

MESSENGER and VISITOR.

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B. McC. Black, Editor.
J. H. Saunders, Business Manager.

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Messenger and Visitor

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1890.

KEEP THEM OPEN.

This is about the time when in many Sunday schools the Superintendent begins to talk of closing up the school for the winter. "The days are growing short," he says, "the roads will be getting bad, the scholars will not be able to get out, and we think we had better close the school for this season. So you will all please come next Sunday, as it will be the last time the school will meet until next summer." So the school takes a vacation of half a year or more.

This closing of the Sunday school for so large a portion of the time we must regard as a calamity which ought if possible to be avoided. No doubt there are some cases in which it is expedient to close for the winter. But in most instances, we believe, it needs only a little perseverance and self-sacrifice to keep the school open all the year round. The movement to close does not generally, we believe, originate with the scholars. They go to the day school all through the rough and cold months, and are none the worse for it. They can go to the Sunday school as well, and so long as the superintendent and the teachers are at their posts showing a hearty interest in the continuance of the school and the welfare of the scholars, so long they are not likely to find their classes deserting them. The school that is shut up for half the year loses not simply six months time, it loses in character and quality as well. When the teachers come back to resume their work it is hardly possible for them to bring with them that heartiness and strength which should belong to those who are to engage successfully in the Christian endeavor. Not only the winter, but perhaps half the summer, is gone before the school has fairly pulled its forces together again and got in line for work. The scholars are at a disadvantage because they have missed what very likely has been the most valuable half of the lessons of the year, and it seems to them scarcely worth while to take any great interest in anything so short lived as a summer Sunday school. The one grand event is the picnic, and one can hardly blame them for thinking that the Sunday school exists for the picnic and not the picnic for the Sunday school. The teachers likewise, of the summer Sunday schools are at a disadvantage. Those who are ready to lay aside their work at the point at which it begins to involve some hardship and self-denial can scarcely be really wholehearted in it at any time. The hibernating Sunday school teacher cannot be expected to attain to any great measure of efficiency in his work. He misses the discipline of constant study and practice. He must, in a measure, lose interest in his class, and fail to cultivate that intimate acquaintance with his scholars which is essential to successful work. We write "he" and "his" in these sentences, using the masculine pronoun as representative, though, as a matter of fact, the teacher is quite as likely to be feminine as masculine.

Some measure of sacrifice and self-denial may be required on the part of superintendent and teachers to keep the school open through the winter; but what is the good of us as Christians, if we have no capacity for sacrifice and self-denial for the sake of our Lord and those to whom he makes us ministers. Let the boys go into winter quarters if they will and seek their paws for half the year. The world can get along just as well without them any way. But Christians should not consider themselves as belonging to the hibernating species. If there is anything that ought to keep alive and full of vitality all the year round, it is the Sunday school.

THANKSGIVING DAY.

Thursday, the 6th day of November, proximo, has been proclaimed by the Government of this country as a day of Thanksgiving to Almighty God in acknowledgment of the blessings of the year. In view of this we are moved to make the following remarks and suggestions:

We ought to observe Thanksgiving Day. True, the State has no power and no right to compel us to worship God. Church and State have separate offices. But regardless of all advice from our rulers we shall do well to assemble and call on the name of our Lord, to offer devout thanksgiving.

We have abundant gifts for which to be thankful. Let our readers think for a moment of the gifts of the earth bestowed by the harvest, and all the accompanying gifts that make the harvest a blessing. In all the multitude of quiet homes among us, where the timely fruits

of the earth are enjoyed, there is no fear of the robberies that prevail where the Gospel has not come. Peace, order, security are ours. Thus our gifts are threefold.

We owe these gifts to God's beneficence. The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof. He sends rain and fruitful seasons. Apart from His thought and the exercise of His power we could obtain none of these useful things. We are indebted to Him for them all.

Our God receives our acknowledgments. He commands us to offer thanksgiving. Reason also suggests it. The Christian desires to praise his Lord for all the kindnesses shown. The acknowledgment of God's hand in temporal things conduces to the maintenance and spread of true religion. Men are prone to forget and deny God's work in nature. They sing His praises; they soon forget His works. Let Christians announce before all the people their faith in a God who lives, and works, and upholds all things. This will help to check materialistic thought.

It will also promote gratitude. To express the grateful feelings of the soul is to increase those feelings. Further spiritual blessings can be granted when the Christian opens his heart and lips in praising His God for mercies shown.

A Thanksgiving service should be provided for. Let it be expected that the people will assemble; let the sermon be as good as can be made; let the service be the best we can give to our Lord. The occasion is worthy of it—demands it. The occasion furnishes themes for discourses which the ordinary service does not so well provide. It is a good opportunity for the churches to make themselves felt as leaders of public opinion on moral and religious questions.

The collection should not be forgotten. Bring an offering, and come into the Lord's courts. Give back to the Lord some portion of what He has given you. Let it be applied to some good purpose. Our Lord showed interest in little children, whom he took into his arms and blessed. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. He is therefore interested in them now. There is an Infant's Home at Halifax that will receive and use your offerings in harmony with the spirit of our Saviour, whose affection for the young is not confined to the precious darlings that make glad the tables in our comfortable homes on this thanksgiving day, but goes out to the poor and to those who have no helper. And there are other people, old and young, outside of Halifax, on whom kindness may be exercised, of which our Lord may, at last, inasmuch as ye did it to one of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.

THE CONVENTION AT WOODSTOCK, ONTARIO.

As noticed in the last issue of the Messenger and Visitor, the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec met with the church in Woodstock, on Thursday, 16th inst. The meetings continued until the following Tuesday. The last issue of the Canadian Baptist has a full report of the proceedings, and we shall endeavor to call from it such things as may especially interest our readers.

With our brethren in Ontario the denominational paper, as we understand it, is related to the body in the same way that their missionary and educational enterprises are, that is to say, it is under the control of a Board appointed by the Convention. The Directors of the Standard Publishing Company presented their report to the Convention. In connection with the Canadian Baptist a Book department is conducted by the company, the report from which was found rather unsatisfactory, for while the paper had a margin on the right side of \$669 the Book department showed a loss of \$1,690. A good deal of discussion took place in connection with this report, and some proposals were made looking to ward changes in the manner of conducting the book department, but the matter was finally left in the hands of the Board.

Notice had been given at the last annual meeting of the Convention of a motion to the effect that "a standing regulation of the Convention be passed declaring that the appointment of Home Mission Superintendent, the Secretary of the Foreign Mission and the Editor of the Canadian Baptist be made in open Convention." After some discussion, in which the generally expressed opinion was that the change proposed was not desirable, the motion was put the Convention and lost.

The report of the Home Mission Board was read by Rev. J. P. McEwen. It emphasized the need of men. There were eighty pastoral churches, thirty-six of the number being comparatively strong and well located. The year's work had been gratifying. Wherever missionaries had been placed much good had been done and many souls converted. The receipts of the year were \$17,518, the disbursements, \$15,967.

The Educational report was read on Saturday morning, by Hon. John Dryden. "Kindly reference was made to the loss of Prof. McGregor, the removal of Dr. McVicar, the decease of Dr. Castle and the eminent services rendered by him," and hopeful words were spoken in reference to the professors newly elected.

Students enrolled are, respectively, Toronto Baptist College, 32; Woodstock, 151; Moulton, 144; total 327.

The manner in which this report was received gave evidence of some friction in connection with the establishment of the Arts department of the University. In amendment to the motion to adopt, the following resolution was offered:

"That, while adopting the report and pledging ourselves to a hearty support of all the branches of our University, we instruct our Boards to submit all educational departures involving possible financial burdens on the denomination, to this Convention, before calling them into existence."

This amendment was discussed at considerable length. Some of the brethren thought that the Board's action in establishing the Arts college had been premature. It was submitted that the expenditure required for this purpose would seriously interfere with the theological work that it would have been wiser to wait for a time and allow the funds to accumulate; that the Board before taking this step should have submitted the matter to the Convention; and that the course adopted would be likely to alienate the hearts of the people and thus weaken the educational work of the denomination for the future.

On the other side it was contended that the Board of Governors had not overstepped the authority vested in them; that the opening of the Arts College was a matter definitely settled at Guelph, and the time of that opening was a matter of detail which the Board itself had a right to decide on; that Senator McMaster had intended the establishment of an Arts course, and had not thought of delay in order to accumulate funds; that to pass the resolution would be virtually a vote of censure, and that the other Boards had never been so criticized. The vote resulted in the loss of the amendment and the adoption of the report.

Saturday evening was devoted to a public educational meeting with platform speeches, the speakers being Principal Huston, of Woodstock, Dr. Newman, of McMaster, Dr. Saunders, of Halifax, and Dr. T. H. Rand, of McMaster.

THE AUTUMNAL MEETINGS.

The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland has held its Autumnal meeting this year in Cardiff. It was a curious coincidence that the autumnal gathering of the Congregational Union of England and Wales should also be held the previous week in the same County of Glamorgan.

The South Wales Daily News—for a copy of which we are indebted to a friend—in its leader of October 7, while bidding the Baptist Union welcome to Cardiff, remarks:

"The Baptists, we need hardly say, have a splendid record in regard to their foreign as well as their home work. Like their twin denomination, the Congregationalists, they are strong in the field of foreign missions. Among their preachers they have and have had some of the most powerful and eloquent men that have ever appeared in the pulpit or upon the public platform. Any church might be pardoned for envying their claim to that perhaps most gifted of all pulpit orators, Robert Hall, whose name and name can never die."

Further on we find these sentences:

"Politically they are intensely Radical. They have had their early training in the school of adversity, and their experience has made them strong in the possession of sound and strong backbone in which there are no visible elements of decay. They will contend for the faith that is in them to the end. This is their prominent characteristic, whether we have regard to their distinguished doctrine, their Nonconformity, or their vindication and defence of the cause of civil and religious liberty. . . . To their credit it must be said that they have been true to the people. They have espoused the cause of the people and publicly helped them in their struggles. We have heard a great deal about the 'down grade movement' as an alarming symptom in the Baptist pulpit. Mr. Spurgeon, the most popular pulpit orator of the day, is mainly answerable for this; but Mr. Spurgeon, great and good man as he is, has rarely, if ever, been a prominent figure at the meetings of the Baptist Union, or co-operated closely with his brethren in the ministry. We do not say this from any desire or intention of fault-finding, but only for the sake of pointing out that Mr. Spurgeon's comparative isolation from the main body must seriously detract from the importance or value of any judgment which he may pronounce upon the Baptist pulpit generally."

The London Freeman gives up a large part of its issue of Oct. 10, and in addition a supplement of twelve pages, to a report of the proceedings of the Union. This report with the Freeman's comments make very interesting reading, and we should be glad, if it were possible, to place the whole in the hands of our readers.

The time of the meetings, which were extended through several days, seems to have been occupied principally with addresses on various topics vitally related to Christian thought and effort. These addresses, carefully prepared and delivered by representative men, could not fail to be rich in inspiration for the body.

An interesting feature of the meetings was the presentation of an address by thirty-five Nonconformist ministers of Cardiff. This address gave expression to sentiments of gratitude and admiration in view of what the Baptists are and what they have done, warm fellowship for them in their struggles for political and religious liberty, and desire for a closer union of all Evangelical churches.

The first day seems to have been occupied with devotional exercises and opening addresses, with a grand temperance meeting, under the auspices of the Total Abstinence Association, in the evening. Tuesday was mission day, and in that which the chief interest of the meetings centred. Missionary sermons, addresses by missionaries and others, and a missionary dinner, which is a thing of time-honored custom, were a part of the order of the day. The sermons and addresses were evidently of great interest.

From so rich a feast, it seems a meager thing to offer our readers only a few morsels taken here and there almost at random, but that is all we are able to do. Following is the report of the address of Rev. Charles Jordan, missionary to India:

"There is talk of a crisis in India with its 250 millions of people, and with its wonderful riches. There are many things to discourage and distress at times. It is certain that Satan has been and is stirring up an extensive opposition to the Gospel. This opposition comes in the form of idol books and sometimes in the form of false teachers. Only two or three years ago Calcutta and other parts of India were visited by some Theosophists (as they called themselves), who endeavored to persuade the people that they could put them in communication with a 'Great Spirit' who lived away in the Himalaya mountains, and who had inspired their sages. The scepticism of Europe has in some manner affected some of the educated young men, especially at the great centres, in the cities of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras especially. But certain things are especially encouraging in the work in the India of to-day. One of the most satisfactory features is that the governing classes and men in authority no longer give any opposition to missionary work. In fact, so far from opposition, we are continually receiving their aid and their sympathy. Sir Richard Temple, one of the most active lieutenant-governors in Bengal, said that wherever he went he found that the missionary, so far from being disliked, was positively popular. The spread of education in India is a great help to the spread of the Gospel. Increased facilities for travelling in India contribute to the spread of Christian truth. These great advantages are, of

course, being fostered by the government. But native teachers and preachers are being raised up in India to assist in the great work, and many of them are of splendid power and intelligence. There are now many native converts doing all in their power to extend the kingdom of God in India."

This, again, is a clipping from the thrilling address of Rev. J. G. Darby, missionary to Africa:

"Their brethren in India could tell of good work, of souls saved, of men and women who had been living in darkness being brought into the light and liberty of the Gospel. He could tell of nothing of that sort on the Upper Congo, where he had been with two of his brethren. Of the three, he alone was privileged of God to come home. They had no souls saved yet; but they could tell of hard work, and they had not been living lives of luxury. He was glad to say, however, that things were not as they were three years ago. Looking ahead into the picture, they saw the Lord Himself coming in all His glory and might and gathering to His great bleeding heart those dark sons of Africa. The day would come when the light of the Gospel would shine in gloom, and Africa would stand forth in the light of the Gospel of Christ, and men and women that now cried for each other's blood would worship the King in His beauty. Instead of doing as they now did, cutting off the heads of their bodies and pressing their feet on the blood squirt into the air, they would kneel down and worship Christ. Had they only seen some of the things he had seen, and heard the cry of a mother as she was being tied hand and foot by her cruel husband, flung into the bottom of a canoe, and carried away to be sold as a slave, had they seen children standing on the beach with tears rolling down their faces, and weeping for their mother thus cruelly torn from them, they would know what it was to feel for those people, they would know what it was to determine to go there and live and work and die for them if they could be brought into light and life. Many reverses had been met with. They had looked at the great Congo where the little steamer had ploughed her way captured by its noble Grenfell, they had heard of the millions of people found on the banks of the stream who were living without God and hope. They had seen babes taken and stretched on the ground and their little heads severed from their bodies, and the mother weeping for her children—no hope—no hope. They had seen their brethren stricken down by their side, and man after man step into the gap to die. There were men in Wales, England, Scotland, and Ireland willing to go there, and they could help them to do it. They that had the money must give it, and those that had no money should get down on their knees and pray until Africa was delivered. Those young men that had energy, backbone, and fire, should do their utmost until the gloom was dispelled, and the whole of the Congo was won for Christ."

On the occasion of the dinner above referred to a number of speakers were heard, the most interesting address, according to the Freeman, being that of the Archbishop of Llandaff, Rev. John Griffiths, B. D., who was present as a guest. A few sentences from this address will give an idea of its spirit and character:

"It gives me very great pleasure, indeed, to be here amongst you to-day. I know that the history of the very great body to which you belong is a very interesting one. It is a history of very great courage and self-denial; it is a history of labour, and of facing even death for the accomplishment of a purpose. You have occupied a sphere in Christendom of a most interesting character; and it is quite true (you will pardon me for saying so, but I am giving you the impressions that are present to my mind, and my memory may be faulty); that you have been occupying a sphere of isolation. I do not find any fault with that, because you had to fight for the maintenance of particular views to which you attach the very greatest importance. You have fought great battles, but these are not under the shadow of kings and states, but under the banner of your own convictions; and I believe you have fought them with the honest consciousness that in fighting, you are doing the right thing in endeavouring to accomplish the ends upon which your hearts are set. I honour you for that very much. I honour you, too, for the work you have done in the past; and if you would allow me with open heart—for Welshmen have open hearts—I would express the sincere wish that isolation should be less marked in the future than it has been in the past. . . . I believe, gentlemen, that we have a far larger union of spirit than people give us credit for; but I do plead for visible union to a larger extent than people have given credit for in the past. I plead for it because I believe: the world demands it; I plead for it because society is crying out for it; I plead for it at this table-day because I believe success in missions abroad depends in a very large measure on our presenting from home a visible front. I thank you, sir, for listening to me. The words I have spoken are words that come from my heart, and they are words which continually find a place in my humble supplication and prayers. You have noble names written for you; that you have, and we are proud of them. We are proud of the Bedford tinker who was at the root and banner of Indian missions, and that greatest divine of the present century, Robert Hall of Bristol, who look upon your church with some degree of Welsh pride as being engraved upon it the never-to-be-forgotten name of the apostolic preacher Christmas Evans, a man who in his dying hours seemed to have caught the spirit of the great Jewish prophet who thought he was going home to heaven in a chariot, for the last words he uttered were, 'Drive on.' I thank you for listening to me, and for allowing me to be one of your number; and God grant that every distinction in the various churches to which we belong may be merged in one, with the strong desire to push forward the kingdom of the Redeemer and rescue the world from sin and misery and bring it into the sweet captivity of the grace of God."

Questions.

1. Is it according to Baptist usage for two or three ministers at a district meeting to ordain a man to the office of the ministry, no notice having previously been given and the meeting being for an entirely different purpose?

2. Ought the members of a Baptist church to be countenanced in taking part in a series of meetings held by Methodist ministers, it being the evident design of such meetings to break down Baptist influence? W. P.

1. Such a proceeding must be regarded as quite irregular and could only be justified under very exceptional circumstances.

2. It is difficult to see how members of Baptist churches should be countenanced in committing denominational suicide, and it is about equally difficult to believe that they should be willing to do so.

Now is the time to subscribe. Send \$1.00 and receive the Messenger and Visitor from this date until the end of Oct.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNION, THE REV. JAMES OWEN, DELIVERING HIS ADDRESS ON WEDNESDAY MORNING. HIS SUBJECT WAS "THE FREE CHURCHES AND THE PEOPLE."

The Freeman says of this address that "it was received with remarkable enthusiasm. The audience were now moved to the deepest emotion by passages of fervid eloquence, and now relieved itself by mirthful laughter at touches of humor most appropriately placed." We give below some paragraphs, which will give a general idea of its scope and character:

"It is necessary to remember, then, that uniformity is not essential to unity, and that below the surface we find a greater unity than the superficial observer would imagine. 'The unity' it has been said, 'exists in the one Object of worship, the one Object of alliance, the one Source of virtue, the one cementing principle of mutual love. The diversities are, and must be, as numerous and intractable as are the essential distinctions which nature, habit, and circumstances have created among men.' You might as well pass an Act of Uniformity for the trees and the flowers and the birds as for human minds and consciences. You may have in all churches the same form and order of religious services, the same lessons, the same prayers, the same hymns, the same sermons (even this is possible), and yet with this monotony there may be no real unity. And beneath a variety of forms, of names, of opinions, of systems of church polity, of services, there may be a real union of heart, of conviction, and of purpose. Differences of religious views are not always to be deplored; they lead to evidence of life, signs of an earnest search for truth, and of fidelity to conscience. I would welcome all, not caring by what name they may be called, who strive honestly to reclaim the moral wilderness and turn it into the garden of the Lord's ban, in stead of cultivating my own patch of ground. I am intent upon removing the plants from my neighbor's plot into my own, surely this is not labor for 'His name's sake.' We know that if the churches were drawn into closer fellowship with Christ and His kingdom, they would draw into closer fellowship with each other."

"Is not a closer union possible between the Free Evangelical churches of our country? Denominationalism may be inevitable. Different mental powers, different temperaments, different kinds and grades of training, and education, different domestic and social surroundings, will lead to different views of truth, and of different aspects of the same truth, and to different ecclesiastical preferences. But this is not inconsistent with union. The force is not because the trees differ in kind and shape and size. The ocean is no less one because it washes different shores, and is called by different names. The race is no less one because it is divided into different nations and tribes. The existence of different languages is a not incompatible with union and brotherly love; but bigotry, the narrow sectarian spirit, the purblind zeal that can discern no excellences in any beyond its own circle, this has ever been a bane and a hindrance to the unity of the church. Let me add, however, that I have little confidence in the person who loves everybody in general, and nobody in particular; who loves every country under the sun, and no country specially; who loves every church and extension, and no church particularly; the camp-meet Christian who wanders everywhere and remains nowhere long."

"As Baptists, we cherish, I trust, a loyal spirit towards our denomination, our one denomination into which we are thankful the two sections of 'General' and 'Particular' are being merged. If there is a good reason for its existence, then it calls for the hearty devotion of its adherents; and I trust that not one of our ministers is guilty of the sin of silence in regard to it and need pleading and importance of baptism. Let us have a question of loyalty to Christ; not of much water or little water, but of reverence for the authority of Christ, and of obedience to His will. He says, 'Preach—declare the glad tidings—make disciples—baptize.' Preach the Gospel to the caravan in the desert, where no sacred place is available for baptism; preach it to the sufferer who cannot submit to baptism; preach it to the dying one in whose breast an outward ordinance might encourage a vain hope. No rite, whether administered by a priest or a bore, is anyone a Christian. 'The Kingdom of God is within you.' It is not 'eating or drinking, or any external observance; it is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.' But baptism is a symbol of the truth proclaimed in those words, and symbols are valuable. 'Did not the whole Hungarian nation rise, like some tumultuous moon-stirred Atlantic, when Kaiser Joseph pocketed their Iron Crown, an implement, as was sagaciously observed, in size and commercial value little differing from a horseshoe? The flag of an army is more than a rag of different colors; to insult that flag is to insult the army; to capture that flag is to dishonor the army. The wedding ring, the key of a city, the sceptre of a king, is a symbol expressing ideas which words could not convey. And so with baptism, it is a symbol of the surrender of the nature to God, the whole nature; and when we are immersed in the name of the Triune Jehovah, we declare that our entire being—body, soul, and spirit, shall be devoted to Him. In this, as in all other matters, we would be true to Christ."

"Barnwell said, 'Taken as a class the Baptists are the Christian impracticables (not using the word in an evil sense) individuals of the highest and most perfect degree. They are each a kind of church by himself, holding his minutest convictions as stern immovable fatalities. They are the intolerant, so to speak, of individualism, sacrificing to it communion, and submerging under it, to a great degree, the doctrine of the sacred rights as Bushnell's impression of the strict communion Baptists of America; this would be his impression, doubtless, of the sturdy Baptists of Wales. But he adds this expression of his esteem for them: 'Such manifestly are the men to be foremost in asserting the sacred rights of conscience. They did it in England, they did it here; they have done it everywhere.' Loyalty to our own denomination is perfectly consistent with the union for which I plead."

The next morning steps to Indian Harbors the friends expecting in the afternoon gathered in His preached an earnest warning to a large crowd close of which a collection towards defraying the delegation, amounting was also paid to the \$17.30 for the Convention. It was interesting to committee at their far, arranged to ask the district to endorse a given sum. \$200 this church. It is apostolic injunction gatherings when I our churches. Here of faithful, willing might feel it a joy to The Seventh-day busy with their among this people, away by their lives and His church.

Bro. Webb having his mission for The for home that morning in the last Saint Mary were conducted by fellow laborer in the being, who preached evening. At the service, a collection for the Convention received for expenses have been engaged the erection of a pl have succeeded in building a complete dedicated to the Lord's day, the 19th just now is unoccupied owned by the church in connection with located near by, the object of this visit brethren was to place. Here is a fine and attractive, can do most effective Master. Where is

A Letter from Will not a few Hill-Street of Vermont by the sea? Think true I take my pen. Nearly six months since in the fast em I entered Boston steamship Yarmouth have been, not full nor yet over-full of been very full of int At their commencement everything was new whom I had had no acquaintance confront Sabbath; as I reentered surrounding hills I strange; and as I entered I found some things different from the gave me a truly home feeling, and that was ly face of good brother the first to extend his arrival at the Bel Now, however, almo familiar, and we are here to stay—in a p Among the expect that have been im