a study of what the Bible says concerning the mother of Jesus. Judging from letters received in response, I believe that the Lord has been pleased to bless this ministry, and to use His Word, which we sought to give, to save some from believing this most recently publicized lie.

"Perhaps to quote part of one letter received from Quebec Province will give you an idea of how a number have responded. This reader wrote saying, 'I have received the *Voice of the Gospel* which shows what God and man say concerning the Virgin Mary. The scriptures you gave were what we needed. I have searched them all in the Bible, and am assured that the Virgin Mary did not ascend into heaven bodily as the clergy endeavour to teach us. They have made an idol out of her such as the heathen worship. Could you please send me two New Testaments for two of my friends?'

"Thus we rejoice that though millions, who love dark-

ness rather than light, hilariously receive each additional lie invented by the papacy, yet God in His mercy is pleased to continue the use of His truth to enlighten and restrain some so that the hours of Rome's success become the occasions for her losing some of her one-time helpless victims.

"In Sudbury we have rejoiced that the hand of God has been manifest in salvation, and that we are experiencing tokens of His grace and faithfulness as we plunge into the work of constructing our new Church home. It is indeed a very welcome experience at last to turn our hands to this task of erecting a building for the use of the church which for all the years of its experience has endeavoured to put the urgent needs of our crying mission fields ahead of the ordinary necessities of our own work.

"The Sudbury Church has in the 12 years of its organized existence been largely responsible for the formation of the two other churches that are in our present pastorate, one of which is the only French Baptist Church in Northern Ontario. Because these struggling causes at Minnow Lake and Lavigne were compelled to build or not survive, the Sudbury Church chose to suffer the inconveniences of a rented building in order that the more urgent needs in these other fields might be met, and in order, too, that money and the time required might be devoted to the radio ministry and extensive visitation which the pastor and other Christian workers of this field have done.

"As we look now at the new works that are springing up in the fields which we have served through the radio and visitation efforts, we are profoundly grateful that the Lord directed and enabled us to follow the course we did in the expending of our limited resources. However, now that at last we are engaged in the work of construction to provide the building facilities which are absolutely necessary for the continuance of our work, we find ourselves much in need of prayer, and have cause for great rejoicing as we day by day see the hand of God leading to our support, new friends and unexpected resources by which to enable us to meet our constantly accumulating costs. We are resolved that we shall not allow this additional burden of raising the more than \$40,000, yet required to complete the building, to hinder the preaching of the Word and the sending out of God's truth in its printed form to those whom He has put under our care. Therefore, we are glad that we can report that He has given us thus far sufficient to carry on in all phases of the work, and that somehow day by day strength is furnished so that the needs are met and the work goes on.

"As welcome encouragement comes from far and near we are made to realize afresh the valuable service rendered to us by THE GOSPEL WITNESS, and to thank God that as we struggle in these efforts which tax our strength and try our faith, there are those who faithfully stand by co-operatively to serve. As I travel about visiting the young converts and seeking to encourage the newer churches which are springing up throughout our territory, I find it impossible even to imagine what a company of believers will rejoice with grateful hearts when at the judgment day the name of Jarvis Street and its auxiliary agencies will be mentioned. There may be those who think it worth their while to serve for human favour or earthly position, but I would a thousand times

rather look forward to the reward which THE GOSPEL WITNESS workers can anticipate than to have all the pomp or applause which the world can give."

Victoria Avenue Church, Hamilton

Rev. John Byers, Pastor

In the history of any church, some particular aspect of truth may for a time receive peculiar emphasis, for the Master Teacher sees and meets the need of His scholars, when they are earnestly studying in His school. For several weeks the responsibility of each member to God, to his fellow-believers and to the unsaved has been repeatedly brought to our attention. Recent sermons by the Pastor on the natural man, the carnal man and the spiritual man have made a deep impression.

The spiritual condition of the believer was also the burden of the Scriptural messages and testimony given during a helpful two weeks' campaign held in October under the leadership of Rev. and Mrs. Fred Zarfes of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Souls were blessed, and the presence of unsaved friends and relatives of our members was an encouragement to continue to pray and trust the Lord for their salvation. The attendance was good, the church being practically full on several occasions.

We confidently expect the blessing of the Lord to accompany the seed of His Word, so faithfully and forcefully broadcast by the Pastor, the Bible School teachers and Christian workers. Some who have been saved in the church within the last year or so are now taking their places as workers in our midst, thus strengthening our hands and our hearts, as we realize that the Lord is sending forth labourers into His harvest.

We have many bright boys and girls in our Bible School, and some of them are especially gifted. We are concerned, as we realize that they represent great possibilities of future usefulness. Brethren, pray for us.

—O.L.C.

Blessing at Essex

Since Rev. Bert Oatley-Willis became pastor of the Baptist Church in Essex last May, 20 have been baptized upon profession of their faith in Christ. "This is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes". The work of the church as a whole shows gratifying evidence of growth in spiritual health. The recent special meetings under the ministry of Rev. John Boyd of Sudbury, proved to be a source of rich blessing to all. Mr. Boyd's forceful presentation of the work being done among French-Canadian Roman Catholics in Northern Ontario gave the folks at Essex a clear picture of the situation and a much larger appreciation of the difficulties involved in reaching these people with the Gospel. The pastor and the members of Essex Church feel that no work in Canada is more worthy of practical support.

Christians Calm in Time of Storm

Rev. John Knight describes the storm caused by a hurricane which swept over a section of Jamaica and its damaging effects:

"The village of Cave Valley suffered a heavy disaster a week ago Sunday and Monday. Heavy rains due to a hurricane that missed Jamaica, caused the Cave River to overflow and swept over Cave Valley and hundreds

of acres of cultivations belonging to small settlers. The goods in some seven or eight shops were inundated in from 15 to 18 feet of water. Due to some fine efforts by the police and others, no lives were lost but some 150 were left temporarily homeless. A few small homes are completely destroyed. The Government and the Red Cross and others have had their hands full in bringing relief. Perhaps the most serious loss will be the crops of yams, sweet potatoes, corn, sugar cane etc. A flood of like proportions is said to have been over Cave Valley over 80 years ago: Though our post office is Cave Valley, it is not down in the valley where the village is, so that we were a mile away.

"The Sunday of the rain, no services were held in these parts, the first time this has happened since 1933 when a hurricane was blowing. This past Sunday, we had a small congregation. Some have lost their clothing, paths are muddy and some, I expect, were trying to reach their cultivations to see what is left to them, as the water is drawing off. On every side, you hear people talking of the goodness of God in spite of their heavy losses, because their lives were saved from peril. It is easy to spot the real Christians in a time like this. I think of one woman who has a shop in Cave Valley who appeared as calm and peaceful as usual and she said she has neither lost sleep or a meal during those awful days. Another middle-aged man, who has no anchor to steady him in the storm, was almost frantic over his losses just across the road from the other lady."

SEMINARY ACTIVITIES

Examinations

Students breathe somewhat more freely this week as the quarterly examinations are now nothing but a thing of memory, and, alas, of record! During the week of these tribulations several women of the church very kindly volunteered to relieve our student-chefs in the Seminary kitchen. To them we all express our hearty thanks, as to the unflinching kindness of a number of friends who replenish our larder with good things.

Soirée française

A very enjoyable and profitable *soirée française* was held *chez les Bauman* last Friday, the final day of examinations. We found Swiss hospitality at its best and discovered that French added a peculiar charm to everything, including a birthday cake for our student-professor, who was not able to blow out all the candles with one breath, so many they were in number! All these occasions add a little bit more to the students' vocabulary and their facility in *la belle langue*.

Blessing in Fort William

Through students in the Seminary from Fort William and Sudbury we have heard with joy of blessing in these two churches recently. At the Lakehead, where Rev. Walter Tompkins ministers, two have recently made a profession of faith. The mortgage on the manse is now wiped out, leaving the church, we understand, free of indebtedness. Happy Church, happy pastor! We congratulate them heartily, and all the more so since we used to know something of the church and its problems.

French Gospel Service on Sunday

As already announced the monthly French Gospel Service will be held on Sunday afternoon, November 26,

at three o'clock in Greenway Hall. The preacher will be Mr. Etienne Huser. All interested friends are invited to be present.

BOOK REVIEWS

For Boys and Girls

THE CHILDREN'S MISSIONARY LIBRARY, *Fleming H. Revell Company, New York. Price in U.S.A. 75c per copy.*

Children are now bombarded with "funnies" and "comics" which assault Eye-gate with moral filth or evil propaganda or just plain nonsense, that varies in subject matter from a glorification of crime to hagiography, which is but another name and another form of Roman Catholic propaganda. It is of little use to inveigh against the folly and the sin of children poring over such harsh feasts of thorns and thistles unless we have something better to offer them. And "better" in this case must mean not only better morally but better in point of reading interest and also of visual interest. We think that the announcement of a *Children's Missionary Library* will help provide an answer to this problem that vexes many a home where there are children. And, incidentally, it will likely help Santa Claus when he goes shopping for boys and girls with a view to obtaining something that will profit them as well as please them. The Fleming H. Revell Company have already issued four titles in this series, which in simple, direct, fashion tell the stories of great missionary leaders such as David Livingstone, Hudson Taylor, Adoniram Judson, Mary Slessor, and other volumes are to follow. There is nothing "goody-goody" about them, and as far as we can judge after actually putting them to the test—not in the Seminary!—they fulfil the expectations of the publishers who say that "It is hoped that the combination of text and illustrations of this juvenile library will impress the heart and mind of the child with the labours and results of our self-sacrificing missionary heroes." The coloured drawings on every second page are an added attraction for youthful readers. The text is suitable for children of the fourth or fifth grade and upwards.

THE MEMOIRS OF MCCHEYNE, *The Moody Press, Chicago. Price in U.S.A. \$3.50.*

Robert Murray McCheyne died when he was but twenty-nine years of age, yet he was one of God's gifts to men. Had he written nothing else than that great hymn, alas, too little known or sung, "Jehovah Tsidkenu", he would have filled a larger measure of usefulness than is given to most men. He ministered in times when the Spirit was poured out from on high and shared in the Revival at Kilsyth, the story of which was recently told in these pages. The note of saintliness and of something of the spiritual atmosphere of those times of blessing is preserved in these memoirs, which include his letters and messages as collected by his friend Andrew A. Bonar. A brief biography based on a lengthier account from the same hand is also printed with this volume. One of the advantages of a book of this sort is that it is good to pick up occasionally and read at it, rather than through it. Browsing in such rich pastures as these is bound to add a spiritual wealth to one's thinking.

Perhaps the best method of suggesting the riches that lie in this book is to give a few samples culled from it.

almost at random. They sparkle like jewels taken from some rich mine to remind us that there are many more where they were found. Take for example his advice on how to read the Bible:

"You read your Bible regularly, of course; but do try and understand it, and still more to *feel* it . . . *Turn the Bible into prayer.* Thus, if you were reading the First Psalm, spread the Bible on the chair before you, and kneel, and pray, 'O Lord, give me the blessedness of the man; let me not stand in the counsel of the ungodly.' This is the best way of knowing the meaning of the Bible, and of learning to pray."

Or take this searching word:

"This is the reason unfaithful ministers are cold and barren in their labours. They speak, like Balaam, of a Saviour whose grace they do not feel. They speak, like Caiaphas, of the blood of Christ, without having felt its power to speak peace to the troubled heart. They speak from clear head-knowledge, or from past experience, but not from a present grasp of the truth—not from a present sight of the Lamb of God. Hence their words fall like a shower of snow, fair and beautiful, but cold and freezing. The Lord give us to stand in the presence of the Lord Jesus."

We are tempted to continue, for excerpts of this sort are to be found on almost every page. But we forbear in order to advise the reading of this spiritual classic.

—W.S.W.

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 15 Fourth Quarter Lesson 10 December 3, 1950

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

READING THE LAW

Lesson Text: Nehemiah 8:1-13.

Golden Text: "So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."—Nehemiah 8:8.

I. The Holy Exercise: verses 1-8.

A good leader is a gift from God. Nehemiah's personal experience of God's Providential dealings (Neh. 1, 2), his unflinching courage and trust in God, combined with practical good sense, inspired the people to complete the rebuilding of the walls in 52 days, in spite of intense opposition (Neh. 6:15). Even his enemies were compelled to admit that the work was of God (Neh. 6:16; Prov. 16:7; 1 Pet. 2:12), and if his enemies acknowledged the Divine hand, so also did his friends and followers.

Thus, having seen the hand of the Lord laid bare in their midst (Psa. 126:2; Lk. 1:49), the Jews requested to hear the word of the Lord (Lk. 5:1; Acts 13:7). In these days it is rare to see people with a keen appetite for the commands of God (Amos 8:11). Men seek for pleasure and amusement, rather than for the will and word of God (Psa. 1:2; 2 Tim. 3:1-5). These Jews, however, gathered as one man in one place (Acts 13:44), united in their common desire to know what God had said and what He would say to His people (Psa. 85:8; Habb. 2:1; Acts 10:33). How readily Nehemiah would accede to their request!

Desires and resolutions, be they ever so noble, will do no good, unless put into practice; it is deeds, not words, that count in eternal matters (Jas. 2:2). These Jews were in attendance where the word of the Lord was to be proclaimed. They did not forsake the assembling of themselves together (Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:25), but came one, and all to the appointed place of meeting, all who could hear with understanding.

We must take heed what we hear (Mk. 4:24), and how we hear (Lk. 8:18). It is one thing to be present in a service, but quite another to be attentive to the word (Matt. 13:13-15; Acts 16:14; 20:7-9; Heb. 4:1, 2). The human mind is a great vagrant; we must learn to keep it at home (2 Cor. 10:5). One may hear the words and sounds with the outward ear,

yet not really hear the truth, or heed it. In the parable of the sower, the superficial hearer apparently hears the word, but only the one whose heart has been Divinely prepared welcomes and embraces the truth (Matt. 13:19-23). We are to receive the truth in the love of it (2 Thess. 2:10).

The audience stood in reverence as the word of God was read. We need more reverence in the house of God these days (Habb. 2:20). The attitude of the one who listens to the message of God is an index of his attitude to God Himself. As Ezra the scribe, Nehemiah and their associates blessed and praised God before the reading, the people bowed in humble, reverent worship.

So much for the audience. Notice the actions and attitude of the leaders. Ezra stood in a conspicuous place, that all might hear the message. In other words, he made every provision to satisfy the spiritual desires of the people. Again, he was not alone, but was accompanied by trusted leaders and teachers. Fellowship in the ministry of the word is of great value (1 Kings 19:14, 18; 1 John 1:3).

Ezra opened the book of the law in the sight of all the people (Lk. 4:16, 17). This was a testimony in itself. He did not open a book of essays, a commentary, a Teacher's Quarterly, or a book of poetry, history or biography, but he opened the Book of God. We are commanded to preach the Word, and to teach the Word (Acts 4:31; 16:32; 2 Tim. 2:2; 4:2; Heb. 13:7). Other books have their place, but the Book of books must be supreme.

Ezra read the law distinctly, clearly, emphatically. A man, when asked about his conversion, said that he was saved, while listening to a minister reading 1 Kings 17:1: "And Elijah the Tishbite—said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." Said the man, "As the minister read that passage, I felt as though I myself were standing in the presence of God, a sinner in the hands of a holy God."

After the law had been read, it was carefully expounded by Ezra and his associates, who gave the sense and caused the people to understand the reading (2 Chron. 35:3; Lk. 24:27, 45; Acts 8:30-35). To expound the word of God is our glorious task in church and Bible School, to translate the letter of the law into living truth, to take the syllables printed on paper and so enforce and apply them, that they are impressed upon heart and conscience (2 Cor. 3:3, 6). As a musician transforms notes on a printed page of music into glorious harmony, so are we to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, making the truth real and beautiful to others.

II. The Holy Results: verses 9-13.

The word of God is living and powerful (Heb. 4:12); it is a hammer which breaks things into pieces (Jer. 23:29). Spoken in the power of the Holy Spirit, it brings conviction of sin (Acts 2:37; 1 Thess. 1:5; 2:13; 2 Thess. 3:1; 1 Pet. 1:23). The audience shed tears of repentance, as they realized how far short they had come of the will of God (2 Tim. 3:14-17). These were indeed holy tears (2 Cor. 7:10).

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning (Psa. 30:5). The sorrow of the repentant Israelites was changed into the joy of faith and hope (Rom. 10:17). The word of God is described as a two-edged sword (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12). With one edge it wounds, as it were, but with the other it heals. It is like the surgeon's scalpel, causing first bleeding, then blessing. When we allow the holy word to do its intended work, and do not shrink from the pain of conviction, it will ultimately strengthen the soul.

The members of this congregation would not be satisfied with scanty fare. Having partaken of the bread of life the first day, they returned the second day for more spiritual food (Lk. 4:4). Ordinarily, Christians do not remain in the house of God with the word of God long enough to receive the blessing which accompanies such healthy exercises of the soul. The Bible creates an appetite for itself, and the more we read it, the greater will become our longing to read it, and study its holy pages (Jer. 15:16; Rev. 1:3).

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Nov. 27—Reading the Law for Conviction	Jan. 2.
Nov. 28—For Salvation	Rom. 10:1-17.
Nov. 29—For Sanctification	John 17:1-9.
Nov. 30—For Guidance	Psa. 119:105-112.
Dec. 1—For Our Food	Deut. 8; Ezek. 2:8-3:3.
Dec. 2—For Service	Neh. 10:28-39.
Dec. 3—For Instruction	2 Tim. 3.