

Messenger and Visitor

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—It is related that when Sir William Harcourt was a young man he once paid a visit to Lord Beaconsfield, or, as he was then, Disraeli, and on Sunday went with his host to the village church. "My friend, the vicar," said Disraeli, in explanation of that functionary's High Church tendencies, "will take what I call a collection, and he calls an offertory; and afterwards what I call a plate, and he calls an almsdish, will be placed on what I call a table and he calls an altar."

—It is stated that the rebuilding of the London Metropolitan Tabernacle—Spurgeon's church—which was destroyed by fire a few months ago, will begin immediately. The new building will be almost exactly on the plan of the former one, with the exception that the upper gallery will be dispensed with. The seating capacity of the new Tabernacle will be about 5,000. The cost will be £40,000, of which some £20,000 has been received from the Insurance Companies and the balance is being raised by subscriptions.

—It is related of Dr. Jabez Bunting, whom the London "Christian World" calls a Methodist pope, that, at a Conference when he was retiring from the President's chair, the election for his successor resulted in a tie between Mr. Slugg and another minister. Dr. Bunting asked whether one of the two would give way to the other, and Mr. Slugg at once expressed his readiness to do so. "Then," said Dr. Bunting, "I give my casting vote to Mr. Slugg." It is not generally the modest "Mr. Slugg" who under such circumstances receives the honor, but probably "Pope" Bunting did not sacrifice his reputation for infallibility in the choice of his successor.

—Results of a highly important character in the view of archaeologists have been achieved through the explorations of Mr. Quibell, carried on last winter at Kom-el-ahmar, ("The Red Hill") representing the ruins of the classical Hieraconpolis ("City of the Hawks") in upper Egypt. The discoveries of Mr. Quibell, according to the statement of Prof. H. V. Hilprecht in the "Sunday School Times," illustrate the history, life and art of the so-called pre-historic period of Egypt more than all other discoveries hitherto made in the Nile Valley. Besides Prof. Hilprecht's reference to the matter, the "Sunday School Times," in its issue of July 30, publishes from the pen of Professor Dr. W. Max Müller a particular account of the results of Mr. Quibell's explorations, which it characterizes as "the most startling discovery in Egypt within recent times."

—We desire to call particular attention to the notes of Rev. J. H. McDonald, pastor of the Amherst church, one of which appeared last week and another which will be found elsewhere in this issue. The entertaining of the Convention involves a heavy strain on the pastor of the church with which it may be held and a very great deal of work for a large number of his people. We have every confidence that Pastor McDonald and his people will perform most efficiently the duties they have undertaken. The entertainment of the Convention could not be in better hands. With the thoughtful consideration and assistance which the churches represented and the delegates to the Convention can render, everything, we are sure, will be satisfactory. But in view of the labors and difficulties involved in entertaining so large a body, our Amherst friends have the right to expect that the churches and those who are to represent them in the Convention will heartily co-operate so that the difficult work undertaken by the entertainers of the Convention may be performed without embarrassment to themselves or to their guests. Let everyone whom it may concern read what Pastor McDonald writes and govern himself or herself accordingly.

—Another of the world's great men is gone. Toward midnight on Friday, Bismarck, "the man of blood and iron," died. He was in his 84th year and for many months past had been in broken and failing health, but just before his fatal seizure had seemed to be in better condition than for some time previously, so that his death occurred unexpectedly. That Bismarck's name belongs among those of the world's great men will hardly be questioned. His physical and mental resources were very large. If a man's personality is to be judged by his ability to plan large things in the political world, and to bring his undertakings to pass, Bismarck has seen few equals in his own or other generations. As a controller and manipulator of events and situations, and a builder of empire, he stands unrivalled in his century. Prince Bismarck's influence went to the building up of absolute rather than popular government, though probably in his view the system which he did so much to establish in Germany was the best attainable under existing conditions, and the methods by which he built and strengthened the German Empire would have to be defended, if at all, on the principle that the end justifies the means.

—President Allison, of Mount Allison University, recently addressed some words to the Methodist congregation at Sackville in connection with the recommendation, or instruction, of the Charlotte-town Conference in respect to the Plebiscite. Dr. Allison's remarks were reported and published in a form which made them of some value as campaign literature on the "anti" side, and which, as Dr. Allison has thought necessary to intimate in a published letter over his own name, quite seriously misrepresented his statements on the occasion mentioned as well as his position generally in respect to prohibition and the Plebiscite. In reference to this position President Allison writes: "I recognize—how could I fail to do so?—a degree of doubt existing in the minds of at least some sincere friends of temperance whether the times are really ripe for parliamentary prohibition. I frankly admitted that my own mind was not entirely free from this doubt, but went on to say that such was my antipathy to the liquor traffic and desire for its destruction that I intended to give prohibition the benefit of the doubt and vote 'Yes' at the Plebiscite poll. The reporter most inexcusably represents as my expression the very reverse of this intention."

—Some of the Montreal and Toronto dailies are publishing from correspondents in the Klondike country letters written toward the last of June, which give interesting accounts of the condition of things in that region and of the adventures met with by the correspondents on their journey. As to the result of the year's work in gold mining, statements differ quite widely, but it is agreed that it is much below even what were considered conservative estimates. While there are a few who have made their fortunes and others have fair prospects, there must be many more who have got out of their investment of time, labor and capital, little besides a more or less valuable experience and a very large stock of disappointment. The Klondike may almost be described as the land of "the midnight sun"; for though the sun is never seen at midnight, it is at that hour, in the latter part of June, broad daylight, and night there is none. The supply of food had run low at Dawson before steamers began to arrive. The first fortunate arrival with fresh eggs found ready purchasers for them at \$18 a dozen. Oysters sold for \$1 each, potatoes for \$1 a pound, but prices are down now and eggs can be bought for \$3, oranges for 50c. to 65c. each. Newspapers still command a good market and bring 50 cents to \$1 each. Fifteen hundred people wintered at Dawson, but by the last of June the population was estimated to be 6,000, and many other thousands are on the way thither. It is easy to believe that many of the new-comers are "homesick, disappointed or disgusted." Dawson is described as being a model town in respect to peace and order. "The streets are as safe to travel by night or day," writes one correspondent, "as Yonge Street, Toronto. Crimes of violence are all but unknown. No one carries a bowie or a revolver, as is customary in other mining camps. There have been a few cases of stealing gold dust; in one case a sentence of five years was imposed." Another writes of the "solemn stillness" of the Dawson Sunday. "There are some of the roughest characters in the world here, but a stranger would

never know it. A more orderly, good-natured and law-abiding populace it would be hard to find anywhere. One scarcely ever sees even a brawl." The majority of the miners are from the United States, and of course very eager for news of the war. There is no longer exhibited any disposition to twist the lion's tail. The sympathy shown by Great Britain towards the United States has worked a magical change in sentiment, and John Bull is now admitted to be a noble fellow after all.

Elijah and Elisha.

In connection with the remarkable passage of Scripture which forms the Bible lesson of the week it is instructive to observe the companionship between Elijah and Elisha. "And they two went on. And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood over against them afar off." Elijah had his relations to these fifty men as well as to all true worshippers in Israel. They admired and revered the great servant of the Lord, but they stood afar off and came not into intimate fellowship with him. Only Elisha came near and walked with Elijah, bound to him by invisible bonds, until the hand of God should part them. Only Elisha was able to be the friend and disciple of Elijah,—to hold fellowship with him, to accompany him on his last mysterious journey, to receive his final blessing, to witness his ascension and to become his successor in Israel. It is true that the two men were cast in different moulds. In many things they were unlike. But in their faith, their largeness of spirit, their devotion to God's service, and doubtless in certain subtle relationships between the two personalities, there were the necessary conditions for a holy and intimate fellowship. Such companionship is of great importance. No human life, however great, is complete in itself. Elisha needs to receive the call and the inspiration of Elijah, and Elijah needs Elisha in order to the full expression of himself and the accomplishment of his mission. And then there are those fifty sons of the prophets. We are not to forget that they come into the picture and that they have some lot and part with Elijah and Elisha. They are of smaller stature, they cannot keep step with the great prophets. They stand and watch from afar events in which they are not great enough personally to take part. Perhaps it is to some degree their fault that they are not men of larger faith and greater spiritual stature, but they are not to be ignored or despised. Without these lesser men the mission of the greater prophets must fail of its full realization. The Lord has many servants, great and small, and the humblest who does his part shall not fail of commendation and reward.

Another significant thing in connection with the lesson is the prophet's bequest to his disciple. Every good man desires to leave something valuable to his successors. To some men worldly wealth seems the most valuable thing they can leave to their sons, and to some sons such an inheritance seems most desirable. But when Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for thee before I be taken from thee," it is not probable that he was proposing to bestow some material gift upon his disciple. At all events Elisha did not so interpret his Master's words, for he replied, "I pray thee let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." This, of course, does not mean that he might have twice as much of the Spirit's power as Elijah had, but that he might be richly endowed with spiritual power,—that he might, as it were, inherit the double portion of the first-born. "Thou hast asked a hard thing," said Elijah. And doubtless the disciple knew that he had asked a hard thing, but the nobility of Elisha's soul is made manifest in the fact that he could ask nothing less. It was a great thing that Elisha asked, because it signified spiritual power. It did not mean that Elisha might be permitted to wear Elijah's hairy mantle, to appear and to speak like him and to inspire the same awful admiration and reverence which men had accorded to Elijah. It is easy enough to copy externals, and pitiful enough it is to see some stripling aping the manners and methods of a greater man, and making an ineffectual attempt to clothe himself in another's personality, while wholly lacking the spirit that made the other great. Elisha went to the heart of things, and asked for spiritual endowment. The thing that he asked was hard not simply because it

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