

Messenger and Visitor.

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Messenger and Visitor.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 11, 1886.

THE CONVENTION.

Several questions of no small importance will come up for consideration, at the Convention to begin on Saturday week.

The question of the future of Acadia College will require earnest and careful consideration. If she is to maintain the leading place now held by her, we must hear ourselves, and at once. Other colleges are receiving large additions to their endowment funds. Competition between institutions is becoming more keen. The demand for the widest and most thorough course of collegiate instruction becomes more imperative every year. The best educators are commanding higher salaries. The trend of sentiment of some of the best educators is more and more toward optional, which require a larger staff of teachers. All this, and more that might be mentioned, makes advance, on our part, absolutely necessary. If we hesitate until other institutions have us far in the rear, and the tide of attendance which is now setting strongly toward Acadia, begins to ebb away, and flow elsewhere, it will be almost impossible to retrieve the old confidence and patronage. It behooves us to be on the alert. This disaster will soon be upon us, unless we do something worthy of our own past record and of our possibilities, in the matter of Christian education. We know that the governors of the college are considering the question whether something cannot be done in connection with the semi-centennial of our college, which occurs in 1888, to put this heritage from the fathers on a better financial basis. Why should not the jubilee of the college be a time of rejoicing over the completion of the raising of \$50,000—a thousand for each year of the life of Acadia—for the following year?

The question of the finances of our body remains to be one of the most serious ones for the consideration of the Convention. A large deficit seems almost inevitable. This is not due to any want of success in the work for which our people are called upon to contribute. Both our Home Missions and our College have reached, this year, the spring tide point in their history, hitherto. Neither can we suppose this state of things due to real want of ability on the part of our people. For four years, at least, with the exception of last year, we have had a finance agent, for two years under the supervision of the Finance Committee of the Convention, for the present year under the direct appointment of the Convention itself. Last year, District Superintendents were in charge of the work of raising funds, under the direction of the Finance Committee. This system did not have a fair trial, however. If we are ever to raise such for our various denominational enterprises, we must have a way to reach all our people, and get each to do a little. The fact that the rank and file in England make up all but a moiety of the more than a million of the giving of the Baptist Society there, and that Dr. J. H. Hall, pastor of one of the wealthiest churches in New York, bears testimony that the poorer classes do the most of the giving to Missions, point us to this as the aim we should have in view. If this end is ever to be reached, it will be, we are sure, by getting all our pastors to take up the work. How this can most effectively be done, is the great question. To this the best wisdom of the wisest men may well be given.

But there is no reason why we should lose courage. God may be trying us, to lead us to mix more faith in Him with all our efforts. We may not be doing our work in the way now pleasing to Him, and the want of success is to lead us to search round for the better way until we find it. If this be so, the greater success of the future will more than make up the temporary loss. The fact that God's blessing is so richly poured out on the work for which we give our means, shows that the only trouble is in our methods, and not in our great enterprises. This should give us heart to grapple with the lesser difficulty.

It will be remembered that a delegation was appointed, at our last Convention, to meet with our Free Baptist brethren, in their General Conference last autumn. Representatives of the delegation were present, and received a cordial welcome. To reciprocate in kind, and also in expression of the wide spread desire for a closer union between the two Baptist bodies, a large and representative delegation was appointed by their Convention, to meet with our Convention this year. The object of the appointment of the delegation was two fold: first, to bear to us the fraternal greetings of their body; secondly to confer with us on the question of a practical basis of union, if we are prepared to consider it. For ourselves, we hope that there may be a conference over this matter. Other things being equal, there can be no two opinions about the desirability of such a union. Consultation on the question, by representative and trusted brethren of both denominations, and in a kindly, fraternal spirit, will insure a better understanding, all around. It will help us to know just the amount of difference there is between us, and to judge whether the points on which we disagree bind our conscience, and prevent any nearer relation than that of brethren bound together in the warmest Christian love. Even if no immediate union can be hoped for, a conference may show a trend of sentiment which will make union possible, some day. There must be care, however, on both sides, to manifest a spirit which will attract and not repel, or the breach will be widened.

It ought to be considered," says the *Golden Rule*, "no so much a grievous misfortune, as a disgrace, that a child of Christian parents should go out from the paternal roof unconvinced."

CONVERSION OF CHILDREN AT HOME.

This is putting the matter very strongly, but scarcely too strongly. Parents have every advantage over all others in leading their children to Christ. They should have the highest influence, derived both from their relationship as parents, and the respect and love which constant care and self-sacrifice on their behalf should call forth. They have the children under their control, also, during the years when they are most susceptible to influence, and when impression is apt to be most deep and lasting. Unlike it is afterward, when the children go forth to begin life on their own account, while they are only a small part of their time under the influence of anyone, they are with their parents all these formative years, to bring their children to Christ to be moulded by him to his will. If the full power the parents have in their hands were thus used, who can doubt that the conversion of the children of Christian parents, in their childhood, would be the rule.

Why is it, then, that so many Christian parents show so little care for the souls of their children—make so little effort to bring them to Jesus? It is not, in most cases, that they do not love them. It is not that they do not wish them saved. Why is it then?

In many cases, we fear, the parents are prevented from making personal effort to bring their children to Christ, because of the knowledge that their own lives are not as consistent as they ought to be. They fear, lest any words from them may not be received as well as from others who lack their speech by better living. So they leave to others this most sacred duty to their dear ones.

Others, again, neglect this most urgent duty to their children because of the low state of their own inner lives. They have but a faint conception of the terrible condition of the lost. The danger their children are in, the joy they are losing, the degradation of a life of sin, the guilt of robbing the Saviour of service and giving him indifference and sin in return for his infinite sacrifice, and the ever increasing peril, as the native becomes more hardened and more confirmed in its sinning—all this and much more does not arouse them, because they are not living themselves in the enjoyment of the love of Christ, and their own souls are dull, if not dead, to all these grand and dread spiritual realities.

There is, also, a procrastination among Christians as well as with the unconverted, which induces many to defer duty. Parents may intend to speak to their children about their souls' interests but may never think the present just the time. They will wait until there is some special interest in the church, when there is some striking providence, when they will have a good opportunity, &c. This all means they will put off the disagreeable duty, for the present, and that is about all. We chide the unconverted because they will risk the loss of their souls, while they put off their greatest concern to a more convenient season; do parents any better, who act in this way? Then, in all this, there is the false idea that a parent's duty to the souls of the children can be done by a word spoken now and then. If there were the proper idea of the supreme importance of this matter, it would be the chief concern, all the year round.

Finally, it is to be feared that parents are inclined to throw off the responsibility for the souls of their children upon others. Too much cannot be said in favor of Sabbath school work. We fear, however, that it is often urged in a way to do injury. It is spoken of as the greatest means of leading the young to Christ. We hear fifty words spoken about the importance of this work, where we hear one about that of Christian nurture in the home. We are sure many parents are thus led to suppose the Sabbath school teacher is chiefly responsible for the souls of their children. They feel altogether too easy, if they but send them regularly to the school. Let us not hold up the importance of Sabbath school training less; but let us hold up that of the Christian home, much more. Let parents be made to feel that the chief responsibility for the souls of their children has been laid upon them by God himself, and that they cannot be relieved from the best exercise of the paramount influence it is their privilege to have over the life and future destiny of the child, by virtue of the relationship of parents, and through having the child under constant control during the most formative and formative years. If, in holding any other obligation up, we loosen that of parents, there must be an irreparable loss. Let our ministers and speakers be careful here.

We have in mind an instance of what was done by faithful home training: It was the custom of the mother, in this family, to take her children apart, each Lord's day afternoon, and after having a lesson in the Bible, to speak to them personally, pointing them to the Saviour, and have prayer with them. Every one of this large family was brought to the Saviour before leaving home.

How is it with you, Christian reader, as you glance at these lines? Are your lips closed because your life contradicts the words you should speak? Is your own inner life so low that you think little of the unspeakable things which may or must be the eternal experience of your children? Are you putting off this most sacred duty, not realizing their danger, as death may be near, and as their hearts are growing harder? Are you leaving to others your most precious privilege, and what must be your most binding obligation? If you have been negligent, in this great matter, for these or other reasons, be so no longer; but as you wish to have your family unbroken with you in heaven, begin at once to do your part to bring them to Jesus.

JOHN BUNYAN A BAPTIST.

Mr. Vedder, in a review of Brown's "Life of Bunyan" recently published, takes the ground that the evidence there adduced shows that Bunyan was not a Baptist. He was not a strong Baptist, doubtless, or he would not have written his treatise "Differences about Water Baptism no Bar to Communion." Still we are not prepared to accept Mr. Vedder's conclusion from the evidence he adduces. The Freeman states the other side of the case as follows:

In Mr. Brown's recent "Life of Bunyan" he raises again the question whether Bunyan was really a Baptist. The chief reason for doubt—indeed, the only one he urges—is that some of Bunyan's children seem to have been "baptized" in the parish church. Seem, we repeat: for it is not yet certain whether it is to his children the entries refer. Even, however, if they were his, it does not prove anything to establish the fact of their being "baptized" in some other way than by supposing he was not a Baptist. His own statements are explicit enough. In the *Heavenly Footman* he gives among his directions how to run the following: "Do not have too much company when some Anabaptists, though I go under that name myself." And in his "Differences about Water Baptism" he uses language about baptism which is quite irreconcilable with non-Baptist views. "Water Baptism," says he, "is a means to increase grace, and in it and by it sanctification is forwarded and remission of sins more cleared and witnessed" (p. 112). Still more explicit is Kiffin's testimony in his "Sober Discourse of Right to Church Communion"—a book written avowedly against Bunyan's views. "The professors of the Christian religion are distinguished," says he, by certain terms, invented by their opposites to know them by, as Prelatical, Presbyterian, Independent, Anabaptist, etc. And it were well if such names were laid aside and the title of Christian brother resumed, because they agree in fundamentals. Now of all these our controversy in this case in hand is only with some of the last, who are (though not rightly) called Anabaptists. As for others, their avowed principle is to admit none to church-fellowship or communion that are unbaptized. The Church of England, we have to do, look upon this way to be absolutely invalid and so no baptism (else they would not be baptized themselves), and consequently esteem all such as unbaptized; so that we need not prove what is granted (Kiffin's *Sober Discourse*, pp. 2, 9). Bunyan was the leader of this movement and is the writer whom Kiffin chiefly answers. Had he been a Baptist Kiffin could never have written in such terms.

ENGLISH POLITICS.

The interest in the political situation is deepening. The Liberal Unionists are showing signs of an approaching return to the main party. Gladstone's attitude is conciliatory, and Harrington, at a meeting of the seceders, counselled a dropping of all hostility toward the party. Twenty-eight out of one hundred and one of the Unionists were defeated, and it is now seen that they must identify themselves with one party or the other, and the Conservative party, especially with Lord Randolph Churchill at its head, holds out few inducements that will weigh heavily with Liberals.

Meanwhile the new Government is by no means without its troubles. The predominance of the influence of Lord Randolph Churchill in the new Cabinet is thoroughly distasteful to the best elements of the Conservative Party. His services as a guerrilla leader in the warfare with Gladstone and the Liberals, for which his mixture of talent and perversity fitted him, may have been acceptable, but it is felt that there is room for objecting to his appointment over the heads of men whose services have been of longer standing and of a higher order than his. They very justly hesitate to sanction the career of one who has never been recognized as a member in full standing in the party.

This opposition is shaping itself just now about the Birmingham election. Matthews, the new Home Secretary, is to be opposed by alderman Cook, the defeated Gladstone candidate. He is a Catholic, and once

represented an Irish constituency in Parliament posing as a Fenian. On these accounts, and because he is regarded as a tool in the hands of Churchill, the Old Tories will oppose him. The majority of the Radicals will oppose him so that his success is very doubtful.

The telegrams have not indicated Chamberlain's own course, and in view of that gentleman's recent tergiversations, any surmising as to his course would be vain. The Conservatives, however, are outspoken in regard to the inability of the Liberal-Unionist leaders to keep its members in line, and evidently regard the defection as a breach of the compact.

New developments are anxiously awaited, the position is so strained that only a very little impulse is needed to completely change the position of affairs.

Notes by the Way.

COLLEGES.

It is a long time since most of the colleges in New England were founded. A new college would be regarded with surprise. This is because the conditions of society here have become to a large extent fixed, the convenience of the various sections of country has been provided for, and each of the principal religious denominations is now supplied with a college of its own. The latest of the colleges are the Free Baptist in Maine, the Universalists near Boston, and the Boston University, which is in connection with the Methodists. I do not call to mind an instance in New England in which a regularly established college has been abandoned, though some of them have passed through periods of great discouragement. In some cases the "consolidation" of two or more has been urged, but these institutions still maintain a separate existence.

But great changes have taken place in the colleges of New England within the last thirty years. The first change that impresses one whose memory takes in this period is the increase in the expense. It now costs three and four times as much for a college course as it did a generation ago. This is the result of a large increase in the charges for tuition, the higher price of board, and the general increase among the people in the expenses of living. This change operates to reduce the number of students. Many whose circumstances might have permitted them to take a college course at the rates formerly charged, would not venture to undertake it in the present condition of things. In consequence of this change, there have been established in most of the colleges a large number of free scholarships in aid of needy and meritorious students. One is surprised to find how many benevolent individuals have been disposed thus to provide for the education of worthy young persons through an indefinitely long period of time. Scarcely any other form of benevolence could be more productive of good results.

The proportion of students in attendance in the colleges probably remains about what it was thirty years ago; possibly it may not be so large, as there are now more inducements to call young men to other pursuits. The conditions for entering colleges have been considerably advanced, especially in the sciences, the modern languages, and general literature. All of the colleges have received large additions to their funds. This has come chiefly from the benevolence of a few individuals. The history of these colleges records instances of memorable benevolence for the promotion of the higher departments of education. While some of the colleges have been largely favored by this munificence, it is a notable fact that all have shared in it. These gifts have been made for chapels, libraries, dormitories, and improved lecture-rooms; but at the same time the general endowment funds have been greatly increased. By this enlargement new professorships have been created and large salaries are paid. This increase of professorships has been necessary on account of the demand for the division of departments, which had become too laborious in consequence of the large range of reading required in them, and also on account of the call for the introduction of new subjects into the curriculum. The universal genius who can teach every thing no longer is found. The constant activity in all departments of study makes it necessary that the instructor who represents any department should have time to make himself acquainted with all that concerns his subject. The strong pressure for the introduction of new subjects into the curriculum resulted in crowding in such a variety of studies, that at least some portions of it must be treated very superficially. This condition of things naturally suggested the idea of selected courses, and thus came the large provision for options which is found in some of the richest colleges, and is imitated to some extent in nearly all. How much this multiplication of subjects has added to the efficiency of the college as an educational agency is yet questionable. It is claimed by some that by the smaller number of subjects, more thoroughly and continually pursued, qualities of mind were cultivated that do not appear under the new process, and for which no equivalent is found as the result of that process. The impossibility of embracing all subjects in a college curriculum compelled a return to the earlier idea of a few prescribed studies, or the establishment of parallel courses. The latter plan has been very generally adopted, and in some cases with an amazing copiousness of studies. Though this is now the popular system,

it has not yet advanced beyond the experimental stage. If it has enthusiastic admirers and advocates, it has met with keen and forcible criticisms. The war of the giants still goes on, but an impartial observer will note two or three important facts. It has been found that to accomplish the best class-room work it is necessary to break up large classes into sections of twenty or twenty-five. This is a virtual admission that in important respects the small college has the advantage. The admission of the impossibility of comprising all subjects in one college course is also a virtual justification of the old curriculum. Since there must be a selection of studies, the question whether the students or the college authorities should make that selection, is the one to be settled. To argue that in the main, the college authorities are best qualified to select and prescribe, is not an exhibition of bigoted conservatism. At all events the prescribed curriculum of such a college as Acadia must be accepted as equal to any combination that may be made by the caprice or the best judgment of a young man just entering on a college course.

Public sentiment is gradually compelling the colleges of New England to admit young women to their privileges on the same terms as young men. The revolution goes on slowly, but it is constantly advancing. Even conservative Brown is yielding. The younger colleges were the first to make the full concession, but the older ones will follow. Whether the religious influence of the colleges is the same as it was thirty years ago, or less, or greater, cannot be easily determined. In view of all the facts that I can gather, I conclude that this influence is more decided and stronger than it was in the earlier time. These institutions were for the most part founded to promote education in harmony with religion, and most of them, if not all, are, I believe, still true to their original trust.

ACADIAN.

Denominational Statistics, Baptisms, and Church Clerks.

From the statements contained in the letters of the churches marked K and L in my last communication, it appears that some churches report among the number baptized, those persons who have been immersed by the minister, but have united with other denominations. Thus our statistics are not correct in this particular. Evidently there is a difference in opinion and no practice among our churches and ministers as regards the question of baptizing converts who, whether from their views of truth or from their sympathies, prefer to join some other than a Baptist church, or else no church at all. Is baptism the door (i.e., the initiatory rite) of the visible church, or of the invisible church? Is the visible church composed of Baptists, Free Baptist, Methodist and other branches? or is it composed of all bodies of baptized believers only? or is baptism a sign or token of "the obedience of faith," and not a "door" at all? Will the proposed uniform Articles of Faith for the churches in the Convention settle these questions?

Of course the main cause of the inaccuracy of our statistics is the fact that many a church has not in the office of clerk a person able to keep the records correctly, and willing to devote the necessary time and trouble to it. But there are other causes, such as a certain looseness in the matter of dismissing members. A member is granted a letter of dismission in the month of March to join another church. He does not present his letter until August, and is consequently still a member of the former church when the clerk counts him among the number reported to the Association in June as dismissed during the year. In reality the form of statistics contained in the letter does not ask for the number "dismissed," but for the number who have "joined other churches." Whenever a member is "received by letter" from another church, the clerk should promptly write to the church, informing them of the reception. Should not the letter given in March and not used till August have been considered null and void before July?

Perhaps this letter may lead to an improvement in some quarters.

NUMERATOR.

The Modern Mistake.

Very stirring speeches are heard at our Associations, very earnest appeals come to us in the columns of the *Messenger and Visitor*. Agents and ministers are canvassing and begging in our churches for money to carry on the Lord's work.

All our denominational boards are calling for financial aid; and it is very evident they are not calling without cause. These bodies are badly used by their brethren and sisters. They, by the appointment of the churches, have assumed responsibilities which they can only discharge by the honest and prompt endorsement of the churches. The churches have failed them, and they are now carrying heavy debts. The works undertaken by them will not bear retrenchment. They demand enlargement. To cease to grow is to begin to die. The Baptist churches of these provinces are abundantly able to enlarge present missionary operations, and to be free of debt. In these hard times there is enough of the Lord's money in the hands of our church members to do this. There is enough used by them for tobacco and other unnecessary expenditures to do this. It is useless to attempt a denial of this sad fact. The Lord knows this is so, and he is honored. We know this is so, and we are guilty. The unshared around us know this, and they despise us for it.

Why is this? Simply because a large number of our members—a majority I fear—have attempted the impossible. They have set out to be religious, and disciples of the Lord Jesus, without the consecration of their possessions, and all their financial ability to God. They have attempted to worship and serve God publicly by songs, speeches and prayers, without material offerings, or they have, with their lips, been praising God in his sanctuaries, and at the same time, insulting him with cent collections, or no contributions. They have been encouraged in this, or not reproved for this, by their teachers. Now cent collections are all right and acceptable, if these truly represent the ability of the worshippers, otherwise they insult Jehovah; for it is a base sham for us to attempt, in our offerings, to play the widow when we are not poor widows, nor have the good woman's faith and benevolence.

This is a modern mistake of our churches.

The ancient Israel paid tithes as they worshipped. The Apostolic churches, the first disciples, Martha by her service, Mary with her precious ointment, the converts at Pentecost with their money laid at the apostles feet, are examples for us. Judas, Ananias, and Sapphira by their dreadful failures forbid us to hope for successful discipleship when we withhold from God's service, or misemploy our finances. The fellowship of the first churches was a fellowship of giving and receiving. There is no other fellowship ordained for our churches now. When we withhold we break with Christ and his people, and are alienated. It is for our pastors, faithfully and lovingly, to warn our churches of this mistake which we are making. When all our congregations shall bring into our sanctuaries willing offerings as the Lord hath prospered them, a continuous revival will be in our churches, our influence with the unshared around us will be vastly increased for good, and our boards will be out of debt, and in funds to enlarge operations. Quite a respectable number of our churches have proved God in this way, and are receiving the blessing of it. May we not hope, that by an earnest presentation of these truths to our people, all our churches shall take higher ground in this service of giving. Has not the Lord allowed us to drop into our present difficulties, that we may learn a more excellent way?

Westport, Aug. 2. J. H. SANDERS.

Letter from Chicago.

CHICAGO, July 31st, 1886.

Though some time has elapsed since I contributed anything to your columns, I have not by any means been uninterested in what has appeared in them from week to week from other pens touching Baptist interests in the Maritime Provinces. In your educational movements and in the welfare of your churches I have felt as deep a concern as when present among you. I desire to unite with you in thanksgiving to God for the many additions to the churches the past year, amounting in the three Provinces to probably over a thousand. It is to be hoped that this gain will prove to be one of financial and spiritual, as well as of numerical strength. Growth in numbers, however, is not always growth in benevolence and spiritual power. In too many instances the chief aim appears to be to get persons into the Church; their subsequent training in Christian giving and Christian doing is apt to be neglected, or treated as a matter of comparatively small importance. But the end of the Christian life and of the Christian ministry are poorly accomplished in this way. That is not necessarily the strongest church which has the largest membership, if its members, on coming into the Church, are then left to wander like lost lambs upon the mountains; but that is the strongest church whose members, be they few or many, best understand the gospel in principle, best exemplify it in practice, and most unitedly and zealously strive for the promotion of its interests.

I have been sorry to note the low state of your different denominational treasuries,—that the receipts for Home and Foreign Missions and Education are falling so far below what is actually required. This is hardly what should be expected from the over forty thousand Maritime Baptists. Fifty cents apiece would give a better showing than this. And making due allowance for the hardness of the times, it should not be difficult for even the poorest person to contribute this amount, or for the churches to contribute its equivalent for their entire membership. I believe the aggregate contributions of the Baptist churches of Ontario and Quebec to the benevolent objects of the body will amount to at least one dollar per member, still they admit that they might and ought to do more. I have not been commissioned to herald the benevolent deeds of any of these churches, but I venture to refer to them for the purpose of provoking others to similar exploits. The Jarvis St. Church of Toronto has a membership of about 800, some of whom are indeed well to do, but the majority are in only moderate circumstances. Since the beginning of the present year this church took up one collection for ministerial education amounting to \$1,000. A few weeks ago they gave \$700 in one collection for Home Missions. They recently contributed \$8,500 to assist the Beverly St. Church—a daughter of Jarvis St.—in erecting its place of worship, and of the \$10,000 raised in Toronto towards the Woodstock Endowment Fund, Jarvis St. has of course done

its share, as are using objects. And other the means equally we organize for Christian I might add the Jarvis St. Church's salary tions laid out At the end accounts sh voted to making i pastors in and preach treat them I have been Chicago, in the Western Dr. Perrin, I came his miles out of a month's School. Th many of Seminars Semitic stud before knew month in a heat the most. In my t with reading in twenty-one whole of last and Judges regard to gra Park h removal of Dr been called Oriental stud The princ in Chicago at of the anaroh on May the that it will go Chicago is great wicked christian work city have rec the Chicago object being t that Churches There are nov nationalities membership I expect the represented s tion by the M other member

Beligi NEWS P CHURCHES, Q visit the bapti July 18th and to be liquid m many more of the pastors pect to leave the country, i pressed hard view of many My prayer is of duty plain have strength though it may here, that I m Aug. 2. MILTON, Y entered upon a year that has b but steady prog in being surroun unlearned peopl were last Sabba have recently b ing. Our last Sab and more of this Church? and what is be May the Lord Aug. 4. WESTPORT, the Messenger's dear friends an sympathy for am glad to tel Providence I health—better many years from my poor Brown, of Dig thirty miles Sabbath, with the people. The Sabbath by a all the peopl But our heav the flock. P were held w young member help to the ch are long. Dea departure of S of Bro. J. A. loved in her f of friends, to w deared herself, had neglected God by a pul grace of God tude. A very grac is enjoy services have any service of special by the Lord's people. revivals in our have summer: be if we are fervent in spiri FARMFORTH— bath morning, soon. And O Others are co the church, we to make ever carry this spir church. Bro post, as West wisdom and a building chara dations laid to say that appreciate the inter of the my Aug. 3.