

Messenger and Visitor

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ON GIVING MEN WHAT THEY WANT.

If one uses the word "want" in its largest and deepest sense in reference to the receptive power of human nature, it is indeed a most praiseworthy thing to be engaged in satisfying the wants of humanity. But it is also true that, according to the ordinary use of language, men want, or can be induced to want, a great many things which are not for their good and many also which make for their ruin. If then one is ministering to his fellowmen a great deal depends on what is meant by their wants.

The plea of giving men what they want is made the excuse for setting many stumbling blocks in the way of weak and errant humanity. By that lamentably large number of persons who are willing to enrich themselves at the expense of what should be accounted most precious to their fellowmen, it seems to be assumed that if only they are supplying what there is a demand for they are doing no wrong, or at least if wrong is done, the responsibility does not rest upon themselves, but upon those who are willing to receive the hurtful things at their hands. This is largely the ground upon which the liquor business, the immoral stage, the publishing of base and corrupting literature and many another business most pernicious in its effects upon the individual and society are defended. In fact it is about the only defence which is attempted by those who for the sake of material gain, or other considerations as infamous, are willing to minister to every evil appetite and passion of which mankind is susceptible.

One need have no hesitation in calling such an argument diabolical. It is the argument of Cain—"Am I my brother's keeper?" It might be used for the defence of the serpent's approach to the mother of mankind in Eden, to tempt her with that which was pleasant to the eyes and which seemed a thing to be desired to make one wise. And to the present day the spirit of him who was a murderer from the beginning is in the world, and men who for the sake of gain sell themselves to be his servants seek by means of an endless variety of forbidden fruits to tempt the sons and daughters of Eve to ruin.

It is wonderful what men and women too, will do for money. Well has it been said that the love thereof is a root of all evil. Doubtless much evil is wrought by want of thought as well as by want of heart, but the instances in which men—even men who are considered respectable, perhaps also Christian, will engage in business the success of which means the moral ruin of their fellow men is truly appalling. In many cases, it would seem, such a course is pursued deliberately or with a wilful disregard of consequences which, in the circumstances, is scarcely less bad than cool deliberation.

For the sake of getting wealth, for instance, a man engages in the business of distilling spirituous liquors. The business brings him money, and he is enabled to clothe himself with all the respectability which wealth can purchase. This man may be in many respects an estimable citizen, and when he dies there may be nothing but good to say of him so far as his personal character is concerned. And yet that man must know that the increase of his fortune means ruin to many of his fellowmen. He cannot be even wilfully ignorant of the fact that the business by which he has his wealth and to which he is lending the respectability of his name forms an essential part of a terrible curse which rests upon the manhood and womanhood of the land. Another man determines to make a fortune by conducting one or more great newspapers. His methods of journalism

may be marked by many admirable features and much that is wholesome and valuable may find place in the pages of his paper, but if, as is too frequently the case the supreme purpose is to make money, it may be expected that certain sections of the paper will be devoted to advertisements which entirely ignore the moral interests of its readers, and other sections will be devoted to a class of cheap literature which, because of its exciting character, will be eagerly welcomed by a large class of readers, and will be read with more or less harm by others whose better judgment condemns it as incapable of satisfying any wholesome want of mind or heart. Some of this literature which is seeking and finding admission to Christian homes, it should be plainly said, is a positive incitement to vice and crime and could scarcely be better adapted to do the devil's work if it had been written and published with the sole purpose of destroying the souls of the readers. It would be easy to multiply examples indefinitely to show how powerfully the haste to be rich operates upon men and syndicates to cause them to ignore all the moral interests of their fellowmen in effecting this grand purpose. And if these destroyers of manhood are called to any account for what they do, their one defence is that they are but giving the people what they want and the people must be permitted to be their own judges in the matter.

It is scarcely necessary to point out how utterly at variance with this utter disregard of the highest interest of humanity is the spirit of Christianity. It is true indeed, in the profoundest sense, that Christ came to give men what they want. But he addresses himself to the wants that are real and that are highest. It is with no forbidden fruit that he would satisfy men's hunger, it is not with the things that excite and intoxicate that he would feed their souls, but with the bread that came down from heaven, and with the water that springs up unto eternal life. What Christ came to give is Heaven's answer to the real wants of mankind. His word inspires, and he himself satisfies man's hunger for the highest and best that he is capable of desiring and receiving. How necessary in these days of shameless mammon worship that we should keep the divine ideal ever before our eyes! When so many are willing to sell their own souls and the souls of their fellowmen for gold, Christians would do well to inquire whether their attitude toward their fellowmen is that of the great Master. It is surely worth while for every man who calls himself a Christian to enquire what part he is playing in the world and in his own community. Is it the part of a good shepherd who in some real sense is laying down his life for others, or is it the part of the wolf, the robber or the hireling?

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN INDIA.

The Baptist Times and Freeman gives the following account (with some remarks of its own) of a correspondence on Missions to the heathen which has been going on lately in the columns of the London Times:—It was started by Sir A. B. Tullock, who was unable to resist the impulse to tell "the kindhearted old ladies at home who so liberally subscribe to the conversion of the 'p' or benighted heathen who bow down to sticks and stones," "to the detriment of their own poor relations, how their money is wasted. Enormous sums are thus contributed, he assured them, but real conversions are hardly worth referring to. At one time Sir Alexander thought the money spent on missions was entirely wasted; lately, however, he has seen reason to modify his opinions, and admits that medical missionaries are doing useful work, and that the good people of this country, in supporting schools and colleges in India, are saving the Government from the cost of education to a considerable extent. Of course there have been plenty of people ready to take up the cudgels in defence of missions and missionaries. He has been pelted with statistics. One correspondent pointed out that the census reports for the last four decades show that, while the population of India has increased 1 1/2 per cent., the native Christian population has increased by 30.8 per cent. At that rate Protestant Christianity would absorb the whole population by the middle of the twenty-first century. Mr. P. T. Bonarjee comforts the poor relations by showing that the communicants of Protestant churches in the United Kingdom are contributing half-a-farthing in the pound of their incomes annually to Foreign Missions, and asserts unhesitatingly that Christian missions in India are a success. Finally, Sir Alexander so far withdrew his charges as to say that his object in writing was to reassure the doubtful and to emphasize the need for sending out the very best men we can as missionaries. Our social and ministerial failures at home are no good enough to carry the Gospel to the heathen. We quite agree, and are glad to know from his own experience that many, at

least, of the missionaries with whom he has come in contact are "earnest, hard-working men and women." Testimony to the success of missions in India has come during the last week from another quarter. At the annual meeting of the Christian Literature Society for India Mr. Samuel Smith, M. P., and Lord Rad took both bare witness from their own personal observations to the marvellous change that has passed over India of late years. Lord Radstroek, who has just returned from a fifth visit, expressed the belief that the psychological moment had come for forming the character of India, and that the Christian ideal was permeating the whole country.

Editorial Notes.

—Portsmouth, New Hampshire, has been selected as the place of meeting for the Russo-Japanese Peace Conference. Washington was the place at first named in the negotiations, but Washington is perhaps as hot as Ottawa in August, and it is considered that the plenipotentiaries will find conditions more favorable at Portsmouth. But if the gentlemen from the East and the Far East desire ideal conditions for their important meeting they should come to St. John. In this favored spot they would have no difficulty in keeping cool under any provocation. Though the Conference is to meet at Portsmouth, yet if peace results it is said that it is to be known as the Peace of Washington.

—Dr. Kerr Boyce Tupper, recently pastor of the First Baptist Church, Philadelphia, has become the successor of Dr. Lorimer as pastor of the Madison Avenue Church, New York. The "Watchman's" New York correspondent says it is rumored that the promises made the new pastor "include a working plant not less adapted to the situation than Tremont Temple in Boston—a great metropolitan tabernacle that shall be the Baptist rallying point for Greater New York. There is room for it; plenty of money to do whatever the possessors of it can be made to feel is necessary and desirable; and if the new pastor fulfills the expectations of his people there will also be a leader who can bring all these things to pass."

—The Congregationalist of Boston says:—Professor Swisher, a Baptist scholar, who some years ago investigated the early history of Roman Catholic monastic orders in Mexico, has just received the degree of LL. D. from St. Mary's College, a Roman Catholic institution in Maryland. It has been claimed that this is the first recognition of a Protestant scholar or divine by a Roman Catholic college. Rev. Dr. Washington Gladden has hanging upon the walls of his study, and cherishes it among his choicest possessions, a document showing that Notre Dame University in Indiana conferred the degree of Doctor of Laws upon him, in recognition of his catholicity of spirit and refusal to participate in the A. P. A. movement.

It seems that all the foolishness about flags is not confined to the American side of the international line. Some Canadians have been showing how easily they can let their patriotism run away with their common sense. At London, Ont., on the twelfth of July, a drunken Orangeman from Michigan made some insulting remarks about Canada, and certain brave Canadians thought it necessary to avenge the insult by pulling down the American flag which was hanging from a hotel window, and tearing it to pieces. Whether these avengers could offer the poor excuse for their silliness of being being drunk, we do not know.

—Dr. George F. Hoar, writing in the "Watchman" of the characteristics of the Toronto International Sunday School Convention, says:—"The Convention was a delegated body, and for the most part the delegates sat together. From the platform it was easy to form a mental composite picture of the Convention. The leading characteristic of the delegates was a kind of moral earnestness that made them eager to follow the proceedings, to vote intelligently, and to take away that which would minister to their permanent effectiveness. If not drawn from the most fashionable circles of our great cities, the delegates certainly did not come from the backwoods. The men had no hayseed in their hair and the women were evidently not ignorant of the prevailing modes. They were the people that could give backbone to any institution. The women were women of sense and cultivation, and the men were strong and effective. Their names would be a first-class endorsement." The speeches were not all equally good, or the speakers all equally effective in presenting their ideas. Some of them did not have the art of saying things, but "there was a great deal of direct, thoughtful, spiritual and convincing discourse. The speakers were full of their subjects, and they aimed not simply to get something off their own minds, but to get something into the minds of their hearers."

—The Autonomy Bills have reached the Senate, and it is a foregone conclusion that they will pass that body. The feature of the bills principally discussed in the Upper Chamber, as in the House of Commons, is the school question. It is not probable however, that much time will be consumed over the bills in the Senate. The Government has decided to impose separate schools in the new Provinces and can command the necessary majority. This course, however, we are compelled to believe, is determined neither by constitutional reasons nor by adherence to Liberal

principles, but far as the ac- notable party Liberal princip- interpreted and Sir Richard C the Senate in ate school cla- couchment upon as the Provin- until the bills encoach upon esting to hear- ment if it is Government much like a treatment the status of ma- mindt acqui- hood were to from ever hav-

The Nova

The Nova Parrsboro, J. the 8th, Rev. 20. On Frid- ed by electi- moderator, F- tive year, as- and secretary of the nine u- unrepresented- ly. Perhaps- sation.

Friday eve- form address- Avelia, Pen- Rev. S. W. C- er represents- fathers took- nomination- take it? R- Lordship of- rightful Lor- as well as- with the lig- It cannot b- founded the- grounds usu- taught that- to Christ, h- realm of the- tion must- of our insti- ers. Every- penance. - at another- ty, at other- God, this y- last eight y- toral equip- is neverthe- the College- which outl- wordwork- building wh- this is the- pupils inste- reely take- ing building- building re- laborator- year has b- of the coun- Students e- matics for- tion with- its kind- in applic- ancial pros- has been t- stitutions, - schools 450- in Academ- ual Traini- than brilli- prepared fo- searching, - loma spea- mas were - excellence, - to pay fo- ville are - much. 2. - We want - cation an- time. W- ated, whi- does not - live a life - for the re- very insp - At the - moderato- pastors. - E. Locke - S. H. Co - of Londo - most int - among t-