

Messenger and Visitor

The Maritime Baptist Publishing Company Ltd
Publishers and Proprietors.

TERMS } \$2.00 PER ANNUM.
 } \$1.50 IF PAID IN ADVANCE.

S. McC. BLACK, EDITOR.
A. H. CHIPMAN, BUSINESS MANAGER.
85 Germain Street, St. John, N. B.

Printed by PATERSON & CO., 92 Germain St.

—A considerable amount of interest has developed in connection with the Plebiscite contest in St. John. During the past week Rev. A. J. Wheeler, of Auburn, Me., has been speaking every evening in the interests of prohibition. On Sunday afternoon and evening, Mr. Wheeler addressed two large meetings in the Mechanics Institute, and, it is understood, will continue his addresses in the city until the day of polling. Hon. Geo. E. Foster is also announced to speak on the subject in the Institute on Friday evening.

—The Baptists of Maine have four academies, Houlton, Waterville, Hebron and Charleston. Each of them has valuable property and all are giving valuable service. Mrs. B. F. Sturtevant, of Jamaica Plain, Mass., has announced to the trustees of Hebron Academy that she will give \$60,000 towards the erection of a new Girls' Dormitory. She will erect the building from the foundation, furnish the heating apparatus and put in the plumbing, cooking ranges and laundry. The trustees are required to purchase the land, excavate the cellar and build the foundation, grade the grounds and furnish the building. It is gratifying to learn that there are persons who believe that it is worth while to make generous provision for the special education of young women.

—In answer to a correspondent who asks whether a majority of the votes of all the electors of Canada is necessary to a declaration in favor of prohibition or only a majority of the votes cast on the 29th, the Toronto Globe remarks, with obvious truth, that the effect of the Plebiscite will be purely moral and political, not legal. "Prohibition cannot be enacted without a law of the Dominion Parliament, passed through the usual stages in the usual way. And Parliament cannot be compelled to pass a prohibitory law or any other law, except in this way, that its members may be made to feel that the people want such a law, and that if they will not enact it they must give place to members who will." It is therefore of great importance to the prohibition cause, as the Globe proceeds to point out, that the affirmative vote in the Plebiscite be made as large as possible. "The stronger the evidence of public sentiment in favor of prohibition, the more likelihood of a prohibitory law being enacted. This is the only answer that can be given to our correspondent's question. There is no cast-iron rule, no law, no constitutional usage, requiring a majority of the total electorate of the Dominion, instead of a majority of the vote cast. But if the vote cast were small the argument for prohibition would be weakened; the greater the vote the greater the influence on Parliament."

—In another column will be found a communication from the clerk of the Second Kingsclear Church, incorporating letters addressed by that church to the pastor of the Gibson Church and to the Frederickton Church, in reference to a resolution passed by the N. B. Western Association on the subject of ordinations, and to the declination of these churches to attend a council of ordination called by the Second Kingsclear Church. We do not know in what sense the resolution adopted by the association was understood, but, so far as appears in the resolution itself, there is no evidence of any intention to usurp any office or function heretofore exercised by our churches. It is simply advised that a church wishing to ordain a brother as its minister should ask the association to act as the usual advisory council in the case. We do not find that it proposes that the association should ordain. We take it that the church, having received the advice of the association, could proceed to ordain at such time and under such conditions as might be convenient. The object of the action taken at the association, as we understand it, was to secure the presence of a suf-

ficiently large and representative council to advise with the church in a matter in which the interest of the whole denomination is concerned. On this understanding of the bearing of the resolution, it seems to us but a reasonable one affording a valuable safeguard against hasty ordinations, which, unfortunately sometimes occur. We find that according to the carefully prepared report of the association, published in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR of July 6th, the vote on the adoption of the resolution stood 13 to 4, instead of 11 to 7, as the letter from Kingsclear states.

—We are sometimes told, what no reasonable person will dispute, that no prohibitory liquor law, however effective it might be made in its provisions and enforcement, would prove a panacea for all the ills and miseries with which society is afflicted. It would have no power in itself to regenerate the sinful disposition of mankind. Wrong-doing and consequent suffering would continue. There would still be unhappy homes and broken hearts and wasted lives. If every brewery, distillery, saloon and dramshop were at once and forever closed, sin and misery would still abound. All this may be freely admitted, but, on the other hand, no sane person can fail to perceive that the liquor business is the unceasing cause of immense waste of property and productive power, that it is a destroyer of manhood, virtue, home and happiness; that it diminishes industry and immensely increases pauperism and crime, along with the vast expense and misery which crime and pauperism always entail; that it is a foe to the school, the church and the state at large; that it is forever a pit and a snare in the pathway of the young; that in short it is allied with and promotive of almost everything that is evil, and equally opposed to all the highest interests of society, and that as a whole, it constitutes a curse so blighting and withering in its influence that the sovereign electorate of this country cannot afford to do otherwise than to set its heel upon the monster's head and crush it out of existence.

—Every elector who believes in prohibition should vote "Yes." It may be that a good many persons who heartily favor the principle of a prohibitory liquor law entertain doubts, more or less serious, as to whether the sentiment of the country is sufficiently in favor of prohibition to make it wise to enact such a law at the present time. Whether there are any sufficient grounds for such doubts or not, it does not appear to us that they should be permitted to prevent anyone from casting an affirmative vote in the Plebiscite. The object of the Plebiscite, we take it, is to determine how strong, or how weak, the sentiment of the country in favor of prohibition really is. What each elector is asked to do is to say whether or not he himself is in favor of a prohibitory law. He is not asked to estimate the measure of the public sentiment for or against this reform, and only to declare himself in favor of such a law if he thinks that is also the strongly prevailing sentiment of the country. He is asked simply to state his own position and to say whether or not he personally is in favor of prohibition. If he fails to vote "Yes," if, when the ballots are counted which determine what number of the electors want a prohibitory law, his ballot does not make one of the number, he has really voted against prohibition, for, so far as he is concerned, he has said that the electorate is indifferent and therefore cannot be counted upon to support a prohibitory law. Therefore, everyone who on principle is in favor of prohibition should vote "Yes."

—The newspapers which are giving to the infamous liquor business, in its present hour of need, such a measure of comfort and aid as they feel it safe to give, are of course using the taxation bugbear for all that it may be worth as an argument with men to whom they pay the remarkable compliment of supposing that with them pocket counts far more than principle. The method of manipulating the taxation bogey is, to start with, a highly extravagant estimate of the amount of revenue derived by government from the liquor traffic, ignoring entirely the fact that a very large amount of revenue—estimated by some authorities as high as \$2,000,000—would still be derived from alcohol employed in the arts and for use as medicine, and then assume that the entire deficiency must be met by direct taxation. Now, no one need to be alarmed by this scarecrow. A man with half a brain must easily understand that if prohibition should enable the country

to save even one half of the immense sum which it is now wasting annually through the production and consumption of alcoholic liquors, it would be adding immensely to its wealth year by year, and therefore the position of the taxpayer would be growing continually easier and not harder because of prohibition. The liquor traffic costs the country directly about \$40,000,000 annually, and it is safe to say that the direct cost is not half of the whole bill to be truly charged against it. Apart from any moral consideration, no one can contend that it is not wise public policy to make other provision for the \$6,000,000—which is probably about the sum which Canada's public treasury is deriving yearly from the liquor traffic—and thereby save to the country a direct expenditure of \$40,000,000 and an indirect loss which is still larger? Suppose then that for a few years the sacrifice of the revenue from the liquor business should mean for the temperance people of the country some temporary addition to their taxes, must we conclude that those are right who believe that there are no interests which appeal more strongly to the temperance and Christian sentiment of this country than the personal pecuniary interest involved in some possible slight and temporary increase of taxation? Are the temperance men and the Christian men of this country to be scared out of their prohibition principles because they are assured that to stand by them may not be immediately for their pecuniary interests? If this is true, then surely there is little hope for the cause of prohibition in Canada or for the general acceptance of any other cause that does not appeal to base and sordid motives.

—Late despatches from China, of a rather confused character, seem to indicate that complications are thickening in that much disturbed country. There is a rumor that the Emperor is dead, and the Hong Kong correspondent of the London Daily Telegraph intimates that, while there is no positive confirmation of the rumor, it is generally credited. The report is that he died on Sept. 21st, after issuing the edict, giving the Empress Dowager the regency. Kang Yuwei, whose arrest has been ordered on the charge of conspiring against the Empress Dowager, has fled from Peking to Shanghai. He there informed the correspondent of the London Times, that he left Peking in compliance with a secret message from the Emperor, warning him of his danger, and urging him to obtain assistance from those interested in the country's welfare. He further stated that recent events were entirely due to the action of the Manchu party, headed by the dowager empress and Viceroy Yung Lu, and including all the high Manchu officials. The latter were displeased by the emperor's leaning toward the reform party, and decided to restore the regency of the dowager. Further reports indicate that the Empress Dowager is in league with the Russians who, it is said, have undertaken to preserve Manchuria and to maintain Manchu rule in China. There is also said to be a proposal on the part of the Russians to send troops into Peking in order to keep the peace, and it is stated that the British fleet in Chinese waters is under orders to intercept Russian transports in the event of an attempt to land troops.

Some Lessons From Asa's Life.

The Bible lesson for the current week opens with the declaration that "Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God." Every man is under the highest obligation to do that which is good and right, to walk according to the will of God so far as it is made plain to him. It may be admitted that it seems easier for some men than for others to lead a religious life. Some men have had a godly ancestry, and the teachings and other influences of their early years have been wholesome and helpful. With others the conditions are the reverse of these. But heredity and home influence, though they account for much, do not determine everything. We should rejoice in the truth that, by the grace of God, a man may be far better than his antecedents. It may be hard for a man whose mother worships idols, to serve the Lord, yet King Asa's is not the only instance to prove that such a thing is not impossible. But it must be confessed that the cases in which a boy grows up to be morally and spiritually better than his mother are rare. This is a serious consideration for those whose influence is going so far to mould the character of the men of the coming generation. How many mothers in this so-called Christian land of ours are worshipping idols, as Asa's mother did, and thereby making it hard for their sons to serve God? What these idols are it is unnecessary to

point out. heathen wor but, all the the Lord, r ence for g stumbling-t tled to all can afford, But, for all in spite of t Asa served mother's s ing the cha There is Asa made gve to hin prosperity with no ca did not As a lengthen his kingdo eyer emerg in this res so for the College, v turn to bes It is so f and who expensive if not a dis prudent e material f happy hor the man o of prosper vision ag disaster, l extent th failure for in the pre almost su prudence The man use of pr most of a referenc us great death an days and responsi world to given of King A the day of Lord deli It looker when th against 3 days of day as t men, we enemy. worst c could, a his God. tion for final vic best. It is v we reco beloved occurred Sunday to educ importa widely y years ag ating a time as became in the C Baptist able ser place ar and the became he was journal able ar other q