

Wm E. Hipp



PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY

"Where the Scriptures speak we speak, where the Scriptures are silent we are silent."

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Primitive Christianity.

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PROSPECTUS.

It is usual, and eminently proper, when a new contribution to religious literature appears, asking recognition and patronage from the public, for those who project the enterprise to give some reason for its appearance. In accord with this custom, we submit the following announcement:

In as much as the Churches of Christ, scattered throughout the North and North-eastern portions of the United States and Canada, have long felt the need of a medium of inter-communication through which they could greet each other with Christian salutations, and thereby mutually encourage each other in Christian growth and activity; and, whereas, they have equally felt the need of some adequate instrumentality which would reach the masses of the people both in and out of the church, and by means of which the plea for Primitive Christianity could be more effectively advocated and defended in this region; therefore, the promoters of this literary adventure have, after due deliberation, decided to try to answer, in some degree at least, these important demands by the publication of this modest journal.

As indicative of our general aim, we have chosen to call our paper *Primitive Christianity*. By this name we would indicate our purpose of pleading for a system of things legitimately growing out of the teaching of Christ and his inspired followers; and which was in a very high degree illustrated in the earliest life of the Church of God.

We are the more impelled to this effort, because of the many departures from original teachings and customs, which are conspicuously manifest throughout the religious world; and more particularly among the people with whom we once associated in sweet accord.

As further indicative of our purpose, we have placed underneath the name of our paper, as a suitable motto, the immortal words of Thomas Campbell: "Where the Scriptures speak we speak, where the Scriptures are silent we are silent."

We have been prompted in this selection by the force of such Scripture declarations as the following: Writing to his son Timothy, Paul says, "From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

With such a motto at the head of our columns, based upon such a Scrip-

ture declaration as the one quoted above, we feel ourselves pledged to contend earnestly for the all-sufficiency of the word of God in the generation of spiritual life, and in the development of spiritual growth in the hearts and lives of the people of God. For the same reasons, and as a necessary corollary of this purpose, we shall feel equally obligated to discourage all disposition to supplement this perfect equipment for Christian life and activity by the wisdom of men.

We would fain have the words, "Where the Scriptures speak we speak, where the Scriptures are silent we are silent," engraved in capital letters, and printed with indelible ink.

As still further indicative of the work which we hope to do with our paper, we call attention to the fact that the Church of God is the only organization which existed in the primitive age. The remarkable accomplishments of the apostolic age were all wrought through this divinely conceived, and divinely perfected organization. As contemplated by inspiration, this organization, with its officers and ordinances, was esteemed to be sufficient for all ends to be reached through "organized effort." When, in the councils of infinite wisdom, the question of organization came up for determination, the omniscient mind, taking into its grasp all the wants and interests involved, for all time and eternity; and in full command of all its boundless resources, decided the question by projecting and establishing the Church of God. The perfection of God's wisdom in this decision is practically demonstrated in the achievements of the first century of the church, and in the history of the first half century of the "current reformation."

It is sad to contemplate that this beautiful structure, so grand in its simplicity, so comprehensive in its capabilities, and so marvelous in its perfections, should have been marred by the impious touch of fallible men vainly seeking to be "wise above what is written." It is sad that it should have been shorn of its strength by the innumerable human fungi, which irreverent men have fastened upon its body, and which, like vampires, are voraciously drawing from its vitals its very life blood. It is sad that it should have been robbed of its glory by men, vainly seeking to crown their own inventions, which they have substituted for it, with the honor which legitimately belongs to Christ's Church.

Now, we are animated with a burning desire that the Church of God should be restored to the original place and work assigned to it by its great designer and founder.

One prominent plea, therefore, as planned for the work of this periodical, will be an uncompromising insistence on the simple organization of the Church of God, as the only organization proper to be used in the development of Christian character, and the increase of its growth in the conversion of sinners. We hope to contribute something in the way of arresting the tide of apostasy, which,

under the specious name of "progression," is sweeping over Christendom, threatening to obliterate the very outlines of the church which Christ planted in the earth. Backward to Jerusalem, rather than, forward to Rome, shall be our watchword in this respect.

Besides these general purposes, we hope to make the paper serviceable to the local interests of the church. The Plum Street congregation has had for many years an enviable reputation for soundness of doctrine, and vigorous activity in church work. The Vinewood congregation is pressing along, closely following in the footsteps of the mother church. The Cameron Ave. mission is eagerly longing for the time when it will doff the swaddling clothes of babyhood, and don the toga of manhood. Not one of these congregations is satisfied with present attainments. With our Bro. A. C. Jackson in charge of this department of our paper, it extends a hand to help all interested in reaching the best results attainable.

Bible-classes may depend on us to render any assistance within our power. Teachers and scholars will find in *Primitive Christianity* a "friend in need."

With this brief introduction of *Primitive Christianity* to the church and the world, we take our seat on the tripod, and sharpen our pencil.

G. G. TAYLOR, Editor.

THE JUNE MEETING

It was the privilege of the senior editor to attend what the Canadian brethren call the "June Meeting," which convened at Beamsville, Ont., about ten miles west of Niagara Falls. It began June 7th and closed on the 9th. This is a meeting held every year in the month of June and is attended very largely by the disciples scattered over the Canadian country. Its purpose is principally to cultivate acquaintanceship among the disciples, and to mutually edify one another by speeches on special subjects and preaching the Gospel. At this meeting large numbers were in attendance, there being quite a number of disciples in this section of Ontario. There were quite a number also from the more remote sections, even as far away as Meaford, on the Georgian Bay. I met about 15 Canadian preachers, mostly young men who had attended the Bible School at Nashville, Tenn. The most of the country in Canada is virgin missionary soil, at least, for us; and in such territory you generally find the type of men which the Nashville and Bowling Green schools turn out. These noble young men, like Paul, know how "to be in want," and "to endure hardness as good soldiers." They are living on about half what the average preacher does, and still they appeared to me "fairer, and they were fatter in flesh than all the youths which did eat of the king's meat"—i. e., King Edward's. They laughed and talked, and jollied, just as good naturedly as if they lived on the fat of the land. Thank God for such men. They stand out in striking contrast

with a class of young clergymen, specimens of which are frequently met with nowadays, with kid gloves, plug hats and gold-headed canes—vain, empty-headed and hollow hearted coxcombs. If the Apostle Peter were living in these days of ministerial degeneracy and still retained the measure of expletive gifts with which he was endowed when he wrote the second chapter of his second epistle, he would find in these senseless blanks in society, these soulless blots on religion, subjects on which he might exhaust his full stock of invective energy, and conclude his discourse very truthfully by quoting from the Queen of Egypt, "The half hath never yet been told."

Bro. S. M. Jones, one of the pupils of the Bible School at Nashville, is located in Beamsville, and has begun a school of a similar character at this, his present home. It was fairly patronized during last year, and has the promise of better prospects for the coming session. Bro. Jones impressed me as a sincere, earnest and zealous young man. He is bold and aggressive; and in his life work seems to possess "the faith which takes no denial." There is no telling what amount of good might come from a school of this kind if the brotherhood would give it their sympathy and patronage. We pray that God's blessing may rest upon this and all such Christian endeavors.

At this meeting, I was rejoiced to take the hand of an old Kentucky friend and fellow laborer in the ministry. I refer to Bro. Wm. Neal, brother-in-law to Bro. James A. Harding, of Bowling Green Bible School. Bro. Neal is located at Meaford, where Bro. Harding whipped a Methodist preacher by the name of Wilkerson some years ago. He reports the church at Meaford in fine shape. He has been there for two years, and thinks he will remain there for good. We have a few members here in Plum Street Congregation who came from Meaford, and if these are fair samples, I can't blame Bro. Neal for being a little extravagant in his language when he speaks of the Meaford people.

Altogether, the "June meeting" was a very enjoyable and profitable meeting, and if I live to see another June I hope I may be able to meet with these good brethren again.

NEWS FROM PORTLAND, ME.

Letters received from Portland, Me., bring to us the sad intelligence of the death of two dear sisters in the little congregation located in that city.

Sister Robt. Hamilton and Sister Hezekiah Noyes have "laid their armor by," and now they "dwell in peace at home." These dear sisters were among the most intelligent and faithful in the little flock who gathered there, far away on the Atlantic coast, to worship after the manner of the apostolic church. The families of these deceased sisters have my deepest sympathy in their great sorrow. The writer spent five months with these faithful disciples during last

Local Department.

A. C. JACKSON,
EDITOR.

INTRODUCTORY.

The editor of this department shall endeavor to keep the readers posted concerning the work of the Churches of Christ in this city; report what they are doing and what they expect to do; censure and expose whatever may have a tendency to retard the plea for a return to Primitive Christianity; praise and encourage whatever is calculated to advance this glorious plea; and exhort all disciples to greater activity as the servants of Christ. Surely, the work proposed is much needed, and should be performed with the greatest fidelity. At the very outset, therefore, we most earnestly invoke the blessing of our Heavenly Father to rest upon us in the performance of the duties upon which we now enter.

PLUM ST. CHURCH OF CHRIST

Announcements: Lordsday—Breaking of Bread, 10:30 A. M.; Bible Study, 12:15 P. M.; Prayer and Praise, 7 o'clock; Preaching of Gospel, by A. C. Jackson, 7:45. Wednesday, Prayer and Praise, 3 P. M.

Bro. G. Y. Tickle, of Liverpool, England, whose presence made us happy some time ago, writes to the editor of the "Bible Advocate," published in Birmingham, England, as follows:

"Dear Bro. Oliver—I do not know that I can spend a Lord's Day afternoon in a strange city better than by writing you a few lines on my recent trip to Detroit. Owing to the repeated presence of our beloved Bro. John S. Gray at our annual meetings, many of us in Great Britain feel as if the church on Plum street was one of our own co-operation, and after my delightful experience last Fall, it was with a feeling akin to that of going home that I received the fraternal greetings of our brother in the railway depot three weeks ago.

Ever since my former visit to this country, when I hear or offer a prayer for brethren far away, it seems to materialize in the commodious and well-appointed meeting house on Plum St., and among the loyal brethren who there gather for worship. Four thousand miles away from home, in the midst of a lonesome and exhausting journey, a week's rest in the hospitality of the homes of brethren, enjoying the "fellowship of kindred minds," is indeed something to be remembered with joy and thanksgiving, a foretaste of the rest that remains. The recent visit was made all the more enjoyable by the presence in the city of Sister Madge Crockatt and her aunt, Sister Maggie Linn, of Glasgow.

On the Friday evening of our stay a reception and social meeting of the Primitive churches in Detroit was held in honor of the British visitors, and I had the pleasure of expressing the high opinion, love, and confidence we of the old country feel in respect to those brethren and sisters who, in Detroit especially, but in other places also in America, have remained faithful to the New Testament teaching and practice.

The church on Plum street is not content to carry on an active work in its own district alone, but maintains strong mission centers in different parts of the city. During my visit a new meeting room was opened in connection with one of these missions. This really beautiful and commodious house on Cameron avenue, which has been erected entirely at the expense of Bro. Gray, is in a new district of the city, among medium-sized houses, and seems to just fill a need in the neighborhood. I esteemed it an honor to be invited to give the first address in this new room, and to a large company spoke on the mission of a New Testament church. Bro. W. D. Campbell, of Toronto, whom many will remember as being present at the Nottingham A. M., preached afternoon and evening to crowded companies. May God richly bless this noble effort and give the churches great success.

I am in splendid health, and having a successful journey, and am longing to be home. With fraternal love to all, yours faithfully,

GILBERT Y. TICKLE.

We are certainly glad Bro. Tickle came among us. His sincere love, his elevated character, his forceful talks, his deep humility, and his firm loyalty to the New Testament, drew him very near to us. Should he ever visit this country again, Plum Street stands with open arms and warm hearts to receive him. His visit was both pleasant and profitable in the highest degree.

Our Friday Night Bible Class will be resumed in a few weeks. This, we are sure, will be good news to all of the young people, not only at Plum Street, but at the missions as well. Notwithstanding we were frequently interrupted last year, the work was most satisfactory and the attendance good. We hope, however, to have a much better class this year. Let every one get ready.

Like the church at Thessalonica, Plum Street intends to continue to "sound out the word." Under the blessing of our adorable Lord, we hope to soon have missions at Barker Creek, Calumet, and a number of other places. Brethren, we need your encouragement in this work; and above all, we need your prayers.

To sow the "good and incorruptible seed" in destitute fields cannot be commended too highly; while engaged in this work, however, we should not forget to strengthen those points where we have already gathered a nucleus of disciples. Places like Pontiac and Ludington need attention. Here are opportunities for the young men to exercise their talents. Let the elders direct this work.

Brother Otto, whom Plum Street first sent to Japan, baptized thirteen persons last month. In view of his success, he is evidently the right man in the right place. As you are no doubt aware, we make a special offering for the maintenance of this work on the second Lordsday of each month. Let us show an appreciation of his efforts by making our next contribution as large as possible. May the Lord bless him as he labors in that dark country.

Bro. James Lakin, whose illness has been announced orally, is still confined to his bed in Harper Hospital. Do not forget to cheer him with your presence. If you can not go to the Hospital, write a letter of sympathy or send flowers. Such deeds

of kindness are easy to perform, and they are never forgotten. Bro. Lakin has our sympathy and prayers.

David said he was glad when they said unto him: "Come, let us go up to the house of the Lord." He was glad when the hour for worship came. So it should be with us. And if we are thus anxious, we will not be late. Of course there are circumstances under which any of us may be tardy; but this is the exception, not the rule. Most of us can be on time if we will make the effort. We should be so filled with love for the Savior, that our hearts would long for the hour of worship to come.

VINEWOOD AVE. CHURCH OF CHRIST.

Announcements: Lordsday—Breaking of Bread, 10:30 A. M.; Bible Study, 12:15 P. M.; Prayer and Praise, 7 o'clock; Preaching of Gospel, 7:45. Wednesday, Prayer and Praise, 8 P. M.

The Vinewood Avenue congregation is making splendid progress. All of the meetings are well attended and every service is characterized by enthusiasm. But why should the work not be thus alive? With such a large number of young disciples, full of life and energy, it should be enthusiastic in the highest degree. There is one thing about these noble young people which we wish to commend; namely, their loyalty to the New Testament teaching. Where it speaks, they are content to speak; and where it is silent, they are content to be silent. Consequently it is recognized among them that no human organization, such as the Y. P. S. C. E., with its creed or constitution and by-laws in addition to the New Testament, is necessary to carry on the work of the Lord among young christians. These young followers of Christ rightly understand the church to be God's Endeavor Society and that when they obeyed the Gospel, they pledged themselves to endeavor to live the christian life, honor Christ, and work for the salvation of souls. Hence, there is a meeting of the church every Lordsday evening at seven o'clock, in which every young disciple is expected to take part. We rejoice to know that all, especially the young men, take an interest in this meeting. We have reason to believe that many of these young men will develop into successful speakers, and that Vinewood will some day be one of the leading congregations in the city.

The singing class, conducted by Bro. J. Conner, which did so much to improve the singing of the church last year, will be resumed in a few weeks. This effort cannot receive too much encouragement. Let as many as possible attend, and thus make the class a success.

It should be remembered that after our series of meetings two years ago, the Vinewood congregation was scripturally set in order. It is, therefore, no longer a mission. And now that it has become independent, it should begin to "sound out the word." It occurs to us that it could establish and sustain a mission over on Fort Street near Fort Wayne. We offer this only as a suggestion, to be considered by the elders, who should lead and oversee all things pertaining to the church. A church should not be satisfied with having the Gospel preached within the walls of its own meeting house alone; it is the duty of every congregation to scatter the good and "incorruptible seed" in destitute fields.

CAMERON AVENUE MISSION.

Announcements: Lordsday—Breaking of Bread, 10:30 A. M.; Bible Study, 12:15 P. M.; Prayer and Praise, 7 o'clock; Preaching of Gospel, by G. G. Taylor, 7:45. Thursday, Prayer and Praise, 8 P. M.

This congregation is rapidly coming to the front; indeed, we should not be surprised if it becomes the main church in the city in a few years. The deep piety of its members, their zeal to maintain the truth as it is revealed in the New Testament, and their love for one another, will inevitably draw to it the true-hearted of the community. We have reason to believe, therefore, that Cameron Avenue is rapidly becoming a bright and shining light in the Northeast part of the city.

As a result of the presentation of the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, three noble persons have been baptized into Christ recently. We humbly trust and fervently pray that these new-born babes may feed upon the sincere milk of the word and grow thereby. It is not enough to come into the church; we must add to our faith virtue; to virtue, knowledge; to knowledge, temperance; to temperance, patience; to patience, godliness; to godliness, brotherly-kindness; and to brotherly-kindness, charity. That these young disciples may add all of the christian graces, is our humble prayer.

Brother Charlie Whiteman, who is spending his vacation in Canada, is greatly missed. We wish him a happy visit, and shall be glad to welcome him home again.

The prayer meeting is well attended and is intensely interesting. It is especially gratifying to see nearly all of the young men of the congregation present. Let those who are older encourage them to take part and thus develop their talents. No one can attend this mid-week meeting and not be greatly benefited.

It has been suggested that the members visit, not only among themselves, but among their neighbors and friends. This is right, show an interest in those who are not members, invite them to the meetings, and your influence will be much more effective. Disciples should not expect a preacher to do all of the visiting.

It is encouraging to note how the young men of Cameron Avenue are developing; and yet, they have no human society in which to exercise themselves. The church is sufficient. It is a great mistake for churches to adopt human societies. In the constitution and by-laws of the "Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor," page 8, article 11, we have the following statement: "This society, being a part of the church, owes allegiance only and altogether to the church with which it is connected." Then, the society as a whole is a part of the church; whatever is a part of the society, therefore, is a part of the church; associate members are a part of the society; associated members have never repented, confessed, or been baptized; therefore, persons who have never repented, confessed, or been baptized, form a part of the church. How can a church, claiming to plead for a restoration of Primitive Christianity, adopt such? It is simply out of the question. The church, as is abundantly illustrated at Cameron Avenue, is a sufficient organization for the development of young men.