

Messenger and Visitor

Published in the interests of the Baptist denomination of the Maritime Provinces by

The Maritime Baptist Publishing Co., Ltd.

TERMS: \$1.50 per annum in advance.

S. MCC. BLACK

Editor.

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

Address all communications and make all payments to the MESSENGER AND VISITOR.

For further information see page nine.

Printed by Paterson & Co., 107 Germain Street, St. John, N. B.

The Body of Christ.

In one of the most striking and instructive parables of Scripture, the Apostle Paul sets forth the truth that the Christian people constitute an organism similar to the human body. As the members of the human body owe their connection with one another to the physical life which sustains them, so the Christian people form a unity through partaking of one common spiritual life. "By one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit." Life is the great unifier. Death disintegrates. Remove from the human body the life that supports it, and immediately the process of separation sets in and soon all the members will fall away from one another. If by artificial means a mechanical unity is maintained, as in the case of a mummy, the divorce is no less real, for death's interdict is there, putting effective embargo upon all intercourse and correspondences. Similarly when the Christian life goes out of the hearts of the people, they will either lapse into cold individualism, or present the unedifying spectacle of a mummified ecclesiasticism. The only unity on the part of the Christian people that is worth anything to the world, is a vital unity.

But unity does not call for uniformity. There is place in this living organism for every variety of Christian faculty and function. The apostle is careful to show that the very efficiency of the body depends upon the number and variety of the members. "If they were all one member where were the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?" There is need that the Christian Society should have eyes; that is, men of vision, men of outlook and uplook and insight. It can never surrender its seers. But it needs ears as well; that is, men who can hear the voice of deity as it speaks commandment from the skies, and the voice of humanity as it sounds in appeal across the world. It needs tongues, too; that is, men of utterance, who can sing out the glad tidings in sermon and in song, who can teach and persuade and warn and rebuke. And the Christian Society must have hands to work for it; that is, men of executive ability and financial strength to care for the temporalities and keep the business affairs of the associated membership in order. And it must needs have lungs; that is, the men and women whose special function it seems to be to in-breathe the Spirit, that vital air which animates the whole. Nor must we forget the nerves, those sensitive and feeling souls that keep the body quick all over and responsive to the slightest touch: nor the circulatory system, those silent, hidden, but ever busy members who are as heart and arteries and "small, inferior veins" to carry the warm life-blood to every part, and keep the extremities from growing cold. Each has its place and work and each is essential to the well-being of all. From these considerations three practical lessons may be drawn.

First. There should be no slothful self-disparagement on the part of any member of the body of Christ. The fact that one differs from all others in instinct and aptitude, gives no warrant for concluding that he has no place in the body. The ear cannot distinguish form or color. But "if the ear shall say, because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it not therefore not of the body?" Assuredly no! Likewise, it is not by comparing himself with another that a Christian determines his place, but by rendering the service for which his own aptitudes fit him. It is only when one finds himself unable or unwilling to bear any burden, or

perform any function that he has reason to question his right to a place among the members of the Master's body.

Secondly. There should be no depreciation of other people. "The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee." for the eye may require the kindly offices of the hand to pluck out the splinter that threatens to blind it. "Nor can the head say to the feet, I have no need of you," for it may need the feet to carry it out of danger, or to run for the doctor when it has been wounded. No more can the man of contemplative cast say to his more practical brother, I have no need of thee; or the brother who is gifted with executive faculty say to the unctuous prayer-meeting testifier, I am independent of thee. Nor can the church assembling for worship or for work afford to ignore the shut-in ones, the mother ministering to the little children in the home, or the aged saints who from their couches lift up their hearts to God in prayer. Oftentimes these hidden lives because of their unstaggering faith, their purity of soul, their serenity of spirit, their fervency of prayer, are the vital organs of the body. They "seem to be more feeble" than others, yet in reality they are more "necessary" to the health and soundness of the body.

Thirdly. No member of the body should exercise his gift for his own glorification. "The manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal." With all! The eye was not placed in the head simply to gleam and flash and fascinate. Its function is to give light to the body. While it performs its mission it is a thing of beauty. But plucked out of the body and set by itself it becomes a hideous thing from which we revolt in horror. The human hand may be soft and beautiful and in every way admirable while it maintains its connection with the body, and renders its social service, but it becomes a gruesome thing when lying apart on the surgeon's shelf. Even so does a Christian forfeit all spiritual comeliness who fails to subordinate his gift to the edification of the body of Christ.

These truths may well be laid to heart by all our people as they gather again to the activities of church life for the autumn and winter campaign. "Now ye are the body of Christ and severally members thereof." J. D. F.

The Things That Count.

They are Work and Worth. In the long run everything else plays out. It is true in all the walks of life, and particularly true of the Christian ministry. In his callow days a thousand unsubstantial things may count in the preacher's favor, which are scarcely taken into reckoning, when he reaches middle life. A luxuriant head of hair, a ringing voice, a pleasant smile, a flowing rhetoric, with fine pulpit manners and good taste in dress, will win admiration and open doors of opportunity for the preacher during the first decade of his ministerial career. But after that, it is manhood and mastery that the people look for. The prettinesses of speech and manner which sit well upon the novice may become ridiculous when conspicuous in the man of middle life. The day has come when he should be clothed with power, when he should be a path-finder for the people, a recognized force in the community and country where his lot is cast. It is a sad fact that there is a dead line in the ministry, but it is not identical with any age line. There is as much dead wood among the men of middle life as among the veterans. And the reason in the vast majority of cases is, that they have never given themselves to solid reading and hard, patient, brooding thought. They aim to be orators rather than teachers, and spend their time in re-hashing the striking sayings of other men, and hunting up the latest thing in illustrations. Their own minds, in the meantime are left unfurnished and undeveloped. Let a man think, and think and think, and the day will come when he will get his own vision, when the Bible will unfold to him in richness, when his feeling for God and Man and the God-Man will be so deepened and vitalized that his ministry will take on a fountal quality, ever fresh and full. Many a man is a conspicuous failure at fifty because he was unwilling to be an inconspicuous toiler at twenty-five.

But no amount of hard work can lift a little man into permanent and increasing influence. The elements of manhood must be big in him. He must live

above the littlenesses of the ministry. He must keep his heart pure, his ways simple, his sympathies tender, his aims high. He who bravely struggles up into a worthy manhood, will find his place in the hearts of men, notwithstanding all the difficulties in his way. Work and Manhood, these are things that count. J. D. F.

Editorial Notes.

—For the good name of St. John it should be said that we have enjoyed ideal summer weather all through the season. While the country was baking in the sun-blaze to the north, south, east, and west of us, the people of St. John have lived in the greatest comfort. Only occasionally has the mercury run up to 80 degrees. We have revelled in violet skies and soft Italian airs. The almost entire absence of fog has excited our sympathy for less favored cities.

—"Cast thyself down." "Do thyself no harm." These two voices are ever sounding in our ears. The one is the voice of Satan, the other is the voice of God. Self-preservation which is the first law of nature, is also the first law of grace. Self-sacrifice as inculcated by the gospel and exemplified by Christ is but a higher style of self-preservation. The cross is in order to the crown. Christianity demands that we sacrifice the evil for the good, the good for the better, the better for the best.

—The preliminary steps have been taken by the St. Louis Baptist Association, looking to the erection of a Baptist building on the grounds of the World's Fair at St. Louis in 1903. The Rev. S. B. Ewing, Dr. W. H. Mayfield and Dr. J. C. Armstrong have been appointed to confer with the Baptist church organizations throughout the country on the recommendation of the St. Louis Association. The plans for the proposed building include an auditorium and facilities for a Baptist display at the great World's Fair.

—Much interest has been aroused in St. John of late regarding the enforcement of Sunday observance laws. A few weeks ago the Lord's Day Alliance of this city, complained to the provincial government that laws prohibiting Sunday selling were openly violated, and that it was believed the non-enforcement of the law was due to some power superior to the chief of police which that official was bound to obey. The Alliance asked for an investigation, to which the government responded by appointing Premier Tweedie a commissioner to take sworn evidence in the matter. The Alliance has produced considerable evidence of the violation of the law, in the sale of cigars and groceries, while one of the license commissioners has admitted giving permission, on his own account, to druggists to sell soda water. The report of the commissioner will be awaited with interest.

The Judgment Seat of Christ.

By the Scriptural phrase, "the Judgment Seat of Christ," we are to understand, among other truths, that the ultimate fate of men is to be determined by their relation to Christ. Their destiny will be determined by comparison with him as a standard of character. When we appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ we shall stand at once before both the Judge who judges us and the Law by which we are judged. In the person of Christ the legislative enactment and the judicial office, the Law and the Judge, are combined. Jesus Christ is the Son of God incarnate and he is likewise the Law of God incarnate. He is the Word of God made flesh and dwelling among us and he is likewise the Will of God made flesh. In him God's requirement of men descends from the clouds and tabernacles in a transcendent character. In him we have God's interpretation of the dialogue and the divine impersonation of the eternal Law of Righteousness. In him we have a living illustration and a thorough working out of his own summing up of the commandments. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." There is a lake in Switzerland in which the traveller may see reflected trees and houses in the distance which are themselves out of sight. Jesus Christ is God's ideal of character brought within sight, the eternal Law of Righteousness made thinkable and put within the understanding of our minds. What God expected man to be—the standard by comparison with which all worthiness is estimated—is Jesus Christ. That then is the significance of the phrase, the Judgment Seat of Christ. As well as the Judge, Christ is the Standard of Judgment.

How that humbles and lays us in the dust! How that outreaches our little inch rules of morality and displaces our half pints of goodness! How it warns us, too, of the folly of being satisfied with