

# Messenger and Visitor.

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## TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

By our pastors and delegates attending our several associations an excellent opportunity will be afforded for our patrons to forward to us all subscriptions due for the MESSENGER AND VISITOR. Will our brethren kindly remember us? Examine the dates on your labels and help us now. A representative of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR will be found at each of our associations to receive money and give receipts.

"POOR INDIAN" does not apply to the Ojaga Indians, at least so far as the possession of worldly wealth is concerned. They are said to be the richest community in the world. It is stated that they number only a little over 1,500, but they have \$8,000,000 deposited to their credit in the treasury at Washington, on which they draw \$100,000 interest every three months, and they own 1,470,000 acres of the best land in Oklahoma.

The *British Weekly*, while lamenting that there is not in all England a single, whole-hearted, active, influential leader of the disestablishment movement, nevertheless believes that disestablishment is coming whether the churches take any part in the movement or not. "It will come, for an awakened democracy are quick to perceive injustice, and every thinking man must see that six millions a year set free by disendowment are essential to the usefulness of any local government scheme."

MORE of that spirit which makes willing to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" is doubtless a thing to be desired by most of us who call ourselves Christians. It is well said by *Zion's Herald*:

"The disciple who wants religion made as easy as possible for him ought to follow some one for a Saviour who only went through the motions of dying to save him, as actors did upon the stage, trapped out in silk and diamonds and with liveried attendants, and a downy bed and a soft light. He surely is not in earnest about being a disciple of that Christ who expired in agony on Calvary, while the earth quaked and the rocks were rent and the sun hid his face in darkness."

We have a private note from Rev. J. A. Ford, of Eastport, Me., who is in Philadelphia drinking in the inspiration of the May meetings. He thinks it a pity that more of the pastors from these provinces are not there to share in the good things that are going. Bro. F. adds: "My church kindly sent me here, paid all my expenses and urged me to remain for at least two weeks and 'get all the rest and good going.' Their good offices include a visit to Washington, D. C., which I will take at the close of the exercises."

No doubt the church makes a good investment, besides providing the pastor with a very pleasant vacation.

In respect to the communication which appears elsewhere in this issue from the pen of Rev. W. E. McIntyre, in reference to Annuitants and other matters, it seems necessary, in justice to ourselves, to say that before sending it to the printer we wrote Bro. McIntyre, and with the utmost courtesy and power of persuasion we could command, advised him to amend his communication by the omission of certain uncharitable expressions and, especially, of that part of his letter which has no direct bearing on the main matter under discussion. This advice Bro. M. positively declined to accept, and accordingly—as perhaps the best thing to be done under the circumstances—we published his communication entire. While all will agree that the expressed wishes of Mr. Bradshaw—whatever they were—in reference to the B. M. Annuitant Fund of N. B. should be carried out, and while we are perfectly willing that Bro. McIntyre should have every opportunity to place before our readers the facts in the case, and to contend for the just and lawful administration of the fund, there seems to us no reason why this matter should not be discussed calmly, on its merits, and without the imputation of unworthy motives to any one concerned. The introduction of other matters into this discussion, and the attempt to arouse sectional feeling and divide the denomination united, in these provinces, through so many years of peaceful and prosperous history, will be regarded with painful surprise and judged unworthy of Bro. McIntyre. Not narrowness and division, but a larger sympathy, with a better understanding of the condition and the interests of each section represented in our Convention and the whole, and a consequent more intimate and heartier union in all the work and interest of the body, we think our brethren will agree with us, is the thing which, in the name of our Lord and in the interest of His kingdom, we should desire.

## PASSING EVENTS.

THIS month of May is a great month with the Presbyterians of the United States as well as the Methodists and Baptists. As we write three general assemblies, representing as many branches of the great Presbyterian family, are in session, and a fourth is on the eve of being convened. We are not aware, however, that public interest is directed strongly to any of these assemblies, with the exception of that of the Presbyterian church north, which began its sessions at Portland, Oregon, on the 19th ult. The special interest which is felt in the Portland General Assembly is due, in part, to the fact that it represents the most numerous and important branch of Presbyterianism in the United States, but more particularly to the "burning questions" which are expected to come up for consideration and action. This is the first session of the assembly to be held on the shores of the Pacific, but there is some reason to fear that the "Pacific Assembly" would not describe its true character. The matters in which outsiders will principally take an interest are the Revision of the Creed, the Briggs case, and the relation of Union Theological Seminary to the General Assembly. With the issues involved in these questions, we may presume our readers to have a general acquaintance. They are matters of general interest, because they represent a movement and a conflict which more or less strongly is being experienced in all denominations.

THE Presbyterian church is having trouble with its Confession—a trouble in which every church is likely to share which receives the symbols of its belief from past centuries and does not recognize an infallible human authority in matters of doctrine and faith. For while truth is ever the same in itself, the apprehension of truth in the unfettered human consciousness varies more or less with every age. The expression of it also will necessarily vary, and if the iron-bound creed of the past is subscribed to, it must be with mental reservations and amendments more or less important, and more or less uncomfortable for the subscriber. As to the history of the revision movement in that branch of the Presbyterian church to which we have alluded, the account submitted, which we quote from the *N. Y. Tribune*, will be generally accepted, we presume, as a fair statement of the facts:

"As to the revision of the Confession, it is not easy to say what will be done. The revision movement was originally started by liberals, who felt that the old Confession no longer expressed the doctrinal views of the church, and naturally, of course, was opposed by the conservatives. But the issue did not long retain that clear-cut form. The unexpected strength which the liberals developed soon suggested to the more radical of them that a mere verbal revision of the Confession would accomplish only a small part of what they had in view; and therefore many of them practically drew out from the movement, and began to advocate the shelving of the Confession as an obsolete historic document, and the promulgation of a short, simple, and comprehensive creed as the doctrinal standard of the church. On the other hand, the extreme conservatives, seeing the strength of the liberal movement, decided to support a mild revision of the Confession, which would touch no essential doctrines, hoping in that way to head off the whole movement. This new alignment of parties will explain many of the otherwise confusing moves made during the last year, and will furnish an intelligible key to the action of the present General Assembly. The extreme liberals will oppose revision, and the extreme conservatives will advocate it for exactly the same reason, namely, because they alike believe that it does not amount to much. And all their efforts will be directed to gaining the men on the fence over to their side."

THE case of Prof. Briggs, if not of greater intrinsic importance than that of the question of Creed revision, does, for the present at least, excite a livelier public interest, and is likely, if it obtain entrance to the General Assembly, to arouse strong feeling and a prolonged and stormy discussion. To one who has a theoretical knowledge only of the Presbyterian church courts, it would seem that, if the case gets before the General Assembly at Portland, it must do so in an irregular way. The Presbytery of New York, of which Dr. Briggs is a member, took action during the past year, to bring him to trial for heresy, and appointed, for that purpose, a committee of prosecution. But after listening to a statement from Dr. Briggs as to his position in reference to certain points of doctrine, the Presbytery voted to dismiss the charge. It would appear to be a logical conclusion that as the case was dismissed the work of the prosecuting committee was done and its existence at an end. The com-

mittee, however, did not so understand the matter. It held itself to be an original party to the prosecution, and in this view, it appears, it was sustained by a vote of the Presbytery and the ruling of the moderator. To one whose judgment is based on a theoretical rather than a practical knowledge of the Presbyterian system, it would seem that an appeal from the action of the Presbytery would be regularly carried to the Synod as the next higher court, but the committee, whether regularly or irregularly, has carried or proposes to carry the case directly to the General Assembly, and that in the face of the fact that a complaint against such action has been lodged with the Synod. The case can scarcely come before the General Assembly without a long, if not bitter, preliminary discussion as to the regularity of its presentation, and it is at least doubtful if any decision will be rendered this year as to the merits of the case. As to Union Seminary it appears to be almost a foregone conclusion that it will assert its independence of any control of the Assembly, and accordingly become undenominational in character.

THE desire, if not the needs, of the new Chicago University appear to grow with its growth. Notwithstanding the several millions that have already been poured into its treasury, another million is called for, and this million, it is said, is even more urgently needed than was the first million. As our readers are aware, Mr. Rockefeller's millions were given for the most part in the form of endowment, and the interest of these funds only is available. This renders the university rich in endowment funds and consequent ability to establish professorships, etc., but comparatively poor in building funds, and, according to Dr. Henson, in his letter to the *Watchman*, the prospects for the opening term are positively appalling in the number of applications from students that are pouring in. It is in order to provide the necessary buildings that the million dollars is required. One-third of the sum is already within sight and the balance is being devoutly prayed and hoped for. We may notice in this connection that a number of assistant professors have lately been appointed to different departments in the divinity school of the university. Among them we observe the name of Rev. B. F. Simpson, of South Berwick, Me., who has been called to the department of Systematic Theology. The scholarly ability of Mr. Simpson no doubt fully justifies the selection. The work will be, we believe, quite agreeable to his tastes, and we understand it is probable he will accept the appointment. Mr. Simpson is now in Europe, and we are hoping to have an occasional bit from his pen to present to our readers.

THE Baptist Congress, which preceded the meeting of the various societies, assembled at Philadelphia on the 19th ult., and spent three days in the discussion of subjects which are supposed to be of present and special interest. We are indebted to Pastor Stewart, of Brussels street church, for a copy of a Philadelphia paper, which gives some account of several sessions of the Congress. The first subject to be discussed was: "The Christian Year, how far is its recognition advisable?" Papers were presented on the subject by President Weston, of Crozer, Rev. W. H. P. Faunce, of the Fifth Avenue church, New York, and Rev. R. S. McArthur, of Calvary church, New York. Dr. Weston opposed the idea of a church calendar as contrary to the spirit of Christianity and the liberty of the individual believer and as following the example of Rome. Drs. Faunce and McArthur, on the other hand, advocated a church calendar and the recognition of the Christian year in some modified form, as conducing to the presentation of truth in its entirety, and as being "a great influence for true Christian union, organic union, but union in spirit." Dr. Weston's view was supported by Dr. Wilmont, of Roxburgh; while Dr. G. D. Boardman threw the weight of his influence in favor of a church calendar. A discussion as to the inerrancy of the Scriptures, which took place on the second day of the Congress, elicited some strongly expressed differences of opinion. Dr. S. A. T. Hanna took the ground that the Bible was entirely free from error, but in doing so he drew upon himself some severe criticism, and according to the report before us his position was not endorsed by any other of the speakers. The discussion plainly reveals the fact, that among our Baptist brethren in the United States as well as among the Presbyterians, there are serious differences of opinion

upon this subject. The venerable Dr. E. G. Robinson, late president of Brown University and recently called to a position in the new University of Chicago, being called for took the platform amid great and prolonged applause. His words are thus reported:

"After the searching criticism of all these centuries the wonder is they are so few. Nine-tenths of them are scarcely noticeable to the ordinary reader. I think some of the speakers to-day ought to revise their utterances and beliefs, a great deal and not fear criticism. We need have no fears about the result of criticism. The Bible will take care of itself. I thank God for higher criticism. It only strengthens people's belief in the efficiency of the Bible."

The feasibility of the union of the various Baptist bodies was discussed at one of the sessions. This was participated in by representatives of several Baptist bodies, but the report received does not give any account of the views expressed. Other interesting subjects which the Congress discussed were: The relation of Christianity to Sociological and Political questions, and Christianity in relation to Heathen Religions. We may be able in another issue to present some account of these discussions.

IT is announced that Her Majesty Queen Victoria has been pleased to confer the honors of knighthood upon Chief Justice Lacoste, of Quebec, the Hon. J. J. C. Abbott, Premier of Canada and the Hon. Oliver Mowatt, Premier of Ontario. Dr. George Dawson, son of Sir William Dawson, has also received the distinction of C. M. G. in recognition of his services in connection with the Behring Sea negotiations. As expressions of the good-will of the head of the nation and her advisers, these distinctions will no doubt be valued by those upon whom they are conferred, and probably no one will be disposed to question the fitness of the gentlemen named to receive such expression. But so far as our judgment goes, these titles and distinctions are of no advantage to Canada or to able Canadians. We quite agree with the late Hon. Alexander Mackenzie that they are out of place in a young and democratic country like Canada. The men who, like Alexander Mackenzie, George Brown and Edward Blake, have thought it best to decline these distinctions, are no less worthy of honor, and will receive no less at the hands of their countrymen. In our view, the acceptance of these petty titles is scarcely in keeping with the dignity of able and serious-minded men. By creating factitious distinctions and cultivating small ambitions they introduce an unhealthy element into the life of Canada, for whoever may receive these distinctions, it is quite certain that they will be chiefly sought by other than the ablest and most honorable men.

## Anniversary Week at Acadia.

The anniversary exercises of Acadia College may be said to have begun on Sunday, May 29, when the baccalaureate sermon was preached to a very large congregation by Rev. S. McC. Black, M. A., editor of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR. The text was 1 Kings 21: 2; subject, "Manhood in its relation to Kingship." The elements of this manhood discussed were ability, truth, faith and love. The man of ability is a potential king, he is the truly distinguished man who has indeed a divine right to lead and rule amongst his fellows: "There are kingdoms waiting for those who are able to enter them as kings." Truth too is essential; if you would be in the truest sense a king, you must reign in the kingdom of truth. Without faith life cannot be for you, in any true sense, a success, and as to love, it is the crowning element in manhood, in kingdom and in "God." Love can do all things—it rocks a cradle, it redeems a world. Everywhere it is beautiful, and in its highest manifestations it is divine. "It is a servant of servants, it is king of kings." "Love is God's rule of life for man." The sermon gave complete satisfaction to all. It was admirable in conception, thought, expression and delivery; "it abounded in passages of great beauty." The president Sawyer and Dr. T. A. Higginson assisted in the service. In the congregation were friends from St. John, Halifax, Windsor, Kentville and Yarmouth. The attendance at the closing exercises will probably be large. E. M. K.

The F. C. Baptist church at Marysville, York Co., is about building a fine parsonage in that village for their pastor, Rev. J. T. Parsons. Mr. Parsons is very happy in his new pastorate and is doing excellent work for his people. The new church at Gibson has been organized with about fifty members.—Sus.

## The Idolatry of Christendom.

It is not going too far to say that a large majority of Christians believe that the twenty-fifth day of December is the anniversary of the nativity, and Easter that of the resurrection. These delusions are instilled into the minds of the young by teachers, pastors and masters, sometimes in the Sunday school, and at others from the pulpit. The denominations that long discouraged the observance of those days were the Presbyterians, the Congregationalists, the Baptists and the Quakers. Within the last half century the three first named have drifted away from their moorings, and now on Christmas and Easter there is in them a marked likeness to the Roman Catholics and Episcopalians.

No one will venture to gainsay that the twenty-fifth day of December was the time fixed by the Saxons wherein to celebrate their "harvest home," or that Easter was the time set apart for sacrificing to the Sidonian goddess Ashwreth. The name has been changed into Easter. Our Saxon ancestors celebrated their great feast of ingathering by a bacchanalian feast on the twenty-fifth of December, and sacrificed to their goddess Easter on some day determined by the phases of the moon between the twenty-first of March and the twenty-fifth of April. To disabuse the mind of those who think Easter has something in common with the Passover it will be sufficient to state that the anniversaries of the two seldom come on the same day.

The Roman Catholic church sought in its incipient days to convert the heathens by accommodating itself to their circumstances. The date of the nativity is unknown, while that of the crucifixion and resurrection is. When the Catholic clergy visited the then northern nations they found them wedded to their great feast of ingathering, and seized it as the best time to celebrate the birth of Christ. Later in the year they found that the resurrection and the time for sacrificing to Easter were somewhere within the same season, and that there was some analogy inasmuch as one related to the resurrection, the other to the rising of nature from the sleep of winter, and by the adoption of the two heathen festivals they commended their religion to the heathen, and gained a wonderful ascendancy over him.

When the Episcopal church emerged from the Roman Catholic it retained the saints, liturgy and times and seasons of the latter in a grip the reformation could not break. Other denominations that came out of the Episcopal church discarded her saints and liturgy, but retained her high-days and holy-days and her form of ordination, while others only retained those remnants of idolatry, Christmas and Easter. For a long time Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Quakers and other non-conformists refused to have any thing in their services in common with Rome, and used Christmas and Easter as they did other days, until led astray by the conviviality of the former and the songs of the latter, they pinned them onto their churches. Why object?

It will not be denied that one of the downward steps of the Church of Rome was the accommodating itself to the worship and customs of the idolatrous nations it invaded. If Protestant churches receive a part of that worship and of those customs second handed, and in the adoption of Christmas and Easter some of them have already passed the gate that stands at the entrance of the way to Rome, what will follow in the not distant future? Error is insidious. If today Baptists on Christmas and Easter adorn their pulpits with flowers, and sing Christmas and Easter anthems as a part of their worship, because those days were canonized by papal decrees, may we not expect that in time the preacher's desk will be transformed into an altar adorned with a cross, his dress the vestments of a Jewish priest and the choir into a cortege of small boys dressed in white short-gowns and black petticoats? Already not a few of the sons and daughters of Protestant parents, among them Baptists, are finding their way into the Roman Catholic and Episcopal churches, lured from the denominations of their ancestors by the glare, pomp, flummery, music and ecclesiastical toggery of Rome and Episcopacy.

Baptists are the non-conformists of all the centuries since the Christian era, and can to-day truthfully claim they stand in origin outside the churches of the reformation. It has been admitted by students of history, and those too of undoubted ability, that Baptists may be considered the only "Christian community which has stood since the Apostles; and as a Christian society

which preserved pure the doctrine of the Gospel through all ages." History shows just as conclusively that whenever a Baptist community was drawn into conformity with the saints left in other denominations at the time of the reformation, it either lost its visibility or escaped from the thralldom with its numbers largely decreased. The observance of Christmas and Easter as Christian holidays may seem like customs from which no evil consequences can come to Baptists, but let us remember that the entrance of the blind edge of the wedge is the beginning of the process that slivers the rock. The Baptist rock is in entire conformity to the teaching of the Bible; whatever is found therein Baptists are bound to teach and do—believe and observe, and the errors entailed on Christianity by conformity to the customs of heathen nations Baptists are bound to condemn and discard. C. E. K.

## A Glance Backward "Ten Years More."

The recent articles in MESSENGER AND VISITOR from Miss Graves and others touching the formation of an Alumnae Society of Acadia Seminary, have been read with much interest. The last from a "Student of '61" must be helpful in calling up old memories. A few words concerning the inception and progress of higher education for women in this province may be useful and inspiring. It was in the year 1851 that six young girls began to feel the need of more culture for themselves. This feeling was intensified by the perusal of the life of Mary Lyon. They talked when they had the opportunity of meeting—they were twenty miles apart—corresponded when no other way offered, and prayed unceasingly over the problem of ways and means for the accomplishment of their desire.

After many months of careful consideration, three of these young girls in 1853 left their homes for a three years' course at Mt. Holyoke. They were accompanied by Rev. J. Chase, whose heart was in fullest sympathy with their purpose. So interested was he in their work that he made, at his own expense, a yearly visit to the seminary. It was in part owing to his efforts, in harmony with these earnest girls, that a school was opened in Berwick in 1854. Miss Field, a recent graduate of Mt. Holyoke Seminary, coming with him on his return from one of these yearly visits, took charge of this school.

Some thirty or forty students were gathered there; earnest and conscientious to a high degree. Many daughters of these first students have been or are now pursuing a course of study at Acadia Seminary.

During the winter and spring of 1854 and '55 a revival of religion occurred in the school and many of the pupils were converted, who in all these years have adorned the profession they then made. The year, so far as study was concerned, was a success; but, for want of sympathy from those who had not as yet become fully awake to the importance of education for woman, the school was closed at the end of the year, and Miss Field returned to her home in New York. In 1855 or '56 another school for young women was opened in Liverpool, and another in Paradise. Both were of short duration, probably from the same cause—lack of funds; but still they were useful, inasmuch as they created among our young women a desire for better educational advantages. In 1857 a school was opened in Wolfville, but the patronage was not sufficient to meet the expense and it was closed in 1860. These schools were all undertaken by private individuals, who thought thus to interest the public and who looked forward to the time when our people would attempt some work for the young women, such as they were so heretofore doing for the young men. This takes us up to the time spoken of by "Student."

These schools, with Grand Pre Seminary and the female department of Horton Academy, were the successive stages to the present well equipped and successful school, which next September expects to rejoice in the occupancy of one of the finest school buildings in the Lower Provinces.

We would bespeak for Miss Graves and her faithful staff of teachers the fullest sympathy and the most hearty co-operation.

Are we not justified in looking back to those six young girls as the beginning of what we now see? Four of the six have passed over to the other side. It will be observed that the graduates of Grand Pre Seminary have their names added to the list of graduates from Acadia Seminary. Would it not be in order that the graduates of the female department of Horton Academy should have their names added also? ONE OF THE SIX.