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Messenger and Visitor
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WILL OUR LORD'S SECOND COMING BE BEFORE OR AFTER THE MILLENNIUM?

When the address of the retiring president of our late Convention was published, we promised to give some attention to the very strong statement it contained of the pre-millennial view. This was felt to be necessary because of the extreme confidence with which the assertion of this doctrine was made. If it were to go unchallenged, many might believe that there was no better reason for declining to accept pre-millennialism than a willful refusal to examine the evidence in its favor. However it may be with others, we are not holding our present opinion because we "refuse to investigate the subject," but because we have investigated it with some degree of thoroughness.

A cautious and candid treatment of this question is needed for another reason. There are those making a specialty of the pre-millennial view who associate with it beliefs which are harmful. The chief reliance of those who hold this view is in the literal interpretation of the scriptures. This interpretation is peculiarly liable to lead into the materialistic idea that there is no conscious existence after death, the body, that could sleep between death and the resurrection, and that the wicked are to be annihilated. Making these doctrines a specialty, they leave those who have paid no particular attention to them largely at their mercy. It will serve a good purpose, therefore, to give some reasons why pre-millennialism is rejected by so many and the post-millennial view held. There is still another reason for this course. Pre-millennialism is just now associated with the seventh day Sabbath idea, by some who are very active in propagating their views. It is not well that our people should be left at a disadvantage, as they have to meet these hobbyists.

This is our final introductory word. Although Bro. Creed's remarks are the occasion of our considering this question at the present time, we do not propose so much to answer them directly as to give a brief statement of reasons why we are not able to accept the view that our Lord's second coming is before the millennium and not after it. If we do not preserve a spirit of kindly Christian courtesy and candor, we shall deserve censure, and shall not complain if we get it.

It is necessary, at the outset, to understand clearly

THE EXACT POINTS OF DIFFERENCE between the Pre and Post-millennial views. Pre-millennialists believe that the second coming of our Lord will be 1000 years before the resurrection of the wicked, the final judgment and the end of the world, or age. This period may be 1000 literal years, or an indefinitely long space of time. At our Lord's coming the righteous dead will be raised, and, with the living saints in changed bodies, will reign on the earth with Him. Near the end of the thousand years will occur a terrible uprising of evil, which will be cut short by a final victory, the resurrection of the wicked, the judgment and the end of the age. Post-millennialists hold that our Lord's second personal coming is not until after the 1000 years, and that when He comes there will be a general resurrection of good and bad, the general judgment and the end of the world.

Involved in this chief distinction is a minor one. The Pre-millennial view regards the gospel as insufficient to convert the world. The purpose of its preaching is only "as a witness." The world will grow no better if it does not grow worse. It is only by the coming of our Lord and the direct assertion of his personal presence and power that the millennial triumph is to be brought in. This will not come by a gradual progress, but at a stroke of the power of the Lord when He comes. The Post-millennial view, on the other hand, holds that the gospel, backed as it is by the Spirit's power, is to prevail, and finally here in this glorious period. This does not mean that the progress is to be uniform and unbroken. Sometimes it will apparently be stayed by great uprisings of evil; at others, it will be carried forward upon the crest of great triumphs. The millennium is one of these triumphal periods, more marked and general than any previously seen, in which Satan is represented as bound (Rev. 20). But even in this period evil shall exist, although suppressed, and be doing its insidious work, as is seen in this same chapter by the gathering of the hosts of Gog and Magog at its close, the loosing of Satan, and the last great struggle before our Lord's coming to awaken all that sleep and judge quick and dead.

Other minor differences will appear as we proceed.

Which of these views is favored by scripture, is the chief question. What early or later Christians believed is of minor importance. Yet it is of importance that we should know just the facts as to the history of these doctrines in the church to prevent misconception. Of the so-called apostolic fathers only Barnabas, Hermas and Papias exhibit traces of pre-millennialism in their writings, and these were the fathers of least note. The fathers whose writings had most weight: Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp, Tatian, Athenagoras and Theophilus of Antioch, show no traces of it whatever. It had no place in the apostles' creed, the earliest doctrinal statement after the writings of the apostles. See Guerike Church History, Shedd's History of Doctrines, 195 sq., etc.

From A. D. 150 to 250 this belief gained general but not universal prevalence. It was a time of fierce persecution, and the saints saw no hope except in the near coming of the Lord to assert His own power, and flee to His belief for consolation. They were thus led to interpret some passages of scripture as giving them assurance that the Lord was about to appear for this longed for purpose. The interpretation which led to the belief was a false one, as the Lord did not appear, and the fact that these early Christians were thus led astray in one part of their interpretation should make us very careful how we consider their holding it much in favor of the doctrine.

Even during this time Ignatius refers to orthodox believers who rejected it. From this time on Pre-millennialism rapidly declined, and from the beginning of the fourth century it had few supporters. If "the common doctrine of the millennium is a novelty in the history of the church"—if "it is not found in any of the standards of the Reformation," let it not be inferred that pre-millennialism is found there. So far is this from the truth that this view was distinctly repudiated and anathematized by the leading confessions of the reformation both in Germany and England. If the common doctrine of the millennium "is a novelty, dating from Whittier," it is a novelty, only in the manner of its support and in its minor details. The post-millennial view, in its essential features, has been held generally by the whole church since the third century. We do not think any will care to question these statements.

In our next, we shall begin to investigate the scripture teaching on the question at issue between the two ideas.

OUR WISTERY TRIP.

While in Toronto, we could not resist the inclination to visit Woodstock, where six laborious years were spent. We have often thought that no place could ever hold an equal position in a minister's heart with that in which he had his first pastorate. To this place he comes in the first flush of enthusiasm before any hard experience has dampened his ardor. Hopes are high; the whole outlook is rose tinted. It is also the time for lofty ideas and a courage which has been unshaken by defeat. But we had other reasons to make Woodstock a place ever to be held in loving regard. Through the devoted work of Father Bates the ground was all prepared for a reaping, and we had the continuous joy of harvest during four blessed years. These were also years of the most precious fellowship with one of nature's grandest noblemen, Dr. R. A. Fyfe. What an inspiration, also, to preach to the congregation, which we faced tremblingly, yet gladly, Sabbath after Sabbath, including the students of the college and their instructors! What dear friendships were formed! What a halo memory throws round even the difficulties and heartaches! It is no wonder, then, that Woodstock is a fragrant name—no wonder that we looked with eager eyes as the C. P. Railway sped us around the curve up to the station.

We found that the sisters of the West were holding their Convention in the church, and that tea was provided for all. As the friend who met us at the station drove us down and we neared the church where we had so often seen the power of God displayed, and had buried one hundred and ninety in baptism, old memories began to crowd in space, and a hallowed tenderness, half joyous, half sad, possessed us. Even in the joy of meeting old friends, whose souls had been welded to our own in the past, we could scarcely resist the inclination to slip away and be alone. How one realizes, at such a time, how much of his life—his very soul—a man leaves where he has labored for his Lord, and had his heart filled with the work and the workers! What regrets come over him, that he had not come nearer to his own ideals—that his life has not conformed to its own deeper and higher promptings—what a longing that the time remaining may be better redeemed! How fast time flies! Can it be possible that over ten long years have glided by since last we looked into the old familiar faces! But see, who are those who come up with a shy bashfulness? They were little girls then; but they are young ladies now. Yes, the years have been flitting by and life has been flowing on with ceaseless

stream toward old age and death. How emphatic the lesson, "work while the day lasts"—our own day and others day—"the night cometh when no man can work."

But enough of this reminiscence. We were glad to find Bro. Dadsen living in the loving esteem of his people. They have every reason to esteem him highly; for he is as conscientious and manly as he is able, judging of all we know and heard. The audience room has been enlarged to hold 900 people easily. The mission at the East end is prospering. There is no other feeling than sorrow that that at the West-end was given up, as now a fine church building of another denomination is being erected to cover ground our people once held, or might have held.

WOODSTOCK COLLEGE

held a reception the evening we arrived, after the tea, in the church. This has been altogether renovated since we saw it last, and another spacious building has been erected. The Ladies' Department has been given up, since Moulton Ladies' College was opened at Toronto. As a speaker at the Convention said, the Baptist are taking the lead for once. At Woodstock, a manual training department has been opened. It and the scientific department have been handsomely provided with all the necessary facilities and apparatus for work. Dr. McVicar has shown his fine talent for organization in the equipment of this school as well as of Moulton College. Under Principal Huston, an enthusiast in his work, assisted by the old tried stand-byes on the staff, the College promises soon to outgrow its present large quarters. From all we can learn, its success seems to be assured.

WOODSTOCK HAS GREAT GROWTH

since we left. It is now one of the chief railroad centres in western Canada, and manufacturers have not been slow to avail themselves of its advantages. Here is the organ factory of D. W. Karn, Esq., a deacon of the Baptist church, and now mayor of the town. It turns out from 75 to 100 instruments a week, and still can not keep pace with the demand. He proposes to start a piano factory in the near future. His push and enterprise have done much for Woodstock. Here also are the agricultural implements works of the Patterson Bros., one of the largest in Canada, the output last year reaching the value of \$1,200,000. We cannot take time to enumerate other industries. We spent a day in

MONTREAL

We could not but notice one fact. In the great wholesale and the larger retail districts the names were almost exclusively British. In the small shops and in the poorer districts the French form the great mass of the population. This is significant. It shows that either the French genius does not fit this people to engage in the larger commercial enterprises which require brains and energy, or it proves that the dominance of Rome has cramped spirit, crushed energy, and kept the minds of her votaries undeveloped. Perhaps both reasons may hold.

PROHIBITION PARTY CONVENTION.

In response to the call, as published in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR of two weeks ago, this convention was held in Montreal on Wednesday and Thursday last. It was largely attended. Nearly 200 registered their names as delegates from various temperance organizations from all parts of the Maritime Provinces, and there were quite a number present who came on their own account, because of their personal interest in the object of the gathering. The first session on Wednesday afternoon was spent in a free expression of opinion as to the present situation on the question of Prohibition, and the outlook for the future. The general feeling seemed to be that the strength on the side of prohibition of the liquor traffic was now divided, and that there was little prospect of the suppression of this evil, until they were organized into a combined force to grapple with it to the death, impelled by the power of the deepest conviction.

In the evening, a preamble and resolution were presented, committing the convention to the organization of a Prohibition party. These were carried with enthusiasm and practical unanimity. The session of Thursday morning was the most important during the whole gathering. Its chief business was to consider a platform for the party. While some were found who supposed that there was hope enough in the old parties to justify a continuance of effort to bring upon them an influence to make them commit themselves to prohibition, the following platform was adopted with practical unanimity:

1. We acknowledge our dependence upon the righteous Ruler of the universe.
2. It is the recognized duty of the state to protect and conserve by law the material welfare, the health and the morals of the people. It is equally acknowledged that the liquor traffic works the greatest injury to all these chief interests of the individual, the home and the community. It is therefore the most evident right and duty of the state totally to prohibit the traffic which is the greatest foe to these interests, which the state is pledged to protect and conserve.
3. With the great organized influence of the liquor interest in the old politics,

parties, we have no ground of hope that either the government or the opposition will make prohibition a plank in their platform in the near future, if at all.

4. We fail to distinguish any distinct issue of principle between the existing parties at all comparable with prohibition.

5. We therefore declare the total suppression of the liquor traffic to be the chief plank of the platform on which we stand, and believe it to form a political issue which claims the sympathy and practical support of all good citizens who have the highest welfare of the country at heart.

6. We recognize the fact that, when the prohibition party may have to assume the responsibilities of power, the minor interests affecting the welfare of the country will require to be considered. Until, however, this time has nearly come, we do not consider it best to risk the division of the prohibitionists by introducing these issues before they require immediate practical consideration.

7. In the meantime, our representatives in parliament are expected to give an independent support to all measures they consider for the best interests of the country.

Doubtless there will not be wanting people to speak slightly of this convention. Old stages of politicians may smile at the attempt made to start a great and concerted movement. It is to be expected that unforeseen practical difficulties will present themselves, and that the best course will only be reached through a good many wrecks of unwise experiments. This has been the general experience of all the great movements which have come in as revolutionary forces. At the same time, discount the convention as we may, it has no small significance.

The attendance was very large considering the effort made to secure it. It was also representative. These, say 200 delegates, have no mean force behind them. It is also very evidently a growing force. The convention indicates that the temperance men are becoming very impatient, and will not longer be put off with vague promises of future action under well nigh impossible circumstances. The evil and wrong of this traffic are too evident and pressing to permit the question of prohibition to be evaded and shelved and its consideration deferred and deferred. There is also, in this movement, an evidence that many people are awakening to the consciousness that legislative action on a subject involving so much of moral principle as does prohibition, demands as its source and support a party ruled by conviction and not by mere political expediency.

SKETCH OF OPEN COMMUNION.

In Ford's Christian Repository for November is an article under this caption from the pen of Dr. Pendleton. It contains several facts drawn from the records of the famous "St. Mary's Norwich Chapel Case," which throws considerable light on the origin of open communion among the English Baptists. This chapel was deeded to the Particular Baptists. In 1858 the majority of the church holding it had adopted the open communion practice. The minority entered action in the courts to recover possession of the church property. This brought up the whole history of the origin of open communion among the Baptists of England. Mr. Roundell Palmer was chief counsel for the plaintiffs, and searched Baptist history as thoroughly as possible on this point. The result of his researches was that very little trace of open communion could be found in the seventeenth century. Of the five ministers who were said to have held it, he finds that two gave no evidence of having adopted the view, while two others had only submitted to immersion, but did not unite with the Baptists. The only prominent Baptist advocating open communion was Bunyan. The Confession of Faith of the "seven ministers of Christ in London" gives baptism as precedent to the Supper. This was dated 1643. In 1689, the year following Bunyan's death, a confession was issued which made no mention of the order of succession of the ordinances. The omission is supposed to have been due to Bunyan's influence. The controversy over the question of open communion then dropped until the latter part of the eighteenth century. At the first of this century, Dr. Wall gives the decisive testimony, "I know that the Anti-Pedobaptists do not admit to the Lord's Supper, when it is administered by themselves, any but what are baptised in their way." It was the commanding genius and influence of Robert Hall, who revived the open communion practice among the Baptists of England, and it has gradually come to be prevalent there, although in Wales and Yorkshire, where the Baptists have had the most

rapid growth in all Great Britain, the strict practice has always continued to prevail.

THE WEEK.

There is little of interest in British politics this week. Some of the leaders have been enlightening the electors upon some of the issues before the country. The papers are discussing the significance of the speech of Lord Salisbury at the Lord's Mayor's banquet.

There is a rumor abroad that Lord Dufferin, regarded on all hands as one of the ablest of British noblemen and diplomats, has assented to Gladstone's new scheme for home rule, and is the prospective Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when the Liberals come into power. It is hoped his influence may do great things to give the people of England confidence in the home rule measure.

It is evident that the attitude of Germany in East Africa is very offensive to the generosity of the English people. Sir Samuel Baker has been calling attention to the loss of influence and of prestige Great Britain has suffered by giving up the Sudan, to be overrun by Arabs, and to become the centre of the terrible slave hunting power. Germany cares a little about its horrors, so long as it does not interfere with her political plans. Since the removal of the blockade, the slave trade has bloomed out into greater horrors. The missionaries around the great lakes have had to fight for their lives. At Fwambo missionaries have been compelled to build a big fort in self-defence, and those at the north end of Lake Nyassa are kept busy fighting slave raiding parties, who attack the native villages and murder and capture inhabitants. On one occasion in July last the missionaries killed all the Arabs of a raiding party and released a long string of women and children being led into slavery. While the natives have no arms save their spears, the Arabs are armed with English guns, which latter fact arouses the indignation of the missionaries.

GREATER FEAR IS BEING HAD OF RUSSIA.

The government has introduced a great lottery loan fund, and has proved that in this way, almost unlimited amounts of money can be obtained from its own people. Eighty million roubles have been obtained in this way, while thirty-two times this amount was subscribed over and above the amount needed. Russia has been hampered, hitherto, by the great difficulty of negotiating loans in the various European countries. This new source of means will make her independent of the foreign money market, and help to make her more aggressive and dangerous. It is said that she is already pushing her forces up close to the Austrian frontier, and her demands in reference to Bulgaria are becoming more imperious. The latest news is that Bismarck has accepted the office of arbitrator between Russia and Austria and Bulgaria on the very difficult and delicate matter of the relations of these powers to this much troubled little kingdom.

Bismarck is also said to be much elated over the result of the Kaiser's visits to the various potentates. William II. has certainly inaugurated a new era in the methods of kingship, and it is to be hoped that salves of salutes may take the place of the roar of artillery on blood red battle fields, as the result.

The world has been surprised by a sudden and successful revolution in Brazil. This largest South American state is now a republic. The aged and excellent Dom Pedro has been kindly treated; but has had to leave the country. He will have a pension from the new government. The provisional president of the new republic is General Fonseca. The most of the provinces are favorable to the new government, and it is hoped the revolution will be altogether peaceful.

A great national congress of Catholic laymen has been held at Baltimore. There was much enthusiasm and many expressions of attachment to their church and of very worthy sentiments. Mercier was one of the stars of the occasion.

Baptist Seminary.

A friend, \$10; Mrs. E. P. Turner, \$10; J. M. Stevens, \$10; Isaac L. Milbrand, \$10; Mrs. Peter Murphy, \$10; Rev. J. W. Brown, \$10; Mrs. Wm. White, \$5; Manning W. Tingley, \$10; Rufus Tingley, \$30; Ruth White, \$10; R. Wilbur, \$10; Mrs. Hiram Fillmore, \$10; J. A. Turner, \$10; Zenas E. Turner, \$10; C. F. Dow, \$10; E. H. Robinson, \$10; Herman C. Henderson, \$10; Mrs. C. F. Dow, \$5; Mrs. Rufus Tingley, \$20; Mrs. H. D. Cleveland, \$10; Mrs. T. W. Peck, \$10; John A. Styles, \$10; Capt. A. Berryman, \$10; cash \$1.10.

Total \$251.10. Previously acknowledged \$2,741.47. In all \$2,992.57.

SUBSCRIPTIONS PAID.

E. M. Sipperell, \$5; J. E. Vincent, \$2; Martha G. Barnes, \$5; Rev. S. J. Archibald, \$2; Jordan Crandall, \$2; S. McDiarmid, \$6; Mrs. B. Vanwart, \$2; J. R. Vanwart, \$2; Mrs. John McInty, \$10; a friend, \$2; Mrs. Wm. Carlisle, \$2; J. P. Duval, \$2; Rev. C. Currie, \$2; Geo. W. Day, \$2; W. J. Doucette, \$1; Frank H. Hayes, \$2; C. E. Harding, \$2; Chas. W. Parker, \$2; Eliza A. Dolson, \$1; Milton Hicks, \$2; J. McD. Belyne, \$5; W. R. Floyd, \$2; Chas. H. Hay, \$2; Bolton Daggett, \$2; A. C. Smith, \$10. Total, \$77. Previously acknowledged, \$317.97. In all, \$394.97.

Fitting.

A few Acadian students take pity on a tired pastor, and tell him to go aside and rest awhile, engaging meanwhile to supply his pulpit. Heaven's blessing on the dear thoughtful brethren. Halifax becomes the first stopping place, and the North Baptist church affords the first opportunity for public worship. Pastor Manning discourses from Phil. 4:6 with his usual earnestness. We leave the sacred place cherishing, doubtless with many others, the resolve to bring more of prayer and trust into our daily lives, that we may realize more of the "Peace of God that passeth all understanding." This church, under the watch-care of its devoted pastor is doing a good work for God. Its pulpit gives forth no uncertain sound; but every time for truth and righteousness.

There is a little church across the water. It was my privilege to spend the winter of '85 there, as a supply for Bro. Grant, who had gone to complete his course at MacMaster Hall. The memories of that winter are very pleasant. I cannot think of coming to Halifax without going to Dartmouth. The Old Micmac is still doing service on the harbor. Bro. Williams has been pastor here for a year, lacking a few days. He has had a hard day's work already. Though courageous, he is nevertheless weary, and another service before him. How can the request to preach be resisted, even though the prohibition of friends at home ring in our ears. It will be a pleasure to speak once more to the dear people whom I learned to love. The pastor is regaining lost strength; God is blessing his work, and he has a strong hold upon the affections of his people. Exceedingly pleasant were their words of appreciation. A union cemented by mutual esteem and affection gives promise of permanence.

The place of worship here has been considerably improved. The vestry has been remodelled and joined to the rear of the building. A room for the pastor and another for the library have been added; and an excellent baptistry has been placed under the pulpit.

After making a few calls we are back again in the North church for the farewell missionary service, of which your readers have had a good account. The impressions of that evening cannot be effaced. Here were three in the vigor of their youth ready, at the command of Jesus, for toilsome and perilous service in India, that they may save those that are ready to perish; and going, moreover, to represent their brethren who remain at home, who also have received the same solemn charge to "go."

Was it only a fancy of Bro. Gates, who in his eloquent address, pictured the scene of the Lord Jesus, with the angelic hosts, beholding the scene and rejoicing in this fresh proof of the allegiance of His servants? All present seemed to join, with tender emotion, in the singing of the closing hymn:

Yes, my native land I love thee;
All thy scenes I love them well;
Friends, connections, happy country,
Can I bid you all farewell?

Can I leave you,
Far in heathen lands to dwell?
Bear me on, thou restless ocean;
Let the winds my canvas swell;
Heaves my heart with warm emotion,
While I go far hence to dwell.

Glad I bid thee,
Native land, farewell, farewell.

The final parting came on Wednesday, Oct. 23. Dr. Higgins and wife, X. Z. Chipman, Esq., Miss Fitch and a few friends were present at Richmond. Just as the gun announced the hour of 12, the bell gave the signal, the ropes were slipped, and the huge ship began to move. Handkerchiefs waved until the waving was useless. One of the mothers, who had borne the ordeal of separation bravely, stayed herself upon a post and wept. Hard is it to part with loved ones—to have them separated by oceans and continents, with all the uncertainties of human life. The Lord's service still demands sacrifice. For the sake of Christ many a wrench must come to the heart. But a little beyond is the recompense from Him who will say to the faithful, "Ye have done it unto me."

Wooden weddings are very proper, but not very common. The pastor of the First Church had one. An invitation to attend was cheerfully accepted. An inspection of the presents was a revelation of the variety of beautiful and useful things that may be produced from wood, and demonstrated the great regard of the people for their pastor. Mrs. Cline read a paper brimming with wit and wisdom. It seemed apparent that she was not sorry for the choice she made five years ago. Bro. Cline is happy in the affection of his flock. Few of our churches have an equal number of young men of promise who are actively engaged in Christian work.

I was glad to accept Pastor Miller's invitation to the Wednesday evening prayer-meeting in the Tabernacle. This is Bro. Avery's monument—a good foundation for a noble structure. This is the vestry of the church that is to be. May the consummation be hastened. The brethren here have, in the northern part of the city, a wide and growing field, and ought to have the prayers and sympathies of all the Baptist brotherhood throughout the city and Province. But we must turn from these pleasing associations and take another flight—this time to Truro. M. F. F.

(To be continued.)