

Messenger and Visitor.

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WEDNESDAY, JAN. 22nd, 1896.

THE WARFARE OF HOPE.

It is not a sign of a healthful spirit, nor does it minister to the development of a robust and helpful personality to be dwelling habitually upon the evils and the iniquities of the age in which one lives. By so doing one may easily cultivate a pessimistic habit of mind, persuading himself that the good forces are gradually becoming less operative in human society, that the evil ones are becoming more and more dominant and that the world is therefore surely if not swiftly going from bad to worse.

It certainly must be admitted that the forces which are contrary to God's laws and which hinder the best interests of humanity are still powerful even where human life and society are found under their best conditions. The crimes and iniquities of mankind are dreadful to contemplate and no one who has any real acquaintance with the present moral condition of the world can believe that evil is being rapidly banished from the earth. There is surely nothing to justify an exuberant optimism which persistently turns its face from terrible facts; ignores the awful moral degradation and spiritual poverty in which so great a proportion of the world is still involved and recognizes no need of the agencies of repentance and faith, of prayer and effort on behalf of the millions who are living and dying in their sins. But full of evil as the world is to-day and little as there is in it which approaches to the standards of living set for us in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, we cannot join the cry of those who would have us believe that the former days were better than these days and that the world, as regards its moral character, continually moves from bad to worse.

It must be remembered that the evil which goes on in the world to-day is far removed as it never was before. The modern daily newspaper press, with its news agencies in every part of the world has turned its search light upon every dark corner of the earth and the report of all the most horrible things that disgrace humanity comes to the readers of the daily paper as regularly as the sun rises or sets. The iniquities of government, whether municipal, state or national are searched out and published and all the evil deeds of human society legal and law are brought to the knowledge of the present generation, as they have never been to any other. It is the old story of letting a ray of light into the dusky room. The light does not create impurity, but it makes that which exists shockingly apparent. Elderly people especially are apt to think that, because they hear of so much more evil being done in the world now than they did in their younger years, there fore a great deal more iniquity abounds. Probably the contrary of this is true. The publicity which is given to iniquity is shocking and in some respects it is corrupting. But to a greater degree probably the effect is wholesome, since it both exercises a deterrent effect upon those who are disposed to wrong-doing and also, by calling attention to great evils, prompts the better elements in society to seek out and apply the remedy. In reference to physical and social conditions and intelligence, the condition of the people in that part of the world which is embraced under the name of Christendom is now greatly superior to what it has been in other centuries. It is true that an essential improvement in moral conditions does not always accompany greater physical comfort or a better development of the intellect. But from what evidence is available there seems no reason to doubt but that along with improvement in physical and intellectual conditions there has been, during the century now about to close, an advance in the general moral character of the people of the world, or

at least of those inhabiting the civilized portions of the earth.

The influence of christianity in the world has certainly amounted to more than simply preventing the increase of evil. It may be that it has not indeed accomplished all that might reasonably have been hoped for, considering the mighty things that are possible to individual christians, and to communities whose members are filled with the love of Christ and energized by the Spirit of God. But the Word does not return void. The purpose of Christ is finding accomplishment, and what the world has seen as yet are but the beginnings of His power. The days in which we live are better than the past. They are witnessing the widest and grandest triumphs of Christ's power that the world has seen. And can we doubt but that still better and far more glorious days are ahead, when christian hearts and christian communities will take on such an energy of love and faith and service as shall make possible victories over the powers and strongholds of evil as yet only dreamed of? With our faith in God, the Eternal Father, in Jesus Christ, the revelation of God in humanity, and in the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son; with our confidence in christianity as a religion divinely ordained to meet the needs of mankind, to conquer their rebellion, to take away their sins, to assuage their sorrows, to ennoble and purify their natures and bring them into eternal fellowship with God, can we doubt that the triumphs of Heavenly grace have just begun to be seen and that the years to come will witness marvelous victories for the truth? While therefore there is in the church of Christ to-day no room for a languid, self-indulgent optimism that knows nothing of the agony of faith and prayer and strenuous endeavor, there is surely no room for a despairing pessimism that would regard the world and its destiny as in the hands of Satan rather than of God.

SHALL MANITOBA BE CORRECTED?

In reference to political issues generally, the MESSANGER AND VISITOR occupies a strictly non-partisan position. Representing a people who are so much divided in their political affiliations as are the Baptists of these Maritime provinces, such must necessarily be the case. This, however, is not to say that in the presence of issues of an exceptional character and affecting the rights and liberties of the people of Canada or any province thereof, the paper should not have and express opinions respecting the policy proposed by government or by any political party. There may be political situations in which it is the right and the duty of the paper to speak out. Such an one, we conceive, is that now reached in the Dominion Parliament respecting coercive legislation for Manitoba in connection with the public schools of the province.

We have not indeed concealed our opinion that the remedial order of the Government on this subject was a political blunder and that the proposed coercive legislation means nothing less than an unwise and uncalled for interference with the independence of Manitoba in its own provincial affairs. As to the blunder, we may let that pass. We certainly have no call to interfere with the rights of any political party in that respect. But when it is proposed to interfere coercively with the constitutional rights or privileges of the people of a province of Canada, that is quite another matter. The principle of provincial autonomy is, we conceive, of the highest importance not only to the interests of each province but to the peace and welfare of the Dominion, and any interference with that principle which is not made imperative by constitutional statutes or is not demanded on grounds of common justice or the general welfare is likely to work great mischief and should therefore be discontinued by men of all parties.

In the present instance, we are strongly of the opinion that there is nothing sufficient to justify interference with the right of the province to manage its own educational affairs. The Manitoba school law was enacted with the approval of a very large majority of the people of that province, and further the provincial Government in refusing to obey the remedial order from Ottawa has been sustained, in the general election just held, by an overwhelming majority. The Manitoba school law has also been declared by the court of ultimate appeal to be within the power of the province and to entitle no constitutional right of any section of the population. It is true that the Roman Catholics of the province, who constitute a small minority of the population, are aggrieved because the common school law of Manitoba has deprived them of the privilege of state-aided Separate Schools, and the Imperial Privy Council adjudged them the right to appeal to the Dominion Government for remedial legislation. That the Government was therefore acting within its constitutional rights when it issued its remedial order to Manitoba; it is setting within such rights in introducing remedial legislation, and if Parliament shall give effect to a coercive measure, it also will be

acting within its constitutional rights. But it is also just as true that the Government had the power under the constitution to refuse to issue a remedial order or to introduce remedial legislation, and Parliament equally has the right to refuse to concur with such legislation if it shall be introduced. Some of those who advocate coercive measures have contended for another view of the case, but it seems to us impossible to reach the speech of Messrs. McKay, Weldon and McNeil delivered in connection with the discussion of the subject in the House of Commons last July and the admissions of the then Minister of Justice, Hon. C. H. Tupper, and not conclude that the deliverance of the Privy Council on the matter did not in any way interfere with the discretionary power of the Government or of Parliament in respect to remedial legislation. Whether or not therefore Parliament shall pass a measure to coerce the people of Manitoba in respect to their educational affairs is entirely within its own discretion.

It is quite possible, too, that the present majority of the province might with justice and wisdom have pursued a more conciliatory course toward the Roman Catholic minority. But reasonable compromise is not more likely to be denied; the minority may expect generous treatment from the majority if the province is permitted to manage its own affairs, though naturally such a spirit is not developed under a system of compulsion from without. It seems to us very plain that the interests of common justice and the general public welfare of the country demand that Manitoba be allowed to settle its own affairs, free from any attempt to force upon the province school legislation contrary to that enacted by its own Legislature in accordance with declared constitutional rights and the clearly expressed desires of nine tenths of its people.

The right of the people of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to common school systems has been established. These systems are highly prized by the people and in their practical working little friction is experienced. In Manitoba, where the Catholic minority is much smaller than in these provinces, there is certainly no just reason why a system of Separate Schools should be foisted upon the province by external authority and in opposition to the popular will. Considering what the situation is in Manitoba, it must be evident that any coercive measure enacted by the Dominion Parliament would be likely to remain a dead letter unless enforced by something more than ordinary processes. In the light of facts and of possible results we must hold the opinion that coercive legislation in this case would be an unjust, unequal and perilous interference with the principle of provincial autonomy.

DR. ASHMORE IN SWATOW.

Dr. William Ashmore is back at his old post at Swatow, China, and engaged in his old work of training students for the ministry. His class, which he expects will soon number a dozen, is composed of crude material, "just out of the fields and the shops and occasionally some from the saloons." They do not represent much in the way of wealth or position; "their old clothes and old shoes, all told, would not bring per man more than two or three dollars." But they are very polite and also teachable, interested in their lessons and appreciative of what is done for them. Some of them have had some previous training, but most have to be helped in reading as they go along. They are not wanting in intelligence. The chief difficulty is their want of spiritual discernment. "They are all so much of the earthly earth; all their talk, all their thoughts, all their efforts, all their lives have been about things earthly and it is so hard to rise to the apprehension of things heavenly." But withal there is encouragement. "Good common sense intellects they have—none better in all Asia." And promise of spiritual development of a high order is not wanting. "Sometimes they will get hold of a lofty cue, and they will follow it up with a keenness of accent that shows what can be made of them in the Lord's own time and with his help. These men are the high woodmen of a coming christianity that will bear comparison with that of our favored western lands." We wish they were farther along, but we are blissfully happy in this day of small things, because we know that the small things are necessary steps to the greater.

PRAYER FOR COLLEGS.

A note from President Sawyer reminds us that Thursday, the 30th of the present month, is the day which the denomination in these provinces is expected to observe as a day of prayer for colleges. We do not know how generally the day is so observed by our churches. It is observed by some, and it seems important that as many churches as possible should unite their prayers in connection with an object of so very great importance. We would suggest that if some of the churches find it inconvenient to hold a special service on the day named, the subject might be brought before the regular prayer meeting of the week, and our educational institutions and those connected with them as instructors and as students be made special subjects of prayer. It seems to us also that it might be attended with much good if our pastors generally would on the approaching Lord's day devote one sermon to this subject.

The Swallow's Nest.

What stars are to the blue sky; what butternuts are to the green fields; what the white foam is to the curling waves; what gems are to a ring; what music and poetry are to human speech—birds are to the animal creation. The Bible has much to say about the birds. It is a God-built aviary in which all the fowls of heaven seem to find a home. Enter it at almost any door and you are greeted with their songs or catch the rustle of their wings. Here we find the dove of the deluge bearing the olive branch to Noah and the dove of the Jordan resting upon the manifested Messiah. Here is the raven feeding the prophet by the brook and the mother eagle bearing her brood upon her outstretched wings. Here we find "the stork in the heaven and the crane and the swallow" each observing its appointed time. If we look closely into the inspired references, to these winged creatures we discover that they are everywhere represented as the ministers, the comforters and the instructors of mankind. Jesus Himself taught us to find comfort in times of distress, peace in times of anxiety, faith in times of doubt by beholding "the fowls of the air."

Among the birds of the Bible the swallow appears to be a favorite. Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah and the author of the eighty-fourth Psalm were each in turn, its disciple. The latter has a memorable passage in which he views the swallow nesting in the temple as an object of holy envy to all who are dwelling afar from God. "The swallow hath found a nest for herself where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of Hosts, My King and my God." "Blessed are they that dwell in thy houses."

That bird's nest in the temple reminded the psalmist that the soul of mortal like the swallow needs a rest. We are not wholly of the earth earthy. "We were immortal wings within." "The soul is made for flight; for swift incursions into far spaces. The soul can soar—above the clouds, above the sun, beyond the stars. It can sweep in thought, back over the past with more than the swiftness of a condor's wing, in expectation and prevision it can dip far into the future and behold 'the glory that shall be.'" God has given it a capacity, a freedom, a range, that is wonderfully bird-like. The soul wears of bondage, it defies a cage. It yearns for infinite space and immortal existence. It finds its truest affinities in "the things which are above." And yet the soul was not intended to be a vagrant of the skies, a homeless, homeless wanderer through the universe—it needs a nest, a home, a refuge.

The swallow nesting in the temple teaches us to build our soul's nest in God. When the psalmist first discovered the swallow's nest clinging to the walls of the temple, in the outer court where the brazen altar stood, he perhaps condemned it as an audacious bird thus to invade the sacred precincts of that holy place. The swallow builds its nest of clay and twigs and straw and moss and hair—just the common things it can gather from the street or the litter of the back yard. To take these things into the splendid sanctuary and attach them to its noble walls might have seemed a profanation of its sanctity. But as the prophet reflected, other thoughts than that of the bird's audacity would come to him. He would think that after all it was no more incongruous that a twittering swallow should build her nest, even beside the temple altar, than that he, a sinful man whose base passions mixed with earth should dare to build its nest in God.

And this is evermore the audacity of faith. Who of us can come to God bringing no defilement with him? Ate not our noblest thoughts and holiest emotions mixed with sin? What is our righteousness but filthy rags? We must each bring, if we bring anything, that which is as common and unclean as the mud of the street or the straw of the garbage heap. Yet though our poor loves and hopes and trusts and deeds are but as common clay or broken twigs or lowly mosses—though we may build upon the bosom of the Lord of Hosts, and this is our security. Secure this divine attachment and your nest is safe. No enocheo can steal it, no enemy can rife it, no storm can detach it. Jehovah will cover you with his feathers and under his wings you may trust.

The swallow builds her nest that "she may lay her young." It was not simply for her own comfort and security that she sought the temple court but with an instinctive yearning for the rearing of a brood of swallows. We need to learn early in our christian life that God's purpose in giving us a resting place in his love does not end with ourselves. It is not simply that we ourselves may be warm and safe and snug but that we may be used in nourishing others, near to the heart of God. The thought of spiritual propagation runs through the Bible. In the thirteenth chapter of Matthew there are two parables which, taken in their mutual relations give a clear development of this doctrine. In

the parable of the Sower, the seed is "the word of the Kingdom" but in the parable of the Tares "the good seed are the children of the Kingdom." The believer is placed in the world as the seed is placed in the soil and the bird in the nest, that others may believe because of Him. How is it with you? Is your life productive, does it warm other lives? Is your nest a place of spiritual incubation or do you simply sit and sing alone? In God's name build your nest big enough and warm enough for the accomplishment of this divine purpose or your own soul will chill.

In rearing her "loved masonry" the swallow labors with patience and perseverance. She does not imperil her "pendant bed and precarous cradle" by any imprudent haste. Morning after morning we hear the twitter of her little throat, as she attaches a fresh piece of clay and then waits for it to dry. Day after day we watch the flash of her purple wing as she flits to and fro in short, arrowy flights, with bits of down or moss or hair whirled to furnish her home. She is a wise little architect and in the end finds herself in possession of an edifice more wonderful than the palaces of man.

The lesson is worthy of application to the moral structures we are rearing. Christian character cannot be constructed in a day. It must be built slowly, layer by layer. Only by degrees does effort crystallize into character. The end of this century is a difficult time in which to learn this important lesson. In this age of steam and electricity we want to do everything at lightning speed. We are impatient of all delay. We begrudge the time necessary to lay foundations or allow our work to settle into compactness and solidity. We grow discouraged if we are not famous before we are out of our teens. We fume at fifteen and fizzle at thirty-five. But the lesson is essential to true success. We should do better work as we go along even if we have to do less of it. "Haste is slow" and the man who is unwilling to be an inconspicuous sower at thirty is likely to be a conspicuous failure at fifty. The opportunities of youth may appear small, the services which are ours to render them may seem trivial but they are the materials out of which character is formed—the clay and moss and straw form a soul's nest. Despise not the day of small things. As a great sculptor said, "trifles make perfection, but perfection is no trifle."

The swallow in northern climes is not an all-the-year resident. At the first suggestion of autumn she spreads her wing and betakes herself to a southern clime. Through cloud and storm and sunshine the aerial voyager pursues her long journey; guided by an unerring migratory instinct. Should she resist, the mysterious impulse to go the winter frosts would kill her on her frozen nest. We too, are migratory creatures. We too have a summer-land to seek. "Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow, Nor ever wind blows loudly; but in lies Deep meadow'd, happy, fair, with orchard lawns And bowery hollows!" and when the autumn days of life come on and frosts grow keen and winds blow bleak, the christian with heart and hope in heaven sings— "I would not live away, I ask not to stay Where storms after storm gathers dark o'er the way."

But the christian? Unlike the swallow does not forsake the nest in which his soul has spent its earth-life, he takes his nest with him, or to come nearer the fact, is drawn up in it to the eternal summer-land of song. "Say, where is thy refuge, my brother, And what are thy prospects to-day?" J. D. FREEMAN.

Letter from Rev. I. Wallace.

I spent the early part of December in Lower Stewiacke and Wittenburg, in Col. Co. Held a few special services in each place and had the pleasure of witnessing some revival in the church and also quite a number of non-professors expressing a desire for the prayers of God's people. During my stay in these places I made two visits to Meagher's Grant and Little River and had several good meetings and observed the Lord's Supper. I was reminded of a visit made to Meagher's Grant some ten years ago, in compliance with the request of Rev. E. T. Miller, who was then caring for these people. Our first meeting was a very gracious one, but on going to the large school house the next day for another service we found a notice on the door forbidding us to hold any further services there. The object was to prevent the Baptists getting any foothold. This unkindly act was overruled to help the cause it was designed to hinder. The Baptists have now, I am pleased to say, a neat and comfortable place of worship of their own and have hopeful prospects of advancement. The great want of these churches now is the settlement of an intelligent, consecrated minister among them, and with God's blessing, progress will characterize their future career. They still require the fostering care of our H. M. Board. The recent settlement of brethren G. R. Archibald and Archie Shaw at Lower Stewiacke, is a cause of much encouragement. On my arrival at Wolfville, to spend

the holidays with my family, I received a request to go to the aid of Rev. J. Murray in Falmouth. I consequently spent the closing days of 1895 and the early part of the new year in Falmouth and in compliance with the wishes of the Windsor Baptist church supplied for them two Sabbaths, including the greater part of the week of prayer. My cooperation with Bro. Murray was very pleasant and was accompanied with most gracious results. About 29 were hopefully converted to God during the meetings and the greater part of these have already expressed a desire for baptism and church membership. Bro. M. is greatly encouraged in his work and is much appreciated by his people.

I enjoyed my visit to Windsor. The church is prayerfully seeking divine guidance regarding the calling of a pastor, and it is hoped that on an early date this dear old church, in this prosperous town, may enjoy the pastoral care of a faithful under-shepherd. The coming man will find a most important sphere. I am now en route to portions of Glasgow Co. On my arrival in New Glasgow yesterday, I was pressed to remain until over next Lord's day, so as to allow Pastor Raymond to attend the Dedication services at Fort Hillford. Since my last visit here some five years ago, the Baptist church and congregation have purchased a fine block in the central part of the town, on the east end of which, facing James St., they have removed their place of worship and made improvements that greatly enhance its appearance and comfort. On the west end, that facing Archibald St., they have one of the best parsonages in the province. Our brethren and friends of New Glasgow are anxiously being congratulated and commended for their wisdom and zeal in this new departure, as thereby their prospects for advancement in church work are very much improved.

Pastor Raymond is getting his work well in hand, and is esteemed by his people and respected by the community generally. He is to baptize on the first Sabbath after his return from Fort Hillford, and is encouraged in the prospect of further enlargement of his flock. It is especially pleasant for me to meet Mrs. Raymond, as twenty two years ago it was my privilege to baptize her in connection with a gracious revival at Berwick, N. S. I am pleased to find her filling her important sphere gracefully and well. Tomorrow, Jan. 17, I am to celebrate the completion of my 70th year, and would record my heartfelt gratitude to God for the preservation of my life and for the privilege of spending 45 years in the christian ministry. I. A. WALLACE. New Glasgow, N. S., Jan. 16.

Letter from Rev. J. W. S. Young.

Having been requested by the Secretary of the H. M. Board to visit Springfield, Kings Co., I started and reached Hampton Village Nov. 27, when I met my old friend of long acquaintance, Bro. Howard, expecting him to return to Springfield. But as he had prayer meeting that evening, I was persuaded to remain to the meeting. It was my first visit there, but I found myself in the midst of a good assembly, earnest people. The pastor and others expressed a desire that I would remain a few days. After making it a matter of earnest prayer, I consented. Meetings began, and it was evident from the first that God had blessed the work for his people. So I remained for about three weeks and there were meetings of power and about thirty were brought to unite with the church, a very valuable addition. Many hearts were renewed. Then I made Springfield my headquarters and held five meetings and clearly saw that a great work was to be done on the field. But it was necessary for me to return home for a short time. I attended the quarterly meeting at Wittenburg, Dec. 25, and on Christmas held meetings at Lower Woodstock with Bro. Steeves, and so continued for one week during the holidays. Great good resulted in this my old home church, wanderers were reclaimed and some converts were made. In accordance with arrangements entered into with general missionary efforts, we both went to Springfield, arriving at Keirsteadville on Saturday, Jan. 4. On Sunday we began work, and it was evident that God's power was in the meetings. Many who had wandered away have returned and gone to work, and many sinners have sought the Saviour, strong men bowing and crying for mercy. Evidently, have been baptized and many more are to follow. Praise the Lord! Brethren, pray for us, the work is great. J. W. S. YOUNG. Springfield, Jan. 17, '96.

Question.

Is it according to Baptist custom that one of the deacons should get two or three of the members of the church to consent to give a minister a license to preach without coming before the church. If not, how should they proceed? I. B. So important a matter as granting a license to preach should be considered only at a regular and full meeting of the church or at a meeting specially called for that purpose, due and sufficient notice being given. This function of a church should be exercised with the greatest care, and, as a rule, the candidate for license should preach at least once before the church or before a committee appointed by the church to hear him before further action in the matter is taken. We should advise any church to give a license suddenly to no man.

At the Monday morning meeting of the Baptist ministers, St. John, there was a good attendance. Rev. I. W. Corey read a valuable paper on the doctrine of perseverance, and an interesting discussion followed. His services are being held at the Main Street and Carleton churches.

Mr. Henry Todd, of the Narrows, Queens Co., N. B., deserves honorable mention as one of our veteran subscribers, having just paid his 47th consecutive annual subscription. We hope that he may long live to enjoy the weekly visit of his paper and that he will never have cause to regard it with less appreciation. On my arrival at Wolfville, to spend

Maxims in

He who often broods Multiples distress Brooding over sorrow Will not make the Glittering sword and Dry no widow's eye Fruit of honest labor Soon or late appears Scenes of gloom and Will not always la Nature smiles with When the storm is Words by parents Children soon rep Love abhors rep Tainted by evil Patience conquers Truth, in time, Toil is not ignoble, Indolence is sin. Were we rich as Cro Wealth might pro Those who toil for Cannot toll in vain Every true life-story Shows some fond No true heir of glo Ever yet was lost Christ, the sure foun Standeth fast for Turners Falls, Mass.

SIGHTS AND SOU

For Boys and Gi DEAR GIRLS AND BOYS Day after day for we have been chattered med friend to meet under any true where public discussion, and has cowardly refused preferred to stand on on his own side where he could fire action. Our plan has been to his side, take notes and then return to our all his arguments and gospel on the thunder This is Tuesday eve Again, for the hundred past our challenge for sion. The crowd came about that this is the Therefore, although squirm out of it again, do but to accept or less

From the Clock Tow the house of the sub- consents to act as a Mission Chapel in the town, he prefers to there. The next mor the Mission Bungalow hammedan with glow a meeting that very o'clock. The bargain to speak twice, a half Thus the meeting will Miss Gray sets as help eecole man to help re-arranged for a, in The platform is move the house to the tre sitting in either wing Meanwhile I give my prayer in preparation Long before thea people commence to chapel. When the the sub-magistrate d and takes the chair crown crowd. Ever bench or box or bo found has been pro are not enough. Mar ting in the open win against the pillars about the doors. The habit (i. e.) was their called to t half an hour raised upon the christian re time was up, the chal and the missionary half hour. Then th and the Sabbath were. For thirty in away externalizing then the missionary to reply.

To say that his a refuted and his obje molished so as to tes inch of ground to st saying what any of the grace of God, cou better. "It is not ye spirit of your Father you." Jesus promise he would give them dom which all their not be able to gain through the prejudice and training of the against us, yet I do n a man of ordinary audience but under hammedan's charges back as the rock bo A common coo, wh ing to the Mohammed Tower, said that he n hair to the mountain it. His hair would p come off, but the n there still. So the S hair out of his head, root christianity.

One of the most ama is that Tharood did n of Israel go after th was not until plague upon him, and all the