

MESSINGER AND VISITOR.

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Messenger and Visitor

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 1891.

THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT.

The subject of Young People's Societies in connection with the churches for the promotion of religious culture and Christian work, is just now attracting attention and evoking discussion in some leading Baptist newspapers in the United States. In connection with this matter there are two leading questions which demand consideration. First, is it best that there should be Young People's Societies in connection with Baptist churches? Second, if such societies are to have place, what shall be their relation to the churches with which they are connected, and what relation, if any, shall they sustain to other similar societies?

As to question number one, it may be said, on the negative side: 1. There is no Scriptural authority for such societies. The church is the one divinely appointed organization for the promotion of religious culture and Christian work.

2. It is necessary in order to the completeness, happiness and efficiency of the church that the different ages and diverse conditions of life as they exist in the community come together in the membership of the church, and be united as closely as possible in sympathy and effort. The highest welfare of the body demands that hands, feet and eyes—all its members with all their functions—shall be united under one will to render mutual and united service. The completeness and fullness of the family life is not realized except in the union of all its members—the older and the younger, the stronger and the weaker—in mutual sympathy and service. So also in the church, there must be, among its members, mutual knowledge, and sympathy and united effort in order to its best welfare and efficiency.

3. The establishment of a society within a church for any one class of its membership would tend to weaken the bonds of common sympathy and lead to a division of interest and effort, thus endangering the unity and weakening the strength of the church.

Then, on the affirmative side of the question, it may be urged: 1. That no positive command of scripture is transgressed in the establishment of Young People's Societies in the churches; and that the church, though divinely instituted, is not to be regarded as fixed and unchangeable in all its modes and operations, but, in reference to matters that are not settled by a positive commandment, as possessing certain permissive powers of adaptation to meet the changing conditions of different times and conditions of society.

2. The feet, the hands, the eyes, etc., may be engaged at the same time in somewhat different operations, while yet the unity and general purpose of the individual man are preserved intact. In the family the older and the younger members may find both their amusement and their work, to a certain extent, in different circles, without endangering the unity of the family or diminishing from the fullness of its life. So in the church, the fact that there are diversities of operations, corresponding to different natural conditions, does not necessarily interfere with the unity and efficiency of the church.

3. The Young People's Society offers the most effective means for promoting in the minds of the young an intimate acquaintance with the practical aims and efforts of the church, both at home and abroad, of forming the habit of Christian service and developing a sense of responsibility as a member of the church and a servant of Christ.

4. In some churches, because of dissensions or a prevalent worldliness of spirit among the older members, or from other causes, spiritual life is so low an ebb, there is so little sympathy with young Christians in their temptations and trials, so little to encourage them to consecrate themselves to Christ's service, and so much to repress their enthusiasm, that unless the young people of the church are banded together by themselves for prayer and service, they are likely to become discouraged and alienated from the church.

5. The great rapidity with which the Young People's Societies have been organized during the past four years, and their general endorsement, where they have been established, by pastors and other Christian workers, seem to show that they are answering to a real demand of the time.

We have thus placed before our readers, in a concise form, what seem to be the principal arguments on the one side and on the other employed by those who disparage, or by those who encourage, the formation of Young People's Societies

in connection with the churches. We do not feel called upon at present, either to advocate or condemn the Young People's movement. It must, however, we think, be regarded as of no little importance; and it is most desirable that the leaders in our churches should have intelligent and definite ideas in regard to the matter. So far as we are aware, not a great many societies have yet been organized in connection with the churches of our Convention, but it seems probable that before long many of our churches will be called upon to consider the question. It is certainly important that, if such societies are to be formed, they shall receive the best watch-care and leadership that the churches are able to give them. Under such conditions, we are not disposed to think that there is any cause for alarm as to the character of the influence which the Young People's Societies would exert.

AS TO RELATIONSHIP. If the decision is against a Young People's Society, then of course there will not be any question of relations to consider, but if in the case of any church it is decided to form such a society, then number two becomes a question of importance.

As regards the relation to the church, there can be no doubt, we think, that it should be of the closest and most vital character. The society must be regarded not as something independent or semi-independent—a mere annex of the church—but rather as a branch or department of the church's work in full organic connection with it. Its organization, its aims and its undertakings should be submitted for the church's approval. Its officers should be appointed by the church, or at least with its full sanction, and all its meetings should be open to any and all members of the church if they wish to attend. With such provisions and the leadership of a wise and sympathetic pastor, there should be ample security against any danger from conflicting interests as between the church and the society.

As to the matter of the relation of the local societies to other similar societies and to a general organization, the question is more complicated, and there are differences in opinion and practice. The Christian Endeavor movement, which is un denominational in character, has had, during the past few years, a remarkably rapid development. It has derived its support from the evangelical churches generally, and especially from the Congregationalist and Presbyterian bodies. The Methodists, although Endeavor Societies have been formed in connection with many of their churches in the United States, prefer rather to organize on denominational lines, and have established societies of their own under the name of Epworth Leagues. A great number of Endeavor Societies have been formed also in connection with Baptist churches in the United States. But, on the part of some, the movement is regarded with a good deal of suspicion. It is feared that connection with it may have a tendency to cultivate indifference as to their distinctive principles among the young people of Baptist churches. It is held that all the affiliations of the societies should be distinctively Baptist, in order that the young people may be confirmed in their faith and strengthened in their denominational position.

On the other hand it is held that there is not the slightest reason for any feeling of jealousy or suspicion in reference to the Christian Endeavor movement, since every local society is under the control of the local church in which it exists. The United Society, it is said, does not exercise the most shadowy control or authority, its sole function and office being to furnish information and arrange for an annual convention. The Christian Endeavor movement does not contemplate or at all desire the organic union of the churches. The only object of its interdenominational yearly convention is to bring together, for solely spiritual fellowship, the young people of the various evangelical denominations; not in the slightest to weaken adherence to denominational views or ties.

A few months ago a movement was started in the United States to organize the young people of Baptist churches on distinctively denominational lines. The name "Loyalist" was proposed as a designation for the societies, and a young people's paper called the Loyalist was started in Chicago. The name, on account of old political associations, has not met with general favor. The paper has been transferred to the American Baptist Publication Society, and its name changed to The Young People at Work. Whether the distinctive denominational movement will prevail or not remains to be seen. So far as we can learn, it is likely to obtain a good deal of support in the Western States, but in the East it meets with much less favor. It has to sustain the influential opposition of the New York Examiner. Some time ago the Examiner introduced into its columns a Christian Endeavor department, and is giving to the Endeavor movement its countenance and support. The history of the Examiner is that of an uncompromising advocate and defender of Baptist principles, and it is not to be supposed that it would readily lend its influence to any movement calculated to weaken denominational bonds. Dr. Wayland

Hoyt, a well known Baptist leader, who is prominently connected with the Christian Endeavor movement, gives it a vigorous support, and asserts that there is nothing in the relation which a local society sustains to the United Society to justify the apprehension that any danger would result to Baptist interests.

This question of relationship is certainly one which deserves to be carefully considered. If connection with the societies of Christian Endeavor would tend to lessen the interest which our young people feel in their own churches, and to weaken their attachment to Baptist principles, then it would seem to be the plain duty of Baptists, if they organized Young People's Societies at all, to do so on denominational lines. But if such fears are wholly groundless, if nothing would be sacrificed by connection with the Endeavor movement, and if its influence is rather to promote and foster an interest in one's own church and denomination, then there would seem to us to be little wisdom in holding aloof from the Endeavor Societies, merely because, at an annual convention, we would find ourselves brought into contact and association with Christians belonging to other communions than our own. Certainly it does not seem to us to be, in itself, a thing to be deprecated that young Christians of all denominations should once a year meet together to worship the One God and Father of all, to tell and to hear of the triumphs of the truth which all profess to love, and to pledge each other to faithfulness as they grid themselves afresh for the service to which they are called by their common Master.

What about Canada? In reading the article by Charles H. Day in your issue of Dec. 3rd, in re "Luther's Day," the question came to my mind with startling force, What is the condition of Canada? By this communication it would appear that the people of Germany by their carelessness and indifference are in danger of fast losing their hold upon the grand truths of the gospel as taught by Luther, and the liberty that as a natural consequence follows. And that unless another Luther shall rise, there is an awful possibility of those people becoming again enshrouded in the darkness and superstition of Romanism.

Is not every word in that article as true in regard to Canada as to Germany? Do not the signs of the times indicate that the same line of action is being pursued in this country? Is not the need of an awakened conscience in the Christian church here as great as there, not only to the aggressive lines of action of the Catholic church, but this greater evil of the liquor curse?

Nearly, if not all, Christian workers are emphatic in their assertion that the saloon is the greatest hindrance to the spread of the gospel in Canada, that the liquor traffic drags men and women, without regard to class, down to the lowest depths; that the effect of alcohol upon a human being is to benumb and harden conscience, making him indifferent in regard to the great eternity that lies before each of us.

Thousands of dollars and some of the best brain and energy of the church are being spent each year in trying to teach to others the truths taught by Jesus, yet I respectfully submit that very little is being done by the Christian church as an organization to remove the saloon out of the way of the Gospel chariot.

It is true that from perhaps every pulpit, and every church member, there is offered prayer more or less frequent for blessings on the temperance cause and that the curse of intemperance should be driven from our land; but is this enough?

Every reform movement has its clearly defined stages of development; so has this temperance movement. First, it dawned upon a few that too much was an evil, that one must restrict himself to so many glasses a day; second, that man's touch it at all was wrong; third, man's duty to his neighbor demanded that he should do all in his power to keep others from drinking; fourth, the necessity of restricting the traffic; fifth, the duty to kill it by statutory law.

In each of these phases of the reform prayer was absolutely necessary to success, but just as necessary was work. The prayers of the church to-day are all right, but what about the works? Individual members have done and are doing grand work on one line or another as their judgment may seem best, but as an organization, what is being done?

That the liquor traffic is a legalized one in Canada none will deny. That when Finance Minister Foster sits down to figure out his estimates of revenue each year he makes his largest single estimate on what he can make by permitting the manufacture and importation of intoxicating liquors, is equally true. That the churches have appealed to the Parliament of Heaven: none will deny, but how and when have they done so to the Parliament of Canada?

It is true that associations, conferences and senates have passed good resolutions. The question is, Were they ever heard in Ottawa? Late reports say that the Cree Indians in the North-west are evidencing signs of unrest, and that the officials are instructed to watch them. If

it become necessary for the government to communicate with them, will they do it in the English or French language? Not at all, but in the language of the Cree, because that is the language they can understand. The resolutions of the different bodies are not in a language that the government understand. Their language is that of a ballot, and this is the only one they take any notice of.

This question of the destruction of the liquor traffic is the greatest question presented for the consideration of the Christian church to-day. Through it the happiness both here and hereafter of thousands is being destroyed in Canada every year. This need not legally exist another year. Let the Christian church of every name come out and say, "We stand for God, home and native land," and unalterably opposed to the liquor traffic whether engaged in by individuals or governments, and nominate and vote for men in accord with their principles, then the matter will be settled. But some one says this cannot be done. The members will not vote and we would be only displacing our weakness. If this is true, then the only remedy by my mind is for the pulpits of Canada, beneath which Sabbath after Sabbath these voters sit for instruction, to thunder forth in thoughts that shall melt, and words that shall burn, "Wee unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth the bottle to him and maketh him drunken also." "No drunkard shall enter the kingdom of heaven."

In the face of these facts is it not the duty of every Christian minister to cry aloud and spare not until the church members shall be educated up to the standard, where they shall answer their own prayers with their own votes? In politics, those engaged in the liquor traffic are ever active. If this demon of strong drink is to be dethroned, then the Christian church must show its power.

What a change would come over this Canada of ours if the saloons were blotted out! What happiness would enter thousands of homes; what obliteration of lines of care from the faces of the motherhood and sisterhood of our land. How many hundreds of poor inebriates who now would gladly throw off the shackles of this awful thralldom, would rejoice in that temptation was removed, and the possibility of satisfying this craving forever taken away. This is possible, and only possible when Christians shall shoulder to shoulder march to the ballot box and cast their ballots for prohibition.

The letter by Mr. Day should be read by every man and woman in Canada. I am sure that it would cause the scales to fall from many eyes, and wake them to the fact that while they have been sleeping the enemy has been sowing tares. What Mr. Day says of the German church and Catholicism may be said with equal truth of the Christian church, and the liquor traffic, that the greatest danger is from internal rather than external sources, from apathy and indifference rather than from the liquor sellers.

Amherst, Dec. 15. E. B. ELDERKIN.

Petitions for Prohibition. I have read the letters from Bro. Coburn and Mr. Fraser in your last. If the petitions, after all the trouble taken in procuring signatures, will lead to the desired result, every good citizen ought most cordially to lend his aid to their circulation; but if it is pretty certain that they will produce no response from the Dominion Legislature, it is useless to waste the time that will be required to procure signatures.

No one can be more anxious than I am to have the liquor traffic suppressed, and notwithstanding all the set-backs "prohibition" has received in our Legislature and Courts, I yet feel assured that in the end it will triumph. After saying this I hope to be forgiven when I say that I believe that the petitions sent to Ottawa will produce no more effect than water on a duck's back. The accumulation of waste paper, made worthless except for fire kindling purposes, will be greater, and will perhaps rejoice in my humble opinion only that and nothing more. There was a time when the petitions of good men and women had some effect on governments and legislatures, but that time has forever passed away, and they are now to be classed with the tufts of grass the old man used to dialoqe the boys from his apple trees. The "prohibition" battle is not to be fought out with petitions, but by ballots cast at the polls. The only course left for temperance men is to separate the good in politics from evil, and their success depends upon making the political tree good, and that cannot be done by petitions. What we want, and what we must have, is representatives with strong temperance back-bones, and not men who are trammelled by the rum interest. While we are represented by the latter, "prohibition" will be as easily reached as the North Pole. As things now are, the rum influence is a factor in all our religious institutions; I feel tempted to say "in all our Christian denominations. I think I have seen its cloven foot when in a denominational reunion the annual temperance report was on the carpet. True, on those occasions the speeches are always emphatically temperance, and

yet the too careful listener will think he sees in them at times a political declaration that temperance men must not interfere with existing political parties, and we all know that the two Canadian parties are run-bound. There is only one way to prohibitory success, and that is not along the old party lines. Like his satanic majesty's highway, both of these roads are bounded by and fenced in with the influence of the rum traffic.

We may in the future, as we have in the past, walk around the rum Jericho, and blow the rams' horns of our temperance orators, lay and clerical, but produce no effect upon its walls. The only mode of bombardment before which they will fall is one of properly directed ballots, and until those ballots are used in electing prohibitionists, we will in every attack come off with decimated forces and broken ranks. Prohibitionists must break off their party fetters, untrammel themselves from parties that owe their success to run and the rum power, and when we do that, success will crown our efforts. We have nothing to hope from "Tory" or "Grit," and the sooner we make up our minds to that the better.

CHAS. E. KNAPP.

Copies of petitions and circulars of "Suggestions and Directions for Signing and Forwarding," have been mailed to each minister and clerk of congregation, also special circulars to ministers. In view of the prompt action taken by the Maritime Convention at Yarmouth in August last, it is confidently expected that the Baptist churches will send in very largely signed petitions, and make their voice most emphatic.

I have had so much work and writing to do in connection with this movement, that I have had to assume the readiness of the chairmen of the committees on Temperance for the different Associations to do the part asked of them, and I feel confident they will heartily respond to the call.

We have tried to make the circular of "Suggestions and Directions" as plain and complete as possible, and we think that careful attention to them will avoid mistakes.

The date, in Sec. 4, of 15th January, 1891, was inserted in the possibility of parliament meeting in January. As it is not likely to meet until March, the time for signing and forwarding may be extended, if necessary, and, if in any case the work is not completed or undertaken, there is still time. We trust no church will neglect the matter.

Chairmen of Associations' Committees on Temperance will retain petitions until parliament meets, and then after sorting, send to the proper members' and senators, and then notify me according to Sec. 5 of directions.

Temperance societies have been supplied with special circulars, and we rely on their hearty co-operation. Their members will sign petitions in the churches with which as members they are connected, and we feel confident they will do much to make this movement most effective.

D. STILES FRASER.

India Figuratively Considered. Under the above caption the London Freeman presents some very interesting facts, taken from a Blue Book just published, of statistics relating to British India. Briefly summarized these facts are as follows:

1st. Language.—One hundred and eight languages are mentioned, and besides these there is a column for "Languages not specified." Hindustani is the most widely spread, being the means of communication of about one-third of the population. The fact is this peninsula is a densely populated continent of many diverse races having different manners and customs and speech.

2. Population.—But what is the population? Two hundred and fifty-four millions in round numbers. Every minute, day and night, ten persons pass out of time into eternity. For most of these we must sorrow as for those who die without hope. These people occupy forty-three million houses, in three quarters of a million towns and villages. The area of British possessions in India is 1,378,044 square miles.

army consists of 73,000. The cost of militarism in India is twenty millions in tens of rupees per annum—about one fourth of the entire charges against revenue. It is pleasing to know that another fourth is spent upon public works, such as railways, irrigation, and road making.

The death rate of the general population is 25 per thousand per annum. This, you will observe, is very high. Among the causes of death it is remarkable to note that 20,000 persons die every year from snake bites. This is very much owing to a religious fear among the natives of taking life. There is evidently more respect among these people for animal, even reptile, life than for human life. They need the gospel to reverse this order of things. Wherever the Word of God is received human life becomes at once the most sacred thing under heaven. We have this Word, and our orders from Christ are, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

W. J. S.

Correction. In my article on "Our Foreign Mission," in the supplement of the MESSINGER AND VISITOR, Dec. 17, an omission occurs which I wish to correct. In the sentence in which I speak of the present staff in India, I omitted the names of Sisters Wright and Gray. I cannot imagine how this occurred, and I very deeply regret it indeed. Our sister missionaries, Miss Wright and Miss Gray, have performed six years of faithful service on the foreign field, and are held in the highest esteem by all the members of the Board, Woman's Missionary Union, and the denomination at large. I sincerely hope that both Sister Gray and Sister Wright, and all the readers of the MESSINGER AND VISITOR, will accept this my humble apology for an omission which I regret more than any one else, and I will try to do better next time.

W. J. STEWART.

A Temperance Meeting on Heathen Soil. "On Tuesday evenings we have a temperance meeting for our Christians, and should like you to tell them to-night what progress the movement is making at home." So said Mrs. Pearce, on the last afternoon of our most enjoyable stay at the pleasantly situated and pleasantly peopled mission house of Zandiarpet. The big compound bell was rung at 7 o'clock, which sends its call four times every day out into the densely populated groves all about the little Christian community, and promptly on the minute the native Christians assembled in the big school-room. Andrew, the head preacher, interpreted as I told the story as best I could of the growth of the temperance sentiment in America. Christian people had seen the wickedness of the sale and consumption of intoxicating drinks, because they made men not themselves, whereas God made man to be themselves. They had decided that if it was right to make a law providing for the punishment of those who committed murder by direct measures, they had a right to pass a law providing for the punishment of men who for the sake of gain scrupled not at causing the death, indirectly, not only of men, but innocent women and children as well. Christian people had also decided not to touch anything intoxicating because of the attitude of the scriptures on the question. Paul in Ephesians, fifth chapter, warned not to be drunken with wine, "wherein is excess"—Asoia=riot, dissoluteness, the spirit of lawlessness, in other words, wherein is a little devil. I found that they understood that verse when their attention was directed to it. The Telegu word conveys exactly the same idea as the Greek Asoia.

Government in America has become far enough advanced to have compulsory instruction, in many cases, on the evils of intemperance in the public schools, so that the children now growing up in that country will not have the excuse their fathers had, that they did not know the evil effects of intoxicants on the human body. Something was said also on the effects of tobacco among Christians, injuring the body in many instances, and in all cases wasting money and time, urgently needed in the salvation of men. After speaking about thirty minutes, opportunity was given for questions to be asked by anyone, and for 20 minutes they came in thick and fast, and I found all my wit required to answer them satisfactorily to myself. I had to tell them, in answer to one question put in a grievous and diffident manner, that there were still nominal Christians in America and England with heathen hearts who sent rum and spirits to India for their own personal gain, regardless of all the evil consequences that might follow. Just before the little gathering broke up a vote of thanks was passed for my benefit, and they said that all my answers were satisfactory. The Christians at home have an obligation to meet on behalf of India, which is not satisfied by sending missionaries merely. The whole force of their influence must be used to counteract the iniquitous liquor traffic. I never felt so proud of my position on the question as when I could define it to that little company of converted heathens. It needs such experiences as that to teach one the value of a virtuous life.

M. B. SEAY.

Bimlipattan, Nov. 22, 1890.

Dedication at Sackville. The new house of worship at Sackville, N. B., was set apart for which it was designed Jan. 4th. It is finely sited in a village, near the railway. A Baptist traveller will be glad to see a building where worship. It is a handsome structure, and in appearance appointments does credit to architect, Deacon J. B. K. mouth. The house is 60 x 20 feet. The tower is 20 feet high, each corner of the front between the towers is covered with a house really seventy-nine is also a recess for the clock pulpit, 8x20 feet. The has eighty pews that afford for 400 adults. The walnut trimmings. The and commodious, and the parties are excellent. The basement is 54x40 feet also class rooms and all the of the modern church baptistry is conveniently electric light is used. One of the latest style, etc.

The cost, including the and it is evident enough has been secured for all ed. It was built by the turing Company, of Lo have done their work was the gift of the late J. The movement which securing this house was sisters, who contributed work. Friends of other helped nobly. A debt of when the house was finished morning service, by the pastor and Dr. Hoyt were induced to provide of it, so that the house free from debt, and the owners large, are in hand purposes.

It is proper to say that indebted for this house of wisdom, zeal and business faithful pastor, Rev. W. greatly aided, as our parents, by the tireless labor. The opening services were attended, the congregation interested in the welfare. Rev. Dr. Hopper preached sermon and offered the tion. The pastor, Prim Sackville, and Rev. J. D. ed in the services. A was addressed in the evening. Keirstead, and in the evening. A. Steele, Rev. A. H. Mr. Wells (Methodist) the exercises. It was the religious exercises valuable, and that the day would be well if some preached should be provided. MESSINGER AND VISITOR specially prepared for a Mrs. F. Ryan as leader B. Hall as organist.

We congratulate our Sackville upon their trust that spiritual blessing measure may descend upon

Foreign Missions. The regular monthly meeting of the new year Mission Board was held the 7th inst. Present: C. H. Martell, F. D. Cradock, W. J. Stewart, Simms, Mont. McDonnals and James Estey. Pres. by Bro. Saunders; minutes passed. Rev. S. McC. MESSINGER AND VISITOR invited to a seat. Letters from missionaries Geo. Shaw and Archibald, nicely settled at Chicago the pleasure of baptizing (Eurasians)—Mr. W. Kinney. Bro. Sanford reported in last Messenger. Bro. Shaw, after a very busy, reached Bimil, and proceeded to Viziangram to be settled in his new Archibald, as you are Colorado.

After the home corner read and disposed of, the candidates reported that the usual investigation received a medical certificate, and the usual report. Bro. H. Y. Corey by appointment on our staff of mission he be sent out in the completion of his local studies.

This report was unanimously adopted. The committee further having received a request from the Board of the Missionary Union, request of Miss Matilda, Rev. Albert Co., to a staff, and having had an interview with Miss commend her appointment was received and was further resolved that