

Messenger and Visitor.

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Remember the "Messenger and Visitor" for \$1.50 a year to all new subscribers who pay within thirty days of the time of subscribing.

The following is a summary of the report of the treasurer of the Home Mission Union of Scotland—Subscribers, England, 4232; Scotland, 4573; 13, which, with other sums, make a total of receipts of £1,931 10s. 11d. The expenditure was £2,080 17s. 1d. The balance at the close of the year of the Legacy Fund was £1,808.

The "Plymouth Rock" is responsible for the statement that 300,000 of the 400,000 inhabitants of Boston are not habitual church goers. This is a bad showing for the city of the Puritans and the Athens of America. No wonder it submits to be ruled by a rum ring.

A summary of the workmen's club in York-street, Dublin, on Sunday, a resolution was passed unanimously calling upon all true patriotic Irishmen to boycott public-houses, and to put practical effect to the suggestion of Michael Davitt at a late meeting at Linerick, to keep the five and a half millions of taxes on drink sent over to the English exchequer at home, and turn it into some useful industry that will not degrade and demoralize its supporters.

This is the most sensible boycotting we have heard of.

Francis Wells made the following utterance in a speech before the Episcopal Congress, recently held in New York: "Men save their souls nowadays not so much by repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as by forms and ceremonies. Our girls and rosaries, our chancels and furnishings, our postures and genuflections, and as the honored bishop of New York has said, our arabesque performances come from sentimentalism. Now here comes the connection. It seems to me that this talk about the free church system comes from this same sentimentalism."

We had hoped the Episcopalians in the United States were becoming more evangelical. Probably it is there as here. High church and low church are pushing each other further and further away to ritualism on the one hand, and vital godliness on the other.

A Dr. Schickler, a Jewish scholar, made a statement recently at the Temple Adath Israel, in Boston, which will surprise many. He declares that all intelligent Israelites have given up all hope of a Messiah and the political restoration of the Jewish nation. He states the belief of his people to be this:

As with the increase of knowledge the horizon of the human mind has been widened, as the universe has grown larger for us than it ever was for bygone generations, as God even has grown infinitely larger, mightier and holier than ever, then our hopes have grown in proportion. They have lost their national character and have become universal. We have given up all those fanciful notions of a political restoration of Israel by the instrumentality of a Messiah, and here adopted in their place the hope that all humanity will some time reach, by steady evolution, a degree of happiness far beyond the present and far beyond description, a state in which all will still adhere to what will be removed and its virtues increased and developed. United and hand in hand will all our human brethren, we shall strive and advance toward this goal, and if there must be a division of labor, let it be that of a generous competition as to who shall reach the mark first.

In the last Presbyterian Assembly held at Cognition, in May last, a resolution was offered, but not passed, declaring that the Catholic church has apostatized, and should not be recognized as a Christian church; that her priesthood should be regarded as usurpers; her ordinances unscriptural, and her baptism invalid.

A write in the *Catholic Review* rejoins on the subject of baptism, as follows: "Up to the thirteenth century both the Greek and the Latin churches used immersion in the solemn administration of baptism. In fact our Lord and his Apostles baptized with this rite. Christ himself was baptized in this way by St. John. Why, then, do Protestants baptize by aspersion; since our Lord's practice is against it? Will the judge tell us why his sect has given up the scriptural mode of baptism, which the Baptists logically preserve? The Catholic church, as the inflexible custodian of the matter and form of the sacrament, claims the right to interpret them, and modify them with accidental conditions. No such claim is made by the Protestants. They do not justify themselves by the baptism with being invalid; judged by this judge himself, since it is not administered as St. John the Baptist, as our Lord and his Apostles, and as the whole Christian church generally, administered it, up to the thirteenth century; that is by immersion? Is there not apostasy here? A change in the mode of baptism was made in the Latin church in the thirteenth century. As we have already hinted, the Catholic church claims the right to modify in accidental the matter and form of the sacrament. When good order and the common weal of Christians require it, she makes such modifications in her discipline. She is the interpreter of Christ's law, and the visible judge of his doctrine and precepts. In virtue of her supreme authority, she changed the day of rest from the Sab-

both, prescribed on Mount Sinai, to Sunday; and the Presbyterians in the humblely follow her example. She took away the cup from the laity in administration of the blessed Eucharist, because she judged it better to do so; and using the same authority, she gradually substituted the rite of infusion and aspersion for immersion in the public and ordinary administration of the sacrament of baptism."

Passing by the false claim that the Catholic church has changed the day upon which Sunday is observed, the reply is unanswerable. There is just the same authority for limiting the cup to the clergy that there is for reducing baptism to a sprinkling,—no less, no more.

The serial which has been running through all the issues of the year, ends in the present number. Those who have read it will admit its general excellence. It has been longer than we expected it was when its publication was begun. It has contained a few allusions to doctrines we do not believe. Its general influence, however, cannot be good. In the course of a few weeks we expect to begin another serial. It will be much shorter than "Shiloh," and we hope very interesting and profitable.

The Universalists, not long since, had their annual meeting in Brooklyn. They have become dissatisfied with the articles of Faith, because reference is therein made to the Trinity. It is generally believed that this doctrine has been abandoned by their body, and a committee was appointed to make the necessary revisions to meet the present views of the denomination. The Universalists have thus declared themselves to be Unitarians. Is not this the logical outcome of Universalism? It begins by belittling sin, and exalting the divine love at the expense of the divine righteousness. It ends with the denial of the use of expiation for sins, and that the divine Son of God never came or did come to make such a sacrifice.—*Obita Punctis.*

The annual call has gone forth from the general committee of the Young Men's Christian Association for a week of prayer for young men at the Y. M. C. A. We believe in prayer for everybody. There cannot be too much of it. There are special reasons why prayer should be offered up for young men. They have to withstand the strongest temptations. They carry in their hands the fate of the future. We are not altogether satisfied with this call for prayer? Why should Y. M. C. A.'s be the only agencies required in this week of prayer for young men? Is the work of the church for young men to have no recognition? Are all to work to associate Y. M. C. A.'s with the work for young men, the chief agency and the great means of success? Is the church to have a secondary place or no place at all? If there is to be a general observance of this week of prayer for young men on the part of the churches, had they not better pray that their own work for this class be blessed, and that if they are not attempting enough, that they may be led to do more? Let us try and get the church to do all her work for Christ and men, and it will do as our master would have it done, in the body which he has ordained. Let us not fail to associate all good work in prayer with the body in which our soul desires to do good, in which our soul desires to do good, in which our soul desires to do good. If the church is not working her full duty, let us not give her up for anything which has not been ordained by Christ, but try and make her what she intended her to be. Because the locomotive does not go fast enough it is not best to run it off the track.

Bro. Clark's letter in this issue, was written on the day on which he learned of the impression "quite generally prevailing in the Maritime Provinces," that our Toronto brothers had practiced a trick. Possibly it may, by this time, have occurred to him that he accepted this general statement upon too little evidence, and that we do not entertain of him and our other brethren the opinion with which he credits us. We would quite sympathize with our brother's righteous indignation, if his premises were correct.

The Governor and Senate of Acadia College met at Wolfville last week, according to previous notice. The immediate occasion of the meeting was the vacancy in the professorial staff, but the opportunity was used to attend also to other important business. A careful review of the financial condition of the College was made, and district agents were appointed to look after pledges to the funds of the College. Several important committees were appointed, who are to report in June. The work of the different departments of our educational institutions has been an increase in the amount and complexity of the business under the care of the Government, of which the mass of our people have a very faint conception. In view of the financial situation, the Board did not feel that they would be justified in at once adopting the recommendation of the Senate in regard to an enlargement of the staff of professors; but they decided to make temporary provision for instruction in some branches not now provided for, and to endeavor to be in readiness to appoint an

additional professor at the close of the present College year. It is expected that the Senate will be prepared to make a nomination at that time. Probably the decision to proceed cautiously in this matter is wise. The Government do not fully understand that there is a general expectation that our educational institutions are to advance, and they will proceed with the enlargement and improvement as fast as the funds placed at their command will permit.

Thoughts from the Diary of a Dying Girl.

The following extracts are taken from the diary of Mary, the beloved daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Snowden, of West Point, West Co., N. B., who sweetly fell asleep in Jesus a few months ago. Miss Mary was hopefully converted by God's grace, and baptized by the writer a few months before her departure. Her last thoughts on earth are committed to the press, in the fond hope that the thoughtful reader may see what Jesus can do for one who once was gay and thoughtless. "Unto you who believe He is precious."

EXTRACTS: "As my eye wanders from one object to another, thoughts arise in my heart—thoughts of the great Creator, who rules the great world in which we live, and I lift up my heart in thankfulness to Him for His goodness and mercy to poor weak humanity. How merciful He has been to me! How tenderly He has led me along through my life, and at last has brought me to see my sins in their own light—has led me to the Fountain of Life, where I have received pardon and peace which passeth all knowledge. The thought that Jesus my Saviour is sweeter to me now than any earthly pleasure ever could be."

In the midst of her affliction, (Nov. 9th), she writes: "I see no darkness in the future. I only see the light of the love of Jesus shining full and free upon me, lighting up all my life—making the day pass pleasantly by. Not for ten thousand worlds would I give up this priceless gem—the love of my Redeemer. How could I give it up—the bright star that guides me onward and upward to His bright home above?"

Later she writes: "I have a hope in Jesus that has taken all fear of death away. I do not dread the cold grave now as I did before Jesus came to my heart. Then I could only see the dark grave without one gleam of light beyond it; but now I glimpse only of seeing Jesus—of being at home in the mansion that he has prepared for me, of being at rest in His dear arms. I shall be well when I reach my home. No sickness nor sorrow shall ever enter there."

Again: "As my body grows weaker my soul grows stronger in the faith of my blessed Saviour. My hope brightens as the days pass quickly one by one. I feel that at the close of each day, Jesus is doing and resting in me, and that he has been before me. In the course of her reading on the 11th of December, she met the passage, "Be ye also ready," &c., and writes her thoughts thus: "I thank my Heavenly Father that I can feel in my heart that I am ready to-night. I know not when Jesus may send His angel to summon me from this life to His own bright home above—but, by His grace, I can close my eyes in slumber with the sweet assurance that Jesus is my Shepherd—that he is watching over me while I sleep—that He holds my hand while His own dear wounded hand and teaches me to trust Him with my whole heart. I am very tired now, but I shall rest by-and-by."

On Christmas evening she writes: "Well, it is Christmas night—the last that I expect to spend on earth. I have been reading in that most precious of all books—the blessed Bible, that beautiful 23rd Psalm—every word of which is more precious to me than as many pieces of gold. He leadeth me and I know He will not leave me. My trust is in Him. I am waiting for his coming. Oh! if the world would only know how sweet it is to love Jesus—how sweet to know that He loves us. How safe, how secure I feel when I can trust Him fully. How sweet to have a Friend so near who will hear my feeble prayer, who strengthens my heart and sends peace to my soul—sweet peace such as the world could never give me."

So she wrote and so it was "the last Christmas" spent on earth—the Christmas of '84—soon after she quietly folded her hands over her bosom and with a heavenly smile upon her countenance her happy spirit took its flight into the bosom of Him whom she loved most. Her chair in the happy home she adored and helped to make happier is vacant, but her seat in the happiest of all homes is occupied. We think of our loss with sorrow, we think of her gain, and our sorrow is mingled with joy. Let me die the death of the righteous and let my last end be like his."

The Preacher and His Ideal.

Every great man has had his ideal, and to this his greatness has been largely traceable. The effort that has not sought to realize an ideal has ever proved abortive and vain. This has been as true of the preacher as of any other man—as true of him as of the poet or philosopher, the statesman or warrior. The reasons which demonstrate the importance of an ideal to other men apply with greater force to the preacher by as much as his vocation is more important than theirs; they deal only with the temporal interests of men, he with their spiritual and eternal.

The preacher's ideal should cover all his work—should float before him in the form of a definite conception of what his work should be, thus by its potent influence, vitalize and transform it all. No part of his work is so insignificant that it may be done at random, or apart from the presence and inspiration of a definite aim.

As the main object of the preacher—that to which his efforts should be specially directed—is the salvation of sinners and the edification of saints, and as the sermon or divine truth in the sermon is the chief instrument by which this object is to be accomplished, it should be his concern to construct the sermon and so to deliver it that it will be most effective for the purpose intended. Various causes may operate to weaken the sermon or hinder it from producing the desired effect. It may be defective in matter, that is, it may not be sufficiently Scriptural; it may contain too much of the preacher's own thoughts and too little of God's. Many a preacher has failed to stir his hearers' consciences and move them Christward and heavenward, simply because he has filled his sermons with science and philosophy instead of pure gospel truth. Intellectual declaration is one thing, preaching the gospel is quite another. The sermon may be defective in form. The topical form is generally considered most favorable to unity, but the textual or expository form, though by no means inconsistent with unity, may, under certain circumstances, be more effective without unity than the topical with it. The main thing is to know when and how to use each, and when and how to combine them all. Again, the sermon may be defective in delivery—matter too much disregarded. The chief element of power in any sermon that has moved and melted the people has not been its thought, but its style and manner of delivery. The preacher who is boisterous when he should be gentle, who bawls when he should almost whisper, who denounces when he should persuade, who is dull when he should be animated, and who seeks to arouse others by the truth which manifests his own soul has not yet felt the place and power to ever-dwelling congregations. The preacher's ideal, then, should respect everything that pertains to the sermon,—should be such that its realization by the sermon would make the lightest instrument for affecting men and moulding them for the skies.

But our object is more particularly to say, first, that every preacher should have an ideal, to the realization of which he should bend his best endeavors. It should almost seem that some preachers work together without one, they have set before them no standard of excellence which they strive to reach, and so they accomplish little or nothing. Instead of moving steadily forward to a fixed goal, they allow themselves to be diverted by paltry side issues; there is motion and possibly connection, but no progress. Instead of controlling the circumstances of their lives and making them subservient to a definite aim, they are themselves controlled by them, and become possibly their sport. Manifestly he will travel crookedly and to little purpose who does not know at the outset whether he proposes to go. The sculptor will hew the block of marble in vain if he does not carry in his mind a distinct image of the beautiful statue that is imbedded in it. The smith will heat and hammer the iron in vain, who has no definite conception of the shape into which he would fashion it. Like another Aaron, he may throw the pure gold into the furnace, only possibly to see it come out a cast. Secondly, His ideal should be perfect, or as nearly perfect as possible. Otherwise he can never reach the highest excellence in his work; otherwise his work will wear the stamp of positive imperfection and deformity. To copy any other excellence than the highest, is to work away from, and not towards, ideal perfection. Also for the preacher whose ideal of the sermon is that which the sermon should accomplish, instead of being exalted and true, is only and palpably low and false; if it be the tendency of human endeavor to realize its ideals, whatever their character, then his endeavors must prove

absolutely harmful to himself and to all whom he ministers. No man ever gets beyond his ideal, and may step a long way this side of it, hence the importance of every man, and, most of all, the preacher, placing before him the right ideal to begin with.

It might be said, finally, that the preacher's ideal should be ever an unattainable one. For this reason, mainly that when his ideal has been realized, there is for him no progress and no perfection beyond. It is the sculptor who sees in the block of marble a form more beautiful than his chisel can reveal who carries his art to a higher and yet higher stage of excellence. It is the painter who ever tries and yet ever fails to transfer to the canvas the lineaments of the almost divine likeness which he carries in his imagination—who ever feels dissatisfied with his last attempt, and, therefore, summons his powers to another and a greater, the transfused ideal that floats before his mental eye, entrances his whole being, and seems to beckon him ever onward and upward. So should it be with the preacher, the ambassador of Christ, the winner of souls. When he studies, when he prays, when he preaches; in the closest, in the family, in the pulpit. Nor, as mightily helpful in his work of preaching Christ, should he fail to endeavor to exhibit the life and spirit of Christ in his own.—*Can. Baptist.*

The Field at Hand.

BY REV. CHARLES F. DEEMS.

There are many persons in the church who often feel a desire to be useful. When they reflect upon the great work which is yet to be done; when they think of the halo which crowns and glorifies the names of the blessed dead who have served their generation; or when they read of some tremendous blow which has been dealt by a powerful arm to the idol which the world worships, or hear of some encounter on the great moral battle-field, in which the spiritual prowess of some lofty soul has turned the tide of war against the banners of Error—they long to do something which shall leave its mark on earth, and carry its trophies to heaven. If all these longings resulted according to their dreams, how many a glorious institution would rise amid the world's crying wails! How many an idol temple would be supplanted by a sanctuary of the most holy faith! How many a dark place of the earth, wherein dwelleth cruelty, would be penetrated by the cheerful and beautiful light of the sun of righteousness! Why, with so many desires to do good, are they so comparatively useless? Is the defect in their heads? No! it is in their hearts.

Allow me, young Christian reader, to show this to you, if I can. You wish to be useful. The spirit of our blessed religion is the spirit of doing good. It is also an enlarging spirit. "The field is the world" is a grand saying never to be forgotten. But your difficulty is that you wish to sow the whole field over with one single grand broad-cast, which shall fill into every furrow at once seed that shall instantly spring to a harvest, to gladden earth, and if possible, astonish heaven. You are not willing to take the little plot just before your door, and clear it out by the patient picking out of rocks and grubbing up of roots; that work is all too little for you, and too unromantic. You will have the stimulus of a thousand seeing eyes and a thousand encouraging smiles. Does not this show that there is something wrong at the heart? You would like to be a Mrs. Jewson, to have memoirs written of you, when dead, and thousands of copies of volumes of memorial and offerings published, with your name on the title instead of hers. That would be very fine. But you forget the fact that you do not labor faithfully, devotedly, without pride or vanity, in the nearest Sabbath school, among the poor neglected adults or children living on the same square in the same city with you, perhaps, or certainly within a mile or two of your father's residence—that you are not striving to make that father's family a model of a perfect Christian household, not training your brothers and sisters to the ways of the cross, not striving to bring the servants of the household to the blessed Saviour of us all—that this failure on your part is positive proof that you are not ready to go from home to work for Jesus. Remember, that those who go—if there be such deceived souls—to foreign lands for the mere name and grandeur of the thing, have their reward on earth, and have nothing to look for in the skies. Remember, also, that a soul saved in your own village, or at your own fireside, through your instrumentality, will shine as brightly in the crown which Jesus will give you, and will bring as much glory to his blessed name, as though you found that soul in polar snows or oriental jungles.

But you would be useful in your own country, if you could only be sure that

you possess such talents as such-and-such-a-one, if you could only be a distinguished preacher, or could found or support an asylum or a school, or some such benevolent institution. You have not yet discovered perhaps—and the discovery may be painful to you when made—that some of the most talented, and, I will add, distinguished ministers of the church, are doing less for the cause of the Saviour than many an inferior and comparatively unknown brother. You forget that they are exposed to a thousand temptations which never reach the humbler and more hidden child of God. You do not recollect, that the greatest injuries inflicted upon the church of Jesus, come from her most gifted sons. You are not to be judged by the measure which will be applied to them; the rule for each to adopt, in striving to do good, is, Now—here—all I can—always.

The disposition of the church in this day would seem to be to undervalue, or at least to overlook the value of the plan of bringing men, soul by soul, to Jesus. We must do something splendid, or nothing at all. The clat of crowns, eloquence, magnificent machinery, is what attracts us. But suppose each member of the church caught the soul-winning spirit, and depended more upon God's blessing on the outshining of a holy heart in a holy life, and each so lived as in the course of every year to bring at least one more into the army of laborers—how soon would the world be converted, thoroughly converted! Read the memoirs of such humble men as Harlan Page and James Brainerd Taylor, and then calculate upon the supposition that all church members did as much as they—and theirs was not a more favorable position than that of most Christians—and that the number of converts went on, as it should, in geometric ratio, and see how soon the world would be reclaimed to God and his Christ!—*Bap. Weekly.*

Solations.

—WE ARE SAFE.—When I was in England a lady told me the following story. She said she was awakened up by a very strange pecking, or something of the kind, and when she got up she saw a butterfly flying backward and forward inside the window-pane in great fright, and outside a sparrow was pecking and trying to get in. The butterfly did not see the glass, and expected every minute to be caught, and the sparrow did not see the glass, and expected every minute to catch the butterfly, yet all the while the butterfly was as safe as if it had been three miles away, because of the glass between it and the sparrow.

So it is with the Christians who are abiding in Christ. His presence is between them and every danger. I do not believe that Satan understands about this mighty and invisible power that protects us. He must be like the sparrow—he does not see it, and Christians are like the butterfly—they do not see it, and so they are frightened, and shatter backward and forward in terror; but all the while Satan cannot touch the soul that has the Lord Jesus between itself and him.—*Mrs. H. W. Smith.*

—HIS MERE HAVE ALL. Most people think if they keep all the best rooms in their hearts swept and garnished for Christ that they will keep a little chamber in their hearts for Belial on his occasional visits, or a three legged stool for him in the heart's counting-house, or a corner for him in the heart's scullery, where he may lick the dishes. It won't do! You must cleanse the house of him, as you would of the plague, to the last spot. You must be resolved that all you are shall be God's.—*John Ruskin.*

—OUR BLESSINGS ARE BUT WORDS. God's blessings are realities. We wish good to one another when we bless each other. But he does good to men when he blesses them. Our wishes may be deep and warm, but alas! how ineffectual. They flutter round the heads of those whom we actually bless, but how seldom do they actually rest up in their brows. But God's blessings are powers. They never miss their mark. Whom he blesses are blessed indeed.

—THE LATE LORD SHAFTESBURY spent a great deal of his time and money in helping the poor of London. In return he gained the good will of even the worst characters, as is shown by the following anecdote from *The Philadelphia Press*.

"He once lost his watch while walking in the New Cur, a neighborhood 'invaded' with vile characters. He advertised his loss. Within twenty-four hours his household was surrounded by a ring at the street door, and the wheels of a vehicle were heard rapidly departing. On opening the door, a sack was found filled with something that moved. On investigating, a boy of the Artful Dodger class was found in it, bound hand and foot and gagged. Around his neck was the missing watch, and underneath was a placard with the words: 'Look 'em up, Mi lord, he's a Disgrace to our Pterouson, he order know as how our Pterouson was Free of the wad, give 'im five Years'ard. Yer friends.' The Earl kindly went to work to reform the young thief; and eventually he became an honest member of the London shoeblack brigade."