

## Messenger and Visitor

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### The Bible Societies and the Baptists.

It has become customary in a number of places—perhaps the custom is quite general throughout Canada—for the annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society—or rather its auxiliary societies—to be held as one of the services of the week of prayer. There ought not to be any objection to such an arrangement. None, we presume, is felt by any denomination except the Baptists, and we do not know that they are disposed to enter a protest against it. At the same time, when a Baptist minister is called upon to represent his denomination on the British and Foreign Bible Society platform, he is likely to feel a degree of embarrassment in the circumstances. He does not wish to decline, and thereby appear to say that he and his brethren are not in sympathy with the great work which the society has done and is doing in disseminating the Holy Scriptures throughout the world. Nor, on the other hand, does he wish to strike a discordant note in the meeting by finding fault with any feature of the Society's policy or work. And yet he must either do this or else seem tacitly to endorse a line of policy on the part of the Society, which, we suppose, Baptist ministers are very generally agreed in regarding as an unjust discrimination against the denomination.

It will of course be well understood, at least by Baptist readers, that what is here alluded to is the policy of the B. and F. Society in reference to the translations of the Scriptures by Baptist scholars into the languages of the peoples among whom the missionaries of the denomination are engaged in evangelistic work. One of the declared purposes of the Society from the first was to aid in circulating the translations prepared by foreign missionaries, and the assistance which it has thus rendered to missionary work has been very important. At first the Baptist Missionary Society of England was aided by the Bible Society in its work of circulating the Scriptures in India, notwithstanding that it was well known that in Dr. Carey's New Testament every Greek word was faithfully translated, and that *Baptizo* and its cognates were rendered by their equivalents in Bengali. This continued for a quarter of a century, and then, at the instance of Pedobaptist missionaries in India, the Bible Society changed its attitude toward the Baptist Missionary Society and refused to aid translations in which the word *Baptizo* was not transliterated as in the authorized English version, or rendered by some term unobjectionable to other denominations. Quite similar has been the history of the relation of American Baptists to the American Bible Society. For a number of years the Society gave liberal grants in aid of Dr. Judson's Burmese translation of the Scriptures. But, when the British Society, in 1836, refused aid to Carey's translation, the American Society quickly followed its example, in reference to Judson's translation. Both Dr. Carey and Dr. Judson believed themselves in conscience bound to render the Scriptures faithfully into the native languages in the light of the best scholarship at their command. The high excellence of both translations are acknowledged by scholars, nor, so far as we know is it contended by either Bible Society that their rendering into Bengali and Burmese of *baptizo* does not correctly give the meaning of the word. The course pursued by these pioneer missionaries was in full accord with Baptist principles in regard to the translation of the Scriptures. Later missionaries of the denomination on other fields have followed their example, and, as the Bible Societies have resolutely persisted in the attitude toward the Baptists taken

more than sixty years ago, it has been necessary for the Baptists both of Britain and America to make provision for their translation work through other channels, although they had been and have continued to be generous contributors to the funds of the Bible Societies. The policy pursued by the societies toward Baptist translations is the more remarkable in view of the fact that no objection is made to circulating the German version of Luther in which *baptizo* is translated by *taufen*, to dip, or the Douay version, which, from a Protestant point of view, is by no means a correct and satisfactory translation.

A few years ago there appeared to be a prospect that the differences between the Bible Societies and the Baptists might be overcome by agreeing that in Baptist translations both the transliterated form of *baptizo* and the translation should appear in the text, but it seems that it has not been found practicable to effect such an arrangement.

It seems right that Baptists should understand clearly what the attitude of the British and Foreign Society is toward them in regard to this matter of translations. At the same time Baptists would not be true to themselves and to their best traditions if, in their relations to the Society, they permitted themselves to be ruled by any narrow sectarian spirit. We rejoice in the great work which the Society has done and continues to do in the interests of biblical knowledge and evangelistic work. Baptists have shared largely, if not so largely as others, in the benefits of the work, and they will no doubt continue to support it by their prayers and contributions. But while we do so, we may feel it a duty, once in a while, to remind the Society that our appreciation would be still higher and our support more unreserved, if its treatment of Baptists were characterized by a larger measure of sympathy and justice.

### Christ Among Men.

Three things which especially characterized our Lord's ministry come before us in the Bible lesson for the current week. These are the preaching of the gospel, the healing of diseases and the choosing and training of a body of disciples who should extend the scope of His ministry, while he remained in the world, and perpetuate it after his departure.

John the Baptist preached repentance as a preparation for the coming kingdom of heaven, but that preaching was not peculiar to John. It had been in effect the preaching of the old Hebrew prophets, and especially of Isaiah. Then, when John's ministry was closed, Jesus himself began to preach in Galilee the same preaching of repentance. It was also the message with which Jesus charged his disciples, when he sent them forth by two and two; and when, afterwards, Peter and other apostles preached the Word in the name of their risen and ascended Lord, their preaching was still a call to repentance. And the time for preaching repentance is not yet of the past merely, for that Kingdom which Isaiah and John and Jesus proclaimed is still a coming Kingdom, and, for the unrepentant soul, its coming brings no blessing. Perhaps there is nothing which the world needs more today than a mightier emphasis laid upon God's call to repentance and the impending judgment of God upon sin.

Nothing that concerned human welfare and happiness was a matter of indifference to Jesus Christ. For the souls of men—their spiritual interests—he was supremely concerned, but he cared also for their bodies and all that pertained to their physical and temporal well-being. Touched with a feeling of their infirmities, he bore their sicknesses and carried their sorrows. The divine power which he might not employ for the satisfaction of his own needs, however urgent, he could exercise freely for the help of others in distress. The works of mercy which he performed in the healing of sickness, the casting out of demons and the raising of the dead are not to be interpreted merely as signs attesting his divine power, but rather as the free outgiving of his divine sympathy for men in all their suffering and trouble. He was not a recluse and an ascetic, dwelling apart from men in the wilderness and addressing himself only to their spiritual needs. He came into closest touch with humanity. He ate and drank with men. He was with them at the marriage feast and when the shadow of death was upon their homes. From every disease and disability, from every enthrallment of Satan, he would deliver men, that, in body and soul and spirit, they might be en-

dowed with health, beauty and strength, as the sons of God. Looking to the example of our Lord we cannot neglect the physical needs of men. We may not be able to work miracles on behalf of those oppressed with disease and want, but in providing hospitals and asylums, and in a multitude of ways, through associated and individual efforts, much is being done, and much more remains to be done in the name of the compassionate Saviour to give effective expression to Christian sympathy in the alleviation of human suffering, and to promote the well-being of mankind in the world.

The calling of disciples by our Lord is a matter of great importance and interest. He had come into the world as a man and for man's sake. His work was for men, with men and through men. His purpose was to deliver men from evil, to call forth the best that was in them and to reveal how great things were possible for them. As many as received Him, to them He gave power to become the Sons of God. We are not to suppose that Jesus called men to be His special disciples and apostles without any particular regard to their fitness for such office. This meeting at the Sea of Galilee was not His first meeting with these men, as John's gospel plainly shows. No doubt they were men specially adapted to receive His teaching and to be His apostles. Christ's call to service blessed these men of Galilee and glorified their lives. It was a call to leave all they had in the world, it was a call to a life in which there was to be much of perplexity, disappointment, suffering, persecution and final martyrdom, but we cannot doubt but that it was a blessed day for these men when they heard and obeyed the call of Jesus. The Lord is still calling disciples to be with Him, still ordaining apostles to go forth in His name and do His work. No one is excluded. Everyone who will may come near to the great Master and learn of Him. Everyone who will may be His minister in some sphere larger or smaller; and though we are so slow to believe and to act upon it, there is nothing more certain than that the opportunity to be disciples and ministers of Jesus Christ is the highest opened to men and women in this world.

### Editorial Notes.

—It appears from information that has been placed in our hands that certain brethren connected with the church at Lower Economy and Five Islands, N. S., have had serious trouble in connection with a Mr. M. E. Genge, who not long ago was for some months engaged with the church as its pastor. Judging from statements which have been authorized by the church above named, it would be unwise for any other church to enter into an engagement with Mr. Genge, without first instituting enquiries as to his record and particularly as to the action taken in regard to him by the Lower Economy and Five Islands church. Information may be had of the clerk, Dea. Josiah Soley, Lower Economy, N. S.

—Elsewhere in this issue, it will be seen, President Trotter calls attention to the day of prayer for colleges. Every Christian who considers the difficult and responsible positions of those who manage the schools of higher education and those who teach the youth gathered in them, and everyone who considers how great an influence for good or evil will be exercised by those hosts of young people who are yearly graduating from these schools, will certainly recognize how important is this subject for which prayer is solicited. We trust that this call to prayer shall meet with a very hearty and faithful response on the part of our churches.

—It is pleasant to learn from the pastors that so many of them are receiving substantial tokens of regard and appreciation from the people to whom they minister. No doubt but that both those who give and those who receive are blessed in connection with these incidents, of which several are reported on our Church News page this week, and we trust that these blessings may abound. But will those who report these pleasant occasions suffer the hint that, as there are so many, it is advisable to make the mention of them for the paper as brief as practicable. A few words tells the story as well as half a column. We all know that in any case there is a great deal that cannot be reported. Make the good story short, brethren, it will be all the better for it, and then there will be room for all, and no one will be disappointed and aggrieved because his communication has not found place.

—On Monday London, Ont., a the breaking down in which some meeting held in municipal election those present were ed as "a funnel" and a heavy coil top of them. more suffered in accident resulted floor was laid, b ed. It appears disaster that the as it should h occurs there is cism, suits for restore the lives stable door is be will be well if th ful inspection of the timely stre found to be in a

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