

Messenger and Visitor

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A PERIL AND ITS REMEDY.

In a recent issue we called attention to the increasing prevalence of cigarette smoking and the evil effects of the habit. These effects were shown to be of a very serious character, and though the habit has not yet become so common in Canada as in the United States and some other countries, it is apparently becoming more and more prevalent and has already gained a sufficient hold upon the youth of the country to justify strenuous endeavor to correct an evil which, if not effectively restrained, seems likely to work most serious harm in this and coming generations.

In two ways, especially the cigarette works evil. In the first place it presents to boys an easy and seductive way of learning to smoke. And perhaps a boy cannot be greatly blamed for having no objection to participate in what apparently affords so large a measure of enjoyment to many of his elders. Many a boy who could not easily secure cigars or a pipe—and who if he sought acquaintance with the weed by this method might not find the experience exhilarating—can easily obtain a package of cigarettes and by this means secure an easy entrance to the smoker's paradise. The cigarette accordingly represents a strong influence to bring boys under the dominion of the tobacco habit at an age when, admittedly, it is highly injurious to their physical and mental health and fatal to their full development.

But the cigarette works harm of a still more serious character in another way—namely by inducing in those who become addicted to its use, the inhaling habit which, as was shown in a previous article, produces ruinous effects on mind and body. By this habit the tobacco smoke is drawn into the lungs and the poisons with which the weed is loaded deposited in the circulation. And of this ruinous habit the cigarette is the nurse. It is said to be very seldom that a smoker begins the inhaling habit with a pipe or cigar, but nearly every cigarette inhaler soon extends his operations, so that in a comparatively short time he includes pipe and cigars in this abnormal and highly dangerous method of using tobacco.

In view therefore of the very serious nature of the evils threatened, and actually present from the use of the cigarette, it is certainly a matter of importance to enquire what safeguards, if any, are available against the inroads of this vice. There are laws in some parts of the United States, and also in this country, forbidding the sale of cigarettes to boys under a certain age. Such laws may doubtless have some little influence in restricting the sale of the article, but they are so easily evaded and so difficult of enforcement as to be of comparatively little value. Much, certainly, may be accomplished by proper parental training and influence, and by special instruction in the public schools and Sunday schools in reference to the evils of cigarette smoking, and much also may be done through anti-cigarette leagues to create a sentiment against indulgence in the habit. Boys who have had the perils attendant upon cigarette smoking forcibly impressed upon their minds are much less likely to become victims of the vice than those who have had no such instruction. A strong influence against the habit will be created if employers of labor refuse to employ boys who smoke cigarettes. If boys are plainly made to see not only that the use of cigarettes will handicap them in their life struggle by diminishing their natural forces, but will also mean that many doors of opportunity will be closed to them, they will be more careful to avoid the way of temptation.

But is there any good reason why the boys of Canadian cities, towns and villages should be subject to the temptations and perils which the manufacture and sale of the cigarette involves? If it is true, as honest and competent witnesses testify, that the ruinous effects of this vice have become widespread in the United States, so that not only many boys in the schools, and students in the colleges, but also many professors, physicians and others, are helpless victims of this vice, if in short cigarette smoking constitutes an influence which, where it is extensively indulged, is sure

to result in very serious injury to the brain, the drawn and the moral well being of the nation, then why in the name of everything philanthropic and patriotic should the importation, manufacture and sale of cigarettes be tolerated in Canada? The prohibition of the cigarette would not infringe upon any legitimate right or privilege of the smoker. He would still have his pipe and his cigar, he would still be able to smoke and even chew and spit to his hearts content, and we should expect that there are few even among the most ardent devotees of the weed who would wish to see their sons following in their footsteps before they have attained the years and stature of manhood. Certain tobaccoists would object of course. It would interfere with their trade, and it would interfere with the business of educating smokers. But surely there can be no question as to whose interests should be chiefly considered in this connection—the interests of a few rich tobaccoists or those of the boys who are being ruined and the nation which must suffer from the ruin of its boys?

Editorial Notes.

—It is a long time since the editor's drawer has been so well filled with contributions as at the present. Many of these, we are sure, will be perused with much interest by the readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR. We curtail editorial matter as much as possible this week in order to make room for contributed articles, and we beg to assure a number of valued correspondents whose articles have not yet appeared that as soon as practicable they shall be brought in touch with our readers.

—Including to movements toward union—accomplished or in progress—among Christian denominations *The Watchman*, of Boston, says, "the Baptists and Free Baptists of the Maritime Provinces have, through their representatives, agreed on a basis of union." This does not quite correctly describe the present situation. It is true that a basis of union was agreed upon by a joint committee of the two bodies seventeen years ago. The basis was endorsed in a slightly amended form by one of the bodies, but was rejected by the other. But within the past year a proposal for union has been taken under consideration again, and, as will be seen by a note from the secretary of the new joint committee, which appears in another column, a new basis of union is in course of preparation, which it is hoped will commend itself to the acceptance of the committee as a whole.

—The shock of earthquake which was felt in St. John at a few minutes past two o'clock on Monday morning seems to have traversed the whole Atlantic coast region. While the shock would not probably have caused much remark in countries where earthquake shocks are frequent, it was perhaps the most serious that has been experienced in these Provinces within a generation. Those who were awake at the time say that there were two distinct shocks, the first lasting several seconds, and succeeded after a few seconds by another but less severe shock. The seismic disturbance was sufficiently pronounced to awaken many persons from sleep, cause dishes to rattle, and make some persons feel faint and dizzy. Very naturally for the moment it caused considerable alarm among that part of the population who were conscious of the disturbance. The vibrations seem to have been somewhat more violent in Maine than in New Brunswick. We do not hear of any damage having been done in this part of the country.

—The number of Protestant Christians in Japan at the beginning of 1902 was, according to the latest statistical reports, 46,634. Roman Catholics numbered 55,824 and Greek Catholics 26,680, making a total of 129,138. As the numbers given in connection with the Protestant churches include communicants only, the Christian population of Japan is no doubt considerably larger than the figures given above would indicate. Still, as compared with the forty-five millions of the Empire, it seems but a drop in the bucket. However, statistics show that the conversions to Christianity are increasing at a much more rapid rate than the growth of the population. Also in education and in the public life of Japan Christianity has become a highly important factor. At the universities and the higher grades of schools Christian teachers and pupils are largely represented and the public thought, and life of Japan is being gradually saturated with Christian thought and expression. One member of the Cabinet, two judges of the Supreme Court, two Presidents of the Lower House of Parliament, and scores of subordinate officers in the State have been professors of Christianity. In the present Parliament the President and thirteen members are Christians. There are 155 Christian officers in the army, about three per cent of the total corps and the two best battleships are commanded by Christians.

—An informal meeting of ministers and laymen of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational denominations was lately held in Toronto, to consider the question of a union of these several bodies in Canada. The meeting which, we understand, was the outcome of action previously taken by representative organizations of the three denominations, was attended by a number of leading men from the different bodies, and was, it is said, entirely harmonious in spirit. Such a meeting would hardly get beyond the discussion of the principle of the desirability of

union, and in this, general agreement might be expected. When the question of the conditions of union shall come to be discussed serious difficulties will probably be encountered. Such a union, if it could be brought about, is certainly greatly to be desired, both in the interests of the principle of Christian brotherhood and unity and because of the great practical gain which would accrue from combining the denominational forces for evangelization at home and abroad. We should hail with great pleasure the day of union between the evangelical pedobaptist bodies in Canada, but whatever Presbyterians and Congregationalists, or Methodists and Congregationalists may do, we are inclined to think that the consummation of union between Presbyterians and Congregationalists is not to be expected in the immediate future. However, it may, and probably will, come by and by.

—The war news from the Far East continues to be for the most part meagre and of a very uncertain character. There was a report early in the week that the Russian Admiral Makoff had blocked the entrance to Port Arthur, leaving only a very narrow channel, by sinking vessels at the mouth of the harbor, and also a report that the Russian Port Arthur squadron had got to sea, presumably with the intention of making connection with the Vladivostok squadron. At present writing there has been nothing to confirm or to contradict this report which if true would indicate a bold, if not reckless, move on the part of the Russian Admiral. There are statements to the effect that the bombardment of Port Arthur by the Russian fleet, reported last week, was very much more destructive than the previous accounts had indicated. There is, however, no certainty as to the truth of these reports. A correspondent of the *London Times*, who professes to have correct information, states that the defences of Port Arthur are very strong and the place will be able to offer indefinite resistance. The guns of the *Retozhan* and *Cesarvitch* are now mounted on the coast batteries. This, if true, would seem to mean that the two largest Russian battleships are definitely *hors du combat*. The latest reports received up to time of going to press add nothing of importance to the news which had been previously received but contradict a report which came by way of Mukden, that in an engagement which had taken place on the Yalu river the Russians had taken 1800 Japanese prisoners. There is no reason to believe that the Japanese have advanced as far as the Yalu. Their outposts are believed to be in the neighborhood of Auju which is some fifty miles south of the Yalu.

Home Missions in New Brunswick.

BY THE SECRETARY.

Perhaps, none of our missionaries have ever found their experiences more trying than during the winter just past. The weather has been very cold, with scarcely any of the usual milder periods while the snow has also been deep and roads heavy.

To add to this the first five or six Sundays of the New Year were unusually stormy, and congregations in consequence invariably small. Every missionary has had to subjoin a statement of this kind in giving his report. In many places the regular services had to be abandoned altogether.

By the aid of the I. C. R. and other lines however I managed to visit a number of Home Mission Fields, as also to supply several churches some of which have passed the entire winter without pastoral care. Among the latter have been Hampton, Elgin, Havelock, Whinston and Waterborough, where large and important interests have been lying vacant. While our evangelist Bro. Hayward gave his chief attention to the western half of the province I have been striving to fill in a few gaps in the Eastern part.

IN THE NORTH.

One of the important home mission points visited was at the head of the Bay Chaleur. The French up there say "Chaleur" means heat or warmth; but the man whether Frenchman or Englishman, who said these waters or the country either should be called warm, must have been badly out. It certainly was not so during my visit in the month of February.

At Campbellton, Bro. Kierstead has for some time been doing good work. His field extends in one direction several miles up the Restigouche, and in another as many miles to the north and east into Qu bec, just above those warm waters I have referred to. A fine opening has been made along the line of railway to New Richmond, and several of the Campbellton members are found in this part. Bro. K. thinks two students could be profitably employed here during the summer, and it would seem a pity if we shall not be able to give them to so promising a field. We must remember this is new ground for Baptists. They have no outlying constituencies around them, already ours as in other parts of New Brunswick. These districts have to be taken by hand to hand effort, and evangelized from the start, just as the fathers did in the southern part of the province two generations ago. In the town of Campbellton we have a fine congregation, all alive and greatly in earnest. They seem ever ready for the next opportunity. Just now evangelist J. Harry Kirg is assisting Bro. Kier-