

Dessenger and Visitor

The Maritime Baptist Publishing Company Ltd
Publishers and Proprietors.

TERMS } \$2.00 PER ANNUM.
\$1.50 IF PAID IN ADVANCE.

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85 Germain Street, St. John, N. B.

Printed by PATERSON & CO., 85 Germain St.

Premium announcements appear on 5th and 11th pages. They should receive attention from each of our readers. Sample page of the Illuminated Teachers' Bible will be sent upon request.

Editorial Notes

—In connection with the Baptist Congress recently held at Buffalo, it is noted by the 'Watchman' as a gratifying fact that the denomination is every year becoming richer in well-trained and spiritually minded young men. "Our advance in educational work," it says, "is registering itself in the quality of our ministers, and the men of the best training are by no means the least devoted to spiritual things."

—In a communication just received from Rev. H. F. LaPlamme dated Cocanada, India, October 25th, he says: "The plague is honeycombing South India, and claims four out of five of its victims attacked. Thirty or more a day are dying in Bangalore, a city of only 200,000, not 400 miles from here. We are free yet." The petitions of our people must be offered to Heaven for our beloved ones thus closely threatened with this terrible enemy.

—The congregation which assembled at the Main Street church, St. John, in connection with the Union Thanksgiving service on Thursday morning was probably rather better than an average as to numbers, compared with the attendance on such occasions in previous years. The attendance however, did not by any means tax the seating capacity of the church. Rev. A. T. Dykeman of Fairville preached the thanksgiving sermon. Pastors Gordon, Gates and Higgins participated in the services. The sermon, which was a very excellent one, was founded on Ps. 92: 1.

—The authorized life of Gladstone, which Mr. John Morley has in hand, will involve labors which must extend over several years. The number of letters left by Mr. Gladstone is very great, approaching 100,000 it is said, besides many memoranda and other papers of interest. Between his retirement from public affairs and his last illness, the great man jotted down notes on his life, but he never wrote an autobiography. The hope, however, is expressed that the Gladstone biography will not be so long delayed as has been that of his great rival, Lord Beaconsfield, on which it is understood that Lord Rowton has been engaged for some seventeen years.

—The Secretary-Treasurer of the Annuity Fund desires us to say a word by way of reminder to the churches which have not yet taken collections on behalf of the Annuity Fund. We trust that it will not be forgotten that to a number of families on the list of annuitants the assistance which the fund affords is a matter of great importance, and this is especially true at this season of the year, when the fuel bill is so large an item of household expenditure. The amounts which the Fund affords to annuitants are at most comparatively small, and these small payments are subject to heavy discounts unless churches and individuals lend aid by their contributions to the fund.

—In an article recently published in the New York "Examiner" on "The Use of Homilistical Literature," Dr. A. S. Hobart commends to ministers the study of that part of homilistical literature which consists in sermons, not of course for the purpose of reproducing the words or even the thoughts of those sermons, but "just to see how others do it, to learn what one might call the spiritual strategy of sermons." Some sermons are effective, while others, which are superior to them in power of thought and not inferior in sincerity of purpose, miss their aim because they lack the element of adaptation. "Some

sermons set us thinking deeper; some cause blushes of shame at our own faults to come over us; some gird us with power. And some other sermons on great themes are as useful as a tallow candle for combing one's hair. It just greases over the surface and leaves the snarls all in. When ever we read a sermon that does something, it is good to sit down and ask, 'What is there about this which makes it hit the target so well?'"

—The Antigonish Casket does not endorse some of the doctrines of Hon. Dr. Longley's book on "Love." In fact the Casket appears to consider that Dr. Longley's exposition of love is not more satisfactory than Luther's doctrine of faith. It quotes from the book as follows: "When sanctified by love, no relations between the sexes are either impure or wicked," and proceeds to remark: "Surely this is damnable doctrine. All love, even that wonderful species of it which Mr. Longley describes as an 'over-mastering and delirious impulse born of heaven,' has to reckon with the moral law. Be it ever so 'over-mastering' and ever so 'delirious,' if it breaks through the barriers which the moral law has set up, it is lawless love and of the earth, earthly. Like everything else that issues in action, love must be judged by its fruits. The love which issues in acts which are forbidden by the moral law—by which we mean not only the natural law but also the divine law as promulgated by Moses and re-affirmed by Christ—can never sanctify anything, for the excellent reason that itself is now become an unholy love." It would seem to be in order now for the Attorney General to show cause why this criticism should not stand.

—It is intimated that the minister should recognize the value of the lever in spiritual effort. Dr. Hobart recalls Beecher's illustration of the two ways of getting a big stone out of a hole—the one, lifting it out by main strength, the other, putting under it a lever and sitting on the end of it. The latter was less exhaustive and more effective. In preaching it means "tactics." In these days as in Paul's men need to be caught with guile. The minister is partly a fisherman, partly a shepherd, and both fisherman and shepherd must use wit as well as force. "Here is a man who has lifted you out of a hole. How did he do it? Did he scold you out? Did he rave and roar and scare you out? Did he come out against your unbelief with arguments bigger than yours and match you, arm for arm and pound for pound and blow for blow? Or did he come, like David, with an unexpected weapon and fire it at you before you thought he was in range? Did he comfort you by telling you that your sorrow was only imaginary, or by holding up to you some great overshadowing truth, that in its glory made you forget your sorrow? Did he stir you to work for men's souls by the shame of failure, or did he tell you that 'your labor is not in vain in the Lord?'"

—Commenting on the statement of a New York paper, that the Corbett and Sharkey prize fight in that city last week cost the people who attended it about \$60,000 for admission tickets, our neighbor, the 'Telegraph', remarks:

"Sixty thousand dollars to see a fight between two toughs; is there any other cause religious, moral, charitable, social, educational or benevolent that would have gathered such a crowd at such a cost? Yet this is the close of the nineteenth century, that wonderful period of progress and reform. What are we to say of such an exhibition of sympathy with brutality as the greatest city in America has displayed? Is our civilization a failure, or is this but a speck on an otherwise perfect picture? Surely it is about time that the brutal and worthless prize fighter was made to give way to the advancing forces of civilization."

Surely, surely, it is "about time." And we shall hail it as an omen full of promise for the final triumph of the forces of civilization over the brutal and worthless prize fighter if we may live to see the day when the daily papers of Canada shall cease to fill their columns with glaring accounts and circumstantial details of such events as that which last week disgraced New York city. Under present conditions it seems very evident that the sympathy with brutality is by no means confined to that great centre of modern civilization and modern wickedness.

—The Baptist Congress held its sixteenth annual meeting in the city of Buffalo, Nov. 15-17. Some of the ablest thinkers among United States Baptists were present to read papers or deliver addresses on

subjects of great interest to thinking men. But it is evident from the published reports of the meetings that the Congress does not possess the drawing power of some other Baptist gatherings. Even at the meetings which were most largely attended only a few hundreds were present. Still it might not be wise to infer that the discussions of the Conference were unimportant or unimportant in reference to the life and work of the denomination. The first subject discussed was "Man's Fall and Redemption in the light of Evolution," on which papers were presented by President Strong of Rochester, Dr. George Dana Boardman of Philadelphia, and addresses delivered by Dr. Peabody of Rome, N. Y., and Dr. Barnes of Pittsfield, Penn. Each of these, we are told, "accepted some phase of the evolutionary hypothesis as the explanation of the facts of biology," though not without discriminating with respect to certain forms of the theory of evolution which are certainly antagonistic to the doctrines of Christianity. "The Opportunity for Baptists in Present Religious Progress" was discussed by Dr. W. C. Biting of New York and Dr. A. H. Newman of McMaster University. "On what grounds shall we accept the Biblical Books of our Bible?" was discussed by Dr. G. E. Merrill of Newton, Mass., Prof. True of Rochester, Rev. Geo. H. Harris of Tarrytown, N. Y., and others. Other subjects which were considered by the Congress were "State Help versus Self Help, or Paternalism"; "How far can the truths of Christianity be stated in the Terms of Naturalism"; "The Union of the Believer with Christ." Such reports as we have seen of the proceedings of the Congress are of a brief and general character. If, as we presume is the case, the essays and addresses are to be published in full, they should constitute a volume of great interest to all whose minds are strongly exercised over the great questions with which the present generation is wrestling.

—That there is such a thing as honest doubt few thinking men will deny. That an honest mind may be darkened by clouds of skepticism, that the pathway of faith may be obscured, that hope may fail and the mind may feel itself reeling in horror on the brink of that bottomless abyss of atheism,—all this is conceivable. But that a man should delight in atheism, that he should become a special pleader for it, shutting his eyes to every fact and discounting every argument that makes for the existence of God and the vindication of faith,—that is the marvellous thing, and from any point of view must be regarded as a strange perversity in human nature. Such a man is Robert Ingersoll, who, not only professes atheism but glories in it, scorns all faith in God and delights in misrepresenting and blaspheming all that men of religious faith have held most sacred and holy. As the apostle of unbelief he has magnified his office, and the influence of his godless teaching has fallen as a blight upon many lives. But earnest men, whether men of faith or men who doubt, will find no satisfaction in such a gospel as Ingersoll preaches. His graceful rhetoric, his eloquent sophistries, his uncertainties, falsities and insincerities are but as the breath of poisoned flowers and apples of Sodom to men's souls. More and more men who hunger for bread will feel themselves mocked by the stone which this godless gospel offers. Commenting upon Ingersoll and his teaching the Boston "Herald" said not long since:

With his remarkable gifts as a speaker, Colonel Ingersoll might be a great power for good, if he only knew anything. But that is now past praying for. There is no constructive element in his mind, only a destructive. He is totally destitute of the historic sense. Even in his avowed atheism he is simply the narrow partisan dogmatist, with no fine sense of what a fate atheism implies. Contrast, for example, the truculent tone of his utterance on this issue in the Boston theatre last Sunday night with the utterance of George John Romanes, a man of real science, who at one time equally lost his faith, although in later life, to his unspeakable joy, recovered it. "I am not ashamed to confess that with this narrow negation of God the universe to me has lost its soul of loveliness. . . . When at times I think, as I think I must, of the appalling contrast between the hollowed glory of that creed which once was mine and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it—at such times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible."

Finding Hid Treasure.

This world has not yet become so good, even in the best parts of it, but that a young man who determines by the grace of God to live a religious life will find it necessary to breast strong currents of evil influence which derive their strength from forces within him and without him.—

"Those mighty currents which flow,
With such resistless undertow,
And lift and drift
The will from its mooring and its course."
For that young king, Josiah, who comes before us