

Messenger and Visitor.

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SAINT JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 1887.

NO. 1.

—Hindrances to an Efficient Ministry.—Dr. L. W. Bacon refers to two of these in an article in the *Homiletic Review*. They are a dread of saying commonplace and of repeating truth over and over. How true this is. The truth that is the most common is made so by its importance compelling its frequent utterance. The man who in all the time striving to give his people something new, must neglect the very marrow and fatness of the gospel. It must be remembered, also, that truth is not so common to the hearer as to the preacher, who has become more familiar with it by patient thought. The best preaching is that which puts the most common truth in the freshest way. This is what makes Spurgeon's preaching so effective. Then, too, preachers need not be so sensitive about repeating truth already spoken. To impress men, truth must be held before their attention continuously. The most sermons are soon forgotten. If a subject is spoken from but once, the impression on mind and heart is soon removed. It is not well to repeat old sermons to the same people, perhaps; but to state essentially the same truth from another standpoint, is the duty of all who would do most to mould heart and character for the everlasting.

—GREAT CITIES.—It is a fact, almost as true of the present as of the past, that the great cities are the governing factors of any country. There is in this a message to the welfare of the United States, if not of all civilized countries. Statistics show that, in the United States, while only one-third of the people are of foreign birth, the average of this class in the great controlling centres is about seventy-five per cent. Thus, too, those who congregate in the cities usually contain a very large share of the lawless and the degraded. In the old world, the great cities is where the restless and lawless elements are most numerous. How can the great controlling centres be kept from the rule of the worst classes, is a problem that becomes more difficult every year. At least, the church has a great duty to perform in this direction. More vigorous efforts should be made to reach the lower strata of the cities, for their own sake and for the general welfare of the country.

—SALVATION ARMY BRANCH.—Some brethren among the Methodists are urging upon the denomination through the *Witness* and the *Guardian* the formation of a Salvation Army Branch of the Methodist church. While it is our opinion, as all our readers know, that the Army, in its moral, its absolute character, and in some of its doctrines, is not to be commended or condoned; at the same time, it is our opinion that the churches can afford to study the Army, and may find much that they can with profit adopt. Our churches must do more than open the doors of places of worship and invite people to come in. There are many who will not come, and means must be taken to reach them by carrying the gospel to them. The great thing we need is a general resurrection of personal obligation to follow the example of the Saviour, and seek to save the lost. If all professed believers would but speak to the neglected about their souls, and do their best to win them to the means of grace and to Christ, there would not be the multitudes who never darken a church door. This is the kind of work we need. Who will engage in it?

—THE PUBLICATION SOCIETY.—The Am. Baptist Publication Society is doing a great work. From the last report we learn the following facts: The receipts of the year have been: Business department, \$434,352; Missionary department, \$134,255; Bible department, \$27,492; making a grand total from all sources of \$596,099. There have been published during the year 761,800 copies of books, tracts and pamphlets, and 33,394,344 copies of the various periodicals of the Society. These are equal to 752,835,673 18mo. pages. Dr. Hargrave reports the work accomplished by the Armenian mission, which has aroused our Congregationalist friends not a little. He says:

In the year, we have printed 210,096 pages of books, and distributed 99,131 pages; made 47 addresses, preached 154 sermons, held 99 prayer meetings, conducted 99 Sunday schools, made 2,645 visits, organized 3 churches, baptized 19, received 7 others on profession of faith, collected \$215, and given gratuitous medical treatment to 552.

The summary of all the missionary work done makes the following showing: Seventy-nine Colporteurs, Sunday school Missionaries, District, and Bible Secretaries have been in commission during the year. Together they have laboured 23,393 days, travelled 374,870 miles, sold 6,353 Bibles and Testaments, given away 56,279 Bibles and Testaments. Books sold 26,337, books given away 1,319, pages of tracts distributed 1,247,116, sermons and addresses 15,046, prayer meetings held 4,132, families visited 27,332, persons baptized 1,293, churches constituted 37, Sunday schools organized 459, Sunday schools addressed 2,155, Sunday schools aided by grants through Colporteurs 530. Total value of sales of stock \$14,379.30.

—RUSSIAN BAPTISTS.—The Baptists in Russia have sprung from the German Baptists. Dr. Gordon, of Boston, in the *Watchman*, gives the following testimony of an evangelist from Russia:

"An" the Baptists, "they have indeed witnessed a good confession in that country; and though all dissent is crushed out with relentless severity, this humble and persecuted people have exhibited such fortitude under trials and imprisonments, and have lived such blameless lives, that even their enemies have been won to admiration for them, and they seem now to be enjoying a season of a quiet toleration."

—Mr. Schiewe, pastor of the Baptist church in St. Petersburg, is now in the U. S. collecting funds for a Baptist place of worship in the Russian capital. In a letter to the *London Freeman*, he describes what the Baptist of Russia have had to suffer. He says:

"In my opinion, we are fully justified in applying the words of the Prophet Isaiah. (And behold, I darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people,) next to beatitude, in the great and dark land of Russia. Millions live there without the pure and saving Gospel, and die in their sins. Indeed, it bears the name of a Christian country, but that is all. The worship of images, blind fanaticism, and a dead ritual, constitute the whole of the Christian religion in Russia. But the Lord be praised that already the light from on high has appeared in this dark land. Our foes have done all in their power to quench the rising light, but the powers of darkness have not succeeded."

"I know a brother who has been in prison forty-one times for the Gospel's sake. An old man of seventy years of age, because he preached the Gospel, was put in chains and transported a distance of sixty English miles, all of which he had to walk, so that the blood ran from his wrists and ankles where the chains bound him."

"In one town a whole meeting and the preacher were imprisoned, not excepting the mothers who had infants at home; and a brother, on one occasion, was stretched out bound between two horses, and was thrice driven two miles. There are few preachers in Russia belonging to our denomination who have not already been in prison. Myself, also, have not been free from it, having been imprisoned seven times for the Gospel's sake, and was forbidden the country for the same reason. In the year 1859 I was imprisoned for the first time; during the year 1875 five times; and in the year 1877 I was taken away by the police from my brethren and from my wife and children, and together with five other brethren, was conducted over the frontier by guards armed with revolvers and side-arms, and banished into exile."

—MISCELLANEOUS.—The bundle of papers to Watville, last week, miscarried. We are very sorry that we are unable to duplicate the whole list.

—OBITUARY NOTICES.—We are sorry to be compelled to cut down so many of the obituary notices we receive. We hope the friends, when they write, will remember that we have so very many notices of this kind that we can give but brief mention to any of the departed except those who have occupied prominent positions. Obituaries are rarely read by those who are not immediately connected with the deceased. As they are of interest to so small a range of readers, we do not wish to occupy too much space with them. We only wish we could, consistently with the general good of all, give larger space to tributes of affection to the dear departed; but we are sure all will see how necessary it is to have them very short.

—CATHOLIC.—There is something going the rounds of the churches in St. John, very much like the small pox, so far as its being catching is concerned. First it was found in Brussels St., then Leinster St. caught it, next it spread to Germain St., and now it has crossed the harbor and Carleton has had an attack. It is not a bad thing, however, to have, and we can join with the pastors of these churches who are most exposed to it, in the wish that it may differ from the small pox in this particular, that it can be had more than once. It would not be bad at all if the churches should catch it once a year. The attack in Carleton made Bro. Cahill's purse heavier by over \$50, and his heart light in proportion. We expect soon to hear that the contagion has reached Portland and Fairville, and spread abroad generally among the churches.

—A REVISION FOR THIS WORLD.—The *Review* has again and again called attention to the narrowness of the field in which the commonly named evangelical churches do their religious work. Perhaps the narrowest approach to the ideal of the modern working parish is to be found in the Unitarian Society, of which Dr. Hale is the pastor. Here the present field of work is the great congregation, and what they need is to have their motives in this direction spiritualized and clarified, so that the higher meaning of life is not smothered in the process.

We always thought that religion had to do chiefly with God and the soul, rather than with man and his body. The truth is a man can never be best prepared to prosper

in this life, until he has the inspiration of motives drawn from the world to come, and the restraints and encouragements which come from the thought of God and eternity. While all true religion will take in the temporal interests of men as a part of that about which there must be solicitude, to leave out God and the hereafter reduces religion to mere humanitarianism, and makes it unworthy of the name. The people do care a great deal about future punishment, although there are some papers of the *Herald* stripe that would have them care much less. This doctrine is imbedded fast in that old book—the Bible—and it is not to be cast out of the thoughts of men, any more than the Bible itself, by the contemptuous references of papers that are at home only in the politics of this world.

—HELD OVER.—Considerable editorial matter and correspondence is held over for want of space.

—BASIS OF UNION.—The publication of the basis of union is delayed, because one of the members of the committee, to whom was entrusted the duty of putting in form for press, is prevented attending to the matter by a press of work.

—Missionary Notes.

Bro. E. W. Kelly, at one time pastor at Leinster St., St. John, writes from Mandalay, the capital of Upper Burma, to the *Missionary Magazine* that he has now a regular congregation of 24, which is steadily enlarging, and that three have asked for baptism.

Bro. Morrow, also a provincialist, reports the baptism of seven at Tavoy.

Bro. Denchfield says that the church and Sunday school never before were so moved by the Spirit of God. Seven have been received for baptism.

Two Burmese have been baptized at Tavoy, and Bro. Baker thinks harvest for the Burmese is drawing nigh.

Thirteen were received into the church at Sestow, and seven into that of Kinohwa, China, in September.

The Baptist church in Copenhagen, Denmark, has a membership of 425.

There is a great religious awakening among the Boers, or descendants of the Dutch who settled in South Africa. These people have hitherto been very low in their religious condition. The movement is said to be spreading to the natives.

In twenty-five years the number of Protestant missionaries in China has grown from 150 to 500, and of churches from 50 to 400. A quarter of a century ago there were no theological schools or students, and only four of the eighteen provinces were occupied with missionary posts. Now 300 students are found in twenty schools, and missionary labors are carried on in all the provinces but one.

—British Columbia Correspondence.

VICTORIA, B. C., Dec. 14, 1886.

I have just returned from New Westminster, where it was my privilege to participate in the dedication services of the Olivet Baptist church.

This beautiful brick structure, the second of our denomination in British Columbia, is centrally located overlooking the Fraser river. It is most refreshing to our spirits to be able to use the plural number, and speak of the Baptist churches in B. C. The architectural features of this edifice are in the main similar to the Calvary church of Victoria. It is 60 feet square, modern gothic in appearance, the pews being arranged in amphitheatrical form, coovering toward the pulpit, and the seating capacity is over 300. A superior chandelier with twenty jets will be suspended from the centre, the floor will be carpeted, and all the seats cushioned. A large basement, consisting of a main room and two class-rooms, fully finished and furnished, will be used for the Sunday school and social services. The entire cost of building, furnishing, and lot, is \$5,500, and when fully completed the church will be one of the very best in the province. On Sunday, the 13th inst., the day of dedication, the rain fell in torrents all the morning and afternoon, which prevented large congregations, but in the evening the storm abated, and a full house engaged in the services. The dedication sermon was preached in the morning by Rev. J. C. Baber, supt. of missions for the north Pacific coast. The writer addressed the afternoon meeting, and the preacher of the evening was Rev. A. B. Banks, our general missionary. In spite of the unfavorable weather the services were a grand success. The outstanding indebtedness of \$1,500 was reduced by cash and pledges to \$342, which amount was further reduced to \$150 by the proceeds of a concert given on the following evening, by the Victoria Baptist choir and others. This means practically, but of debt and out of danger! A success almost phenomenal in the history of our or any other denomination.

When their esteemed pastor, Rev. R. Lennie, came to New Westminster in Feb.

1885, the membership was four, and services were held in the dingy court house. Now, after a pastorate of twenty-two and a half months, the membership has increased tenfold and the gloomy room has been exchanged for a beautiful church home. Well may they exclaim, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

Just a closing word about Victoria. We are moving along and are praying for showers of reviving. We number just "sixty and nine," and are now looking for the one that is "out on the hills away." Spring Ridge Mission Chapel was commenced two weeks ago. The lot is paid for and the building is now ready for plastering. Pray for us. You are ever in our hearts and prayers.

W. BARRS.

—Literary Notes.

Harper's Magazine for January, 1887, contains: "A Crook's Belle" (Frontispiece); "The Navies of the Continent" (I. The French Navy), by Sir Edward J. Reed; "New Orleans," by Charles Dudley Warner; "Narks," Part I. (A Story of Russian Life), by Kathleen O'Meara; "Martha Reid's Lovers," by Richard Malcolm Johnston; "Campaigning with the Coosachs" (I. A Summer Campaign), by F. D. Millet; "Springhaven," Part IX and X, by R. D. Blackmore; "The House Acre," Part IX. (The Kitchen Garden concluded), by E. P. Roe; "A Note on Impressionist Painting," by Theodore Child. The most of the articles are copiously illustrated by the best artists. Poems: "At Midnight," by Louise C. Moulton; "Confession," by Dora Reed Goodale; "Victoria," Annie Fields; Editor's Easy Chair; Editor's Study, (Holiday Literature); Monthly Record of Current Events; Editor's Drawer.

The *Homiletic Review* for January is one of the most interesting numbers. This is the beginning of a new volume, and we can heartily commend it as one of the best, if not the best periodicals of the kind, published. It is open to the broadest discussions of questions of current interest in religion, theology and morals, and is very full of what pertains to the work of a preacher and pastor. The current number is a very fresh one. It is a monthly, containing over 90 closely packed pages of reading matter which is published at the extremely low rate of \$2.50 per year by Funk & Wagnalls, 10 and 12 Dry St., New York.

We have received a package of very neat little pamphlets from the American Baptist Publication Society, containing the Sunday School lesson and the golden texts for the year. It is nicely gotten up, and must be very convenient for the children.

The January number of the *Century* is freighted with its usual amount of instructive and entertaining reading. The installment of the "Life of Lincoln" is of great interest. "The Hundredth Man," by F. Stockham, is continued. There are articles on "French Sculptor's Comets and Meteors," "Cognella," "The Relative Strength and Weakness of Nations," Gen. Bancroft with two "War Papers," besides other less pretentious articles. The Departments, Topics of the Times, Open Letters, and Brio-a-brac, all are especially full and interesting. The number is profusely illustrated.

—The Missing Bank-Note.

Men decide questions sometimes according to evidence, and sometimes according to authority. They look to prominent and respectable men, hear what they say, and come to a decision. Often they thus do great injustice. The men who pronounce judgment may be ignorant of the facts in the case, or may be prejudiced and totally wrong in their decisions.

There are many dark-looking circumstances which only time can unravel. The Scripture tells us to "judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come;" and yet how frequently men make up their minds and pronounce judgment at once; and still more frequently they save themselves the trouble of making up their minds, and pronounce judgment by accepting the judgment of others who have already judged ignorantly or rashly.

Many a man is judged wrongly, falsely and unrighteously, both in church and in state, but there is no redress for him. The men who believe him will not acknowledge the truth; the men who condemned him will not take the trouble to ascertain the facts; and he has nothing to do but to appeal to God and wait till in his mysterious providence, he shall "bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and manifest the counsels of the heart." What strange surprises will then come to many who have judged unjustly, who have condemned the innocent, who have turned their backs upon those who were accused, and who have lent themselves to perpetrate the wrongdoings of which others have been guilty.

The following story is one of many which should lead thoughtful persons to hesitate before they accept the judgment of others in matters which ultimately concern their fellowmen.

"More than fifty years ago, a young man

lived in a Western city, and, as a druggist was accumulating property, possessing the respect and confidence of the community, as was proved by the fact that, as he was about starting to the East to lay in stock, the cashier of a bank handed him a package of money in bills to be handed to a bank officer in Philadelphia. Being very obliging, he received the package and promised to deliver it promptly on his arrival, which he did; the cashier of the bank to whom he delivered the bills looked them over and hastily placed them in a drawer, saying it was "correct," and went on with his writing.

A month later the Western banker came to the young druggist, and informed him that a bill of large denomination was missing. The young man said he did not know how that could be, for he had delivered the package as he had received it; that the Eastern banker had looked it over, and pronounced it correct, and that he thought his responsibility ended there. The fact was, two prominent business men in responsible positions, on one side, and the unsupported "say-so" of a young druggist on the other. The odds were too unequal, and the young man had to go to the wall; the community withdrew their patronage and their confidence, his business was broken up; he first attempted one thing, then another, but a cloud seemed to hang over him.

"Years rolled on. The story was handed down from one to another, and new corners imbibed the prejudices of the old; and twenty years later there was an odium attached to his character, so that at the mention of his name there was that falling of the countenance which meant, "no confidence." The young druggist became an old man, but never succeeded in regaining the social position he had lost. He died in "Coventry." After he was dead and buried the cashier's old desk was taken to a shop to be repaired. On removing the drawer, the missing bank-bill was found to have been lodged behind it."

The mystery was explained; and probably numbers of the dead man's neighbors who had distrusted and suspected and repelled him for years, were ready to say that they never really believed any harm of the poor man.

That victim of prejudice and suspicion is gone; others are living and dying! When they are good, some one will suddenly discover what good men they were, and regret that they did not know it sooner. Reader, who will it be?

—Mortified.

"Be ye careful to entertain strangers," was a wise command, teaching courtesy and hospitality, "for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." The woman of the following incident was unmindful of this obligation, and but little sympathy can be felt for her chagrin and discourtesy at the result. The Duke of Wellington once walked from Walmer Castle to Deal to attend Trinity church. Not finding the sexton to show him a seat, he entered a roomy looking pew in front of the pulpit, and sat down. Soon after a fashionable-dressed haughty woman entered, and by her manner and expression of face showed that she felt his presence an intrusion. As the stranger bore her indignant glances without moving, she said, bluntly:

"Sir, you will find free seats in the rear, and I beg you to find a seat there or in some other pew."

"If your pardon, madam, for intruding," said the duke, coldly, as he arose and left the pew.

At the close of the service a friend said to the woman, "My dear Madam—you were honored to-day; but why did the duke leave you so abruptly?"

Madam—, construing the remark as a sarcasm on the impudence of the stranger, replied,

"The presumptuous fellow! Then you saw him in my pew? I had to tell him there were seats for strangers in—"

"Why surely," interrupted the friend, with almost horror in her tone, "you knew that the man was the Duke of Wellington!"

The woman's mortification over her rudeness to the man she would have hoored, caused her a fit of sickness.

—Practical Religion.

Giving up sinful practices—or even questionable ones—is not enough. Such negative religion will not last long, or avail much. Genuine piety is a positive thing, it is doing right, it is keeping Christ's commandments. Pulling up weeds does not make a garden in the bright May days. Following the earth and dropping the seeds and setting out the young plants in the only substantial way to do it. When the soil is busy growing vegetation and flowers there is little space left for weeds. Less than half your religion depends on the "thou shalt nots." Christ did not say to Matthew, "Thou shalt stay here at the toll booth, and try to keep out of cheating and other evil practices of the publican." He said, "Follow me," and then Matthew went at once into a new line of conduct, and a new life.

—What I Can Do.—A word in season, how good it is. Rev. Mr. Nash, of St. Albans, was a great winner of souls. When he lay dying, he was in great anguish, saying, "I shall be lost myself, in spite of all that I can do!"

A clerical friend, who visited him, was petrified with amazement, and hardly knew what to say. But he stooped down and whispered, "Yes, you will, in spite of all that you can do!"

It was the early word needed. The dying sinner's face lightened up at once, and he said, "Thank you, my brother, I had forgotten it."

begin at once to do what ever your Master commands. Begin to practice religion. All child would never learn to walk by a hundred talks about the law of gravitation; it must use its own feet, even at the risk of many a tumble. Wait not for more teaching, or more pungent observations, or for any that you read of in other people's experience. These are all snares and hindrances, if they keep you from doing at once the very first act that will please Christ. Have you never responded your lips to an unconverted friend, either to avow your own feelings, or to do that friend some good? Then try it; you will strengthen yourself, and may bring an unexpected blessing to him or her. In short you must begin to obey a new Master; to serve a new Saviour; to strike out a new line of living; and rely on God's almighty help to do it. When you give yourself to Christ in this whole-hearted and practical fashion, he will give you a thousand fold richer gifts in return. Yes, he will give you himself! When you possess Christ you have everything.—*Rev. T. L. Caylor.*

—This, That, and the Other.

"A newly married lady, not well posted about household matters, said to her grocer not long since: "I bought three or four hams here a couple of months ago, and they were very fine. Have you got any more of them?" Grocer—"Yes, ma'am, there are 10 of those hams hanging up there." "Are you sure they are off the same pig?" "Yes, ma'am." "Then I'll take three of them."

No woman ever answers a call by telephone without smoothing down her hair, working up a smile, and trying to make a good impression on the transmitter.

Twenty-five years ago there was but one representative of total abstinence in the British House of Commons, now there are over forty.

A little girl was sitting at a table opposite a gentleman with a wadded mustache. After gazing at him for several moments, she exclaimed, "My kitty has got smothered, too."

Talking about busy men who leave their homes early and get back after dark, and never see their children, a man of that sort was hurrying away one morning, when he found that his little boy had got up before him and was playing on the sidewalk. He told the child to go in. Child wouldn't. Man spanked him and sent to business. Child went in, howling. The mother said, "What's the matter?" "Man hit me," blubbered the youngster. "What man?" "That man that stays here Sundays."—*Exchange.*

The *Baptist Weekly* quotes Rev. Dr. S. S. Mitchell, of Buffalo, as saying of the "New Theology" that so far as it is theology it is not new, and so far as it is new it is not theology.

A Boston lawyer recently met his match in a witness who was giving evidence about an old lady's loss of mind. Lawyer—"Did she look as I am looking at you now, for instance?" Witness—"Well, yes, quite vacant like!"

"Who was the meekest man?" asked a Sunday-school teacher. "Moses," "Very well; who was the meekest woman?" "Never was any."

The same blood circulates from Genesis to Revelation. It is the one Book. He who makes Moses a myth, makes Christ an impostor. He who denies the Mosaic authorship and the inspiration of the Pentateuch, denies the authenticity of the Gospel and the divinity of our Lord. But we are told that the Bible must be tested as to its authenticity by other books are granted. But when Sir Walter Scott avowed himself the author of the *Waverley Novels*, there was an end of guesses and speculations. Plausible arguments made for attributing the authorship of some of them to others. But the world had confidence in Sir Walter's veracity. His word settled the matter. And should not the word of Christ settle the matter as to who wrote the Pentateuch? What are all our petty canons of criticism when weighed against the word? Not one scholar in a hundred can test for himself the grounds on which Wellhausen bases his conclusions. But all of us can read in our New Testaments what Christ said about the Jewish Scriptures; about David in the Psalms; about Moses and the prophets; and that is enough for us.—*Chicago Interior.*

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