

Messenger and Visitor.

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CONVENTION PLAN.—In this issue will be found several reports of meetings of district organizations to press on the work outlined by the Convention Plan. The vigor with which some sections of our convention field are taking up this work and pushing it, is one of the most encouraging signs of the times. How many more churches will send for plans of church work? They can be had through our office at the rate of fifty cents per hundred.

LIBERTY.—Madame Roland, on her way to the guillotine, exclaimed, "O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" and still those who seek to advance evil and wrong strive to delude men by throwing over their designs the glamour and attraction of that sacred name. In Ontario, an organization to promote moderate drinking calls itself the "Liberal Temperance Union." A combine of liquor men in the United States to prevent prohibition and to break down all Sabbath restrictions, presume to take the name of "Personal Liberty League." Those who are willing men should follow Confucius, Socrates, Plato, Brahma, but who reject well nigh all doctrines distinctively Christian, pose as Liberal Christians. In politics, all parties wish to get themselves under shelter of the name "Liberal." The name of liberty or liberal is so prostituted to a bad use that it arouses suspicion rather than otherwise, in these days. It is the old story of the devil arraying himself in sheep's clothing. In this case, the clothing is very thin; but still it will deceive some who are willing to be duped.

CONVENTION.—At their annual meeting in Springfield, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Congregationalists) elected Dr. Storrs (Congregationalist) president. Because of the division over the New Theology question, it was felt to be a difficult position, and Dr. Storrs took time to consider. He has announced his acceptance of the important trust in a long letter, in which he outlines what he considers the proper policy for all parties. He especially deprecates a yearly struggle at the anniversaries of the Board over the question of probation after death. He thinks this theory must have its consideration at the forum of public discussion, and if the Board ever yield its present position to meet the views of the new theology men, it must be by a general change in the sentiment of the denomination brought about in this way, and not by any hasty discussion at a public session of the body. This appears to be reasonable. He suggests the advisability of the appointment of a representative committee to consider the best way to bring it more and more under the control of the churches who funds it disburse. This is the only course consistent with Congregational policy.

WHAT NEXT?—We clip the following from a contemporary:

N-w rules for the Salvation army soldiers have been issued, it is said, by order of Gen. Booth. The regulations require every male and female soldier to be sworn in publicly by the officer in charge of the corps, who shall deliver the charge and swear in the soldier under the colours. Among these rules occur the following: "I will not attend any meeting outside of my corps without having first obtained the consent of my captain or other officer to do so." "I will, as far as possible, wear the army regulation uniform as a sign of such separation from the world." "I do here declare my full determination, by God's help, to be a true soldier of the army till I die."

If this report is true, as is probable, we have a specimen of an attempt at religious tyranny which the worst days of the papacy have scarcely equalled. Gen. Booth has already ruled that his followers shall only glance at anything outside of his publications; now he seeks to prevent them hearing anything but what he and his subordinate choose, on pain of perjury. Any scheme of religion which seeks to shut its votaries into itself in this way, shows its consciousness of its own weakness, and dares itself in the eyes of all intelligent people. The oath to remain a soldier till death is a master stroke. In the first unreasoning impulse of excitement, many may be induced to take such an oath. They may soon find they have made a mistake; but their retreat is barred by an oath. It is a poor compliment Gen. Booth pays his followers when he supposes they will submit to such means to keep them in ignorant submission to his arbitrary rule. It is no wonder many are startled.

BOSTON BAPTISTS.—The Baptist Union of Scotland has held its annual meeting in Edinburgh. The Union consists of eight churches. Five new churches applied to be received into the Union. Returns have been received from seventy-six churches, which report an increase in membership of 616, giving an average of nine per church over these churches, or seven over all the churches, as compared with six per church last year. The number of

baptisms reported is 925, the number last year being 796. The aggregate membership reported last year was 9,950. Taking the nine non-reported churches at last year's figure, the total membership is now 10,350. They have expended about \$12,000 in Home Missions, during the last year. There are seventy-six Sunday-schools, with an attendance of 5,351 and 1,023 teachers, being an increase of 250 scholars and a decrease of nine teachers. Sixty Bible classes show an attendance of 2,700, the number of classes having increased by six, and the scholars by 490. In connection with the churches there are 125 preaching stations and cottage meetings.

AMERICAN BAPTISTS.—Our brethren across the border have been holding their anniversaries in many of the States. We call a few facts and figures from exchanges. The New Jersey Baptists, in the last thirty-two years, have grown from 14,074 to 35,150, and the benevolent contributions from \$23,326 to \$54,364. Of the 37,500 additions to the Baptist churches in New York during the last eight years, 39,000 have come from the Sunday Schools. This year over 700 have been baptized in connection with special evangelistic work done under the auspices of the convention of this State. The State has been divided into districts, each with a secretary—a work has been done through these and co-operating pastors. In Iowa, the work of state missions has resulted in 996 additions to the churches. The aid granted was \$5,496. The Massachusetts State Convention has received \$46,016, and expended \$19,835 and invested the balance. A motion to draw out \$10,000 annually from invested funds to plant new churches was referred to a committee to report next year. There are 61,959 scholars in the Sunday Schools represented by the Convention, of whom 1,931 had been baptized during the year. In Pennsylvania, the State Board has expended \$12,395, and 538 have been baptized in connection with their work.

PERSONAL LIBERTY LEAGUE.—They have been formed in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania an organization known as the Personal Liberty League. It is backed by the rum power. Its object is to break down Sabbath observance generally, and especially to open the Lord's day to the unrestricted sale of liquor. The *Votes*, in an address to the clergy supporting the license system, speaks some truth as plain as it should be wholesome. The plea urged for licensing the saloons was that as the evil of the saloon could not be abolished, it was better to regulate it by license. Many ministers endorsed this plea and multitudes of Christian men supported license. Soon the question of licensing gambling came up. The same plea was urged; the attempt to abolish pool selling has failed. Let us, therefore, as the best thing under the circumstances, regulate it by license, and licensed it was. Now this personal League has been formed, and they own up, it is impossible to prevent the violation of the sanctity of the Sabbath. Liquor will be sold on that day. Let the government, therefore, make it legal to sell on a part of the Lord's day for the sake of regulating the traffic the rest of the time. The members of this League are very determined. They will vote for none in another party who do not give a pledge to vote for breaking down Sabbath observance. The next step may be to say of the social evil, we cannot abolish it. Let us therefore regulate it by license. All of which amounts to just this. If evil does are weak and timid and are easily subdued, the government will put them down; but if they become so determined that it is hard to do this, the government will regulate their evil doing by a license which makes the evil legal within certain limits. What is the lesson which this course bears on its face to those who are engaged in an evil business? Simply this. Be determined. Don't allow your traffic easily to be suppressed. You have only to persevere in evil doing and the government will finally regulate your evil doing by a license, and thus make it legal within certain limits. It is the worst premium to wrong doers to be determined in their evil courses.

All this bears upon the question of the repeal of the Soot Act. It is said to have been a failure, to a great extent, in some places. Allow that it has, and what then? Are we to give up the struggle and repeal the Act and license the evil? This means that rum-sellers are to be shown that if they defy a law long enough, it will be taken away, and they be protected in their traffic by a license. A pretty way to reward men for defying the law of the land, surely. This is to give up the fight against this evil, to encourage law breaking rum sellers to resist all law they do not wish to make it well nigh impossible to renew the effort to secure prohibition. We hope none of our readers will throw their influence in favor of the wretched principle that evil does are to be licensed, if they are sturdy and persistent enough as law breakers.

Church Discipline.

By discipline is here understood more than is usually implied by the use of the word in ecclesiastical affairs. It is to be feared that a narrow and restricted use of this word has been misleading our churches. Discipline has been usually taken to signify the infliction of penalties upon offending members. It does mean this; but, scripturally, it includes the education, training and saving of our church members. It embraces all the theories and processes of church life, as directed and taught by the Lord Jesus Christ. Any narrower view than this of the word will simply lead us to improper penance.

Christ himself best voiced the character and purpose of church discipline when he said—"The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." As this was his chosen work, so is it the work that he has chosen for his church to perform.

These two words seek and save must be emphasized by us if we will understand and properly do any part of our church work; and in some should dictate more absolutely, than in our dealings with offending members. In the few passages of Scripture given to guide the church in this work, the end sought, the course to be pursued, and the Spirit dictating are plainly indicated.

Let us carefully read the teachings of Christ when he says "How think ye if any man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and go into the mountains, and seek that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth over it more than over the ninety and nine which have not gone astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish. And if thy brother sin against thee, go show him his fault between thee and he alone; if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the church; and if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and Publican."

"Verily I say unto you, What things soever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and what things soever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 18: 12-18)

By this we are taught: 1. That it is not the will of God that weak, erring members of the church should perish. 2. That offenders or erring ones have a claim upon their brethren. That they are to be sought out, and if possible restored. 3. That if they refuse to hear the church, when their restoration is sought for, just as Christ directed, then they are to be their brethren as those who never had membership with them.

4. That when the will of God is done by the church towards the erring one in the decision of the church is sanctioned in heaven, and final. 5. That when the efforts of the brotherhood have failed to reclaim, that efforts for their salvation shall not cease, but that as for publicans and sinners, untiring efforts shall be put forth to save them.

By Scriptural discipline the ends sought are the preservation and growth of the church in honor, purity and power; and the salvation of the erring members, and so the salvation of all the lost ones of earth. The co-relation of these aims must not be overlooked by us. The former is included in the latter, and the latter secures the former, for, the church by doing her appointed work, will at once maintain her character and save the erring. The apostle makes this very plain to the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 5). Here he argues and urges for the purity of the church to put away from among them the wicked member. In his second epistle he directs them to restore him to their fellowship and love, that he be not lost. For the exclusion of the immoral member he argues that evil in the church is contagious,—a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump,—that the church should observe the ordinances of the gospel, free from vice, with "sincerity and truth." That there should be moral strength sufficient in the church to expel evil.

That the erring of a member should forbid pride, and call for deep sorrow, till the sin be put away from her. That only in the name and by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, can this good work be done by the church.

By this we are taught that the censuring and exclusion of a member of the church for party purposes, or the gratification of personal piques, is as foreign to Scriptural discipline as mob law is to justice. And this course finds no justification even when it is pursued by a majority of a church. In the church of Christ, injustice counts for nothing only as they proceed in the

name and by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus.

The light and the might may be with small minorities. For here, as always, "one man and God are a majority." Any divergence from the Scriptural purpose or spirit of discipline makes all church action on this line void and nugatory.

For, as in all of God's appointments for us, his own glory and man's good are identical; so in all church work, ordained by Him, the honor of the church and the highest religious attainment of every individual member are inseparable.

Again, the purport of the words seek and save indicates the intention of all church training and discipline, and should control all church exercises.

To seek is to look after, and in this connection it means to serve. Church discipline, therefore, to be valid depends not more upon the misdeeds of offenders than upon the purpose and spirit of the church in dealing with them. It is possible for a member to be improperly excluded for even the most innocent sin. Christ has evidently planned to save the very worst of men and women. It is the business of his church to carry out his plans, and accomplish his purpose.

Then again, to seek is to rescue from the tyranny and slavery of sin and Satan to the freedom and service of God and holiness. Nor can there be salvation from sin in the absence of holy consecration to the service of God; and there can be no effectual saving service without intelligent heart culture and practical training in religious duties. Just on this point should the aim of the church in her discipline be centred. By the cultivation of studious habits and religious industry, the members of our churches will be saved from backsliding, and not otherwise. And as believers are saved from a breach of fellowship by well directed religious work, so will erring members, if they are regenerate ones, be the more readily restored by being introduced to some suitable Christ-like employment, such as any church is in duty bound to provide for them.

May it not be that many wanderers from the fold are prolonging their straying chiefly because they can see nothing for them to do in the church should they return to it. There is too much malice in a real Christian heart to allow it to return to or remain in a church, simply to loaf and receive, without, in a more Christ-like way, doing some good work for the Master and humanity. For we must not overlook the fact that the idle priest in the church as well as out of it. To leave a church that is not doing her legitimate work, is after all, not much of a sin. A religion of don'ts is not a religion that saves from backsliding; it rather cultures out. A genuine church fellowship is not so much made up of negations as of affirmations,—not so much of what we are not to do as of what we are to do as members. These cardinal must be recognized by our churches as we can discipline our members scripturally and successfully.

That these facts and principles have been overlooked or ignored by our churches we have painful evidence. Our present inability to maintain a respectable record is but the fruitage of past negligence. Our chief difficulties now lie not in the fact that some of our members are wanderers from God and duty, but in the sadder fact that we, as churches, are not prepared to go after them in an intelligent and scriptural way. Nor are we prepared even to prevent our young members from following them. Unless our churches can come to a clearer appreciation of our high calling, which is of God in Christ Jesus, the evil of backsliding and covenant breaking will perpetuate themselves in our churches by the power of example. Are not them things even now by far too popular with us? Is it not true that a popular prejudice confronts us as we attempt even the discussion of this topic with our people? This prejudice has been born and bred in the ignorance of these plain scriptural precepts and purposes of Jehovah, which has too largely obtained in our churches. The attempts of our churches in this line have often confirmed rather than removed these evils, as doubtful methods have been pursued and ends sought foreign to the mind of Christ.

As the condition of our churches is constantly pressing us to seek for revivals and reforms, what better can we do than to seek now for a revival of religion of a type that will reach and remove the evils referred to in this paper. I have this confidence in Baptists, that when they better understand the underlying principles and purposes of church discipline, they will earnestly pray and willingly work for the maintenance of it in our churches.

If our pastors will but thoroughly arouse themselves to the work of faithfully, earnestly and persistently teaching the will of God in this matter, we shall see a return which will rejoice every Christian heart and bring great glory to Christ. J. H. BARRIS.

Dakota Correspondence.

Since your Dakota correspondent occupied space in your columns last, he has had an extended and interesting trip to the Pacific coast, some account of which might prove interesting to some of the readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR. Boarding the train (an excursion train from St. Paul) at Kennedy Station, Minnesota, on Thursday, 2 p. m., we reached Vancouver City on Sunday evening following, at about 6 p. m., being but a few hours over three days on the way. There were about three hundred passengers on the train, most of them Americans, and going through British territory for the first time. It was truly interesting and sometimes exceedingly amusing, for an old Canadian Nor-wester to listen to some of the comments made as to the lands and the people, some of them indicating strong prejudices and egregious blundering as to both. One well-to-do traveler fellow advised those writing to their friends behind, to put prominently in large type the initials, "U. S. A.," as he was sure the people there did not know where the state of Minnesota lay,—strangely ignorant of the fact that in the Canadian North-west there are a larger proportion of educated people, and graduates of colleges, than perhaps in any state of the union or province of the Dominion.

The first two days of the trip were rather monotonous as we crossed the vast stretches of flat prairie, varied only by the occasional small village and town along the way; but the last day was one of most intense interest, as we passed through the magnificent scenery of the bold, wild "Rockies." The exclamations bursting forth from scores of throats while gazing in passing along, at the variegated and sublime scenery, ranged all the way from the profane to the pious, which at some times is not a very long range.

Our excursionists represented every phase of American society, from the wealthy capitalist to the low dead-beat, and from the devout Christian to the miserable drinking scoundrel. A number of the principal towns, such as Portage la Prairie, Carleton Place, and Brandon, were passed in the night in going, but were seen in returning, as the respective times alternated very conveniently. At Vancouver we arrived on Sunday evening, just in time to search out and attend the little Baptist church, in which our young Bro. Kennedy, from McMaster Hall, and his amiable and gifted partner have begun with hopeful prospect to labor for the Master. Already Bro. Kennedy is permitted to gather in some sheaves, from the sowing of himself, and predecessors.

Made a short visit to the old fashioned town of New Westminster, and spent a most pleasant evening with my old friend, Bro. Lennie and wife and family. Bro. Lennie, though driven thither by disease, pursuit of health, has done a noble work. From almost nothing, he has worked up an interesting cause, and has built a place of worship, and about freed it from debt, that would be a credit to any of your eastern towns or cities. Thence after a short, and exceedingly pleasant visit with old friends on Sala Island, the boat was taken for the City of Victoria, on Vancouver Island. Here is a well arranged city of considerable proportions, with most of the conveniences of our best eastern cities, and apparently with a due share of their vice, especially in the liquor traffic line; although the infant town of Vancouver, with its fifty-two saloons, seems to be taking the lead in that respect.

The decidedly wholesome influence of your own Bro. Barry, for three years in Victoria, is felt by the little Baptist church there. I attended a prayer-meeting one of the evenings I spent there, which was truly refreshing. They were then without a pastor, but were expecting a brother in a few days from Toronto, with a view to the pastorate.

One Lord's day I spent very agreeably and profitably on Puget Sound, in the City of Seattle, where J. W. Pierce is overseer of the First Baptist Church. This good brother seems to be a vigorous worker, and has a church, apparently, very much after his own heart. The Sabbath School is large, and well conducted, and every evening in the week is occupied by some Christian and benevolent work.

There is a little Second Baptist Church in this city also, made up of a select few, I understand, with pre-millennial tendencies, and having a plurality of eldership, the leading pastor being an Hon. and a Judge.

The first church has one or two mission interests in the suburbs of the city. The ubiquitous, irrepresible "Salvation Army" is in Seattle, as well as in a number of the Canadian North-west towns and cities, and is reaching not a few of the old, old story, accompanied by the noisy, warlike bugling, drum-beating, &c., &c., peculiar to that turbulent sect. Your correspondent availed himself of the privilege offered of addressing their large and somewhat mixed audience, and had marked and gratifying attention, on two or three different oc-

casions; yet, there is little danger of your humble servant "going over to the army," either as general or private.

One of the most pleasing experiences connected with this excursion to the writer, was the large number of his old parishioners from his old Winnipeg charge he found in almost all the towns, from Portage la Prairie to Seattle.

On the return trip a very pleasant visit was made and a Lord's day spent with old and valued friends in the beautiful and thriving town of Calgary, near the foot of the Rockies, where the privilege was enjoyed of telling the "old old story" to a large and appreciative audience in the Methodist church, through the courtesy of the affable and excellent pastor, Rev. J. F. Betts—a blue nose, by the way.

At Qu'Appelle a number of old friends came to the train at two o'clock in the morning to see, and had a friendly shake of the hand with Manitoba's pioneer missionary.

At Brandon another very happy visit was made with old friends of Woodstock College time and others, one of them, our good Bro. R. H. Yale, the self denying and successful colporteur of Manitoba and the North West.

Then, as Winnipeg was reached, in the absence of pastor A. A. Cameron, and at the urgent request of the deacons, a Lord's day was spent with the charge of years gone by, with changes of five years. Many old familiar faces were seen in the pews morning and evening, and very many friendly greetings closed each service. The Sunday school was also attended, where the changes were much more marked than in the congregation, but even then not a few of the old workers were found still sowing the seeds of truth in the hearts of the young and rising generation. After nearly four weeks of absence from my family and my Grafton charge, I reached home again, to find that my good old fellow soldier, Dr. J. Crawford, and others, held the fort faithfully during the unusually long absence, and with increased health and vigor, the autumn and winter campaign will (o. v.) now be entered upon, indeed is already begun.

I intended to give some notes of a late campaign here in connection with the suppression of the liquor traffic by "local option"; but I see that my usual space is now fully occupied, and I must reserve that and some local mission news for another occasion. A. McD.

Literary Notes.

Littell's Living Age for 1888. For forty four years *Littell's Living Age* has kept its readers abreast with the best literature and thought of the time. A weekly magazine, it gives over three and a quarter thousand large and closely printed pages of reading matter—forming four large volumes—every year. Its frequent issues and ample space enable it to present, with a freshness and satisfactory completeness attempted by no other publication, the ablest essays and reviews, the choicest serial and short stories, the most interesting sketches of travel and discovery, the best poetry, and the most valuable biographical, historical, scientific and political information from the entire body of foreign periodical literature, and from the pens of the most eminent living writers. Such authors as Prof. Max Muller, Jas. A. Froude, Prof. Huxley, Richard A. Proctor, B. Ho, W. E. Gladstone, Edward A. Freeman, Prof. Goldwin Smith, Prof. Tyndall, Frances Power Cobbe, Francis Galton, The Duke of Argyll, Wm. Black, Mrs. Thackeray Ritchie, Mrs. Oliphant, Mrs. Alexander, Jean Ingelow, R. D. Blackmore, W. B. Norris, Lawrence Oliphant, B. L. Farjeon, W. E. H. Lecky, Alfred Russel Wallace, Matthew Arnold, W. H. Mallock, P. G. Hamerton, W. W. Story, Ruskin, Tennyson, Browning, and many other foremost writers of the age in all departments of literary and scientific work are represented in its pages. It is, in short, the only satisfactorily complete and fresh compilation of a great and indispensable current literature, and is therefore invaluable to the American reader; enabling him, at a small expenditure of time and money, to keep abreast with the literary progress of the age. The subscription price (\$3 a year) is cheap for the amount of reading furnished, while the publishers make a still cheaper offer, viz. to send *The Living Age* and any one of the American \$4 monthlies or weeklies, a year, both post-paid, for \$10.50; thus furnishing to the subscriber at small cost the cream of both home and foreign literature. The publishers also offer to send to all new subscribers for the year 1888, remaining before Jan. 1st, the weekly numbers of 1887 issued after the receipt of their subscriptions, gratis. *Littell & Co., Boston*, are the publishers.

All the doors that lead inward to the temple of the Most High are doors outward—out of self—out of smallness—out of wrong.