

# Messenger and Visitor.

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VOL. I.

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The "Messenger and Visitor" from this time to the end of 1885, for One Dollar. Do not forget. Get your friends to send in their dollars at once, so as to make the most out of our Special Offer.

The communication in our last paper, signed C. W. W. B., should have been headed "Pennyvania Correspondence."

WE ARE SORRY our esteemed contemporary, the *Presbyterian Witness*, could not find room for the communication of H. H. R., which appeared in our columns last week. It would have suggested much new thought to its readers. We should have enjoyed seeing the *Witness* try its editorial teeth upon the same H. H. R. gave it to crack. Perhaps it is just as well though for the teeth.

The *Illustration* which appeared in St. John on Sabbath, April 19th. There is much of the "wind," "earthquake" and "fire," and we hope there is also the "will small things." We cannot however imagine our Lord or the apostles announcing their approach to a city by posters, which would be of little use in a city where the streets are so narrow and the people so close together.

JOHN DENVER of the London Times, used to say that "a good editor is known by what he leaves out of his paper." This is scarcely true, as no one knows but himself what he leaves out. Perhaps the better statement might be, a good paper is known by what is left out of it, as well as by what is put into it. There is scarcely a week in which an editor has not to refuse to publish something which has been written in heat, and would, if allowed to appear, stir up strife. In all such cases a "good editor" will incur the risk of personal ill-will rather than permit ill to come to the cause through the appearance of what would breed dissension. This is one of the hardest parts of an editor's duties.

ONE reason, and the chief, we believe, why so many young converts fail to grow strong and become useful for the Master, is not furnished with work for the Master. Unless more Christian work is given and expected than attendance at meetings, and participation in them, which should be a privilege, our young converts will remain weak through idleness, and may become captives to the prevailing spirit of the world. Find work for all who should do work, and the church would increase its strength as well as its feelings many fold.

REV. G. F. JOHNSON has sent us a communication which has appeared in the *Wesleyan* and the *Bridgeway Monitor*, taking Rev. E. H. Sweet to task for two statements published recently in the *Messenger and Visitor*. The first is that Christian baptism was, for the first time, administered in Brooklyn, Annapolis Co., a short time ago, whereas Mr. Johnson declares immersion was administered forty years ago. Bro. Sweet is excusable, being a young man, for ignorance of this fact, and will be glad to find that he was in error. The second is that the Baptists were shut out of the union house in Port George. Mr. Johnson states that this house was always a Methodist house, and that the Methodist records do not show that "a cash contribution of even one dollar was ever made toward the building funds by a Baptist." We have enquired of one conversant with the facts, and are assured that this is all the worse for the "records."

The tone and spirit of the communication are not such as make it a kindness to publish it.

SIR JOHN A. McDONALD has shown good sense in permitting a resolution to pass which recommends the suspension of such portions of the Liquor License Act as have been declared *ultra vires* by the Supreme Court of Canada, until the Privy Council of Great Britain take final action on the matter.

IT IS SAID that the Senate will mutilate the Scotch Act amendment bill by adding a clause permitting the sale of light wines and beer in the Scotch Act counties.

Mrs. LORNA M. ALVERT received thirty treatments of the mind cure and then, as she says, "returned to the homogeneity and massage from which I had been lured by the hope of finding a short and easy way to undo in a month the overwork of twenty years." Perhaps she has too much mind to be helped by the mind cure.

Gen. GALLES' condition is improving. After the physicians had given up his case as hopeless, he has rallied. It now appears that the doctors have not understood his disease, and that it is not cancer. There is great hope of his final recovery, although it is too early to form any certain conclusion as to his case. If he do get well, there will be a new link binding him to the hearts of the American people.

The "Boston Herald" has the following on the attitude of Mr. Gladstone in the present critical situation in Central Asia,

which must commend itself to all whose blood is not boiling with the war fever—

"These are the doubts that Mr. Gladstone is evidently attempting to solve. As we said above, this anxiety on his part to avoid the war is most certain to be miscontrived. In the House of Commons on Thursday evening, his statements concerning attempts at a peaceful arrangement were received with jeers and laughter, as if they indicated a pusillanimous spirit on the part of the premier. But a man who wishes to save the lives of tens of thousands of his fellow-countrymen, and spare his country from the burden which an expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars would involve, deserves a better treatment. It is not always the most heroic spirit, who, in the safe refuge of Parliament, call loudly for war. On the contrary, that man shows himself the more heroic who, in the face of an excited people, and at the risk of losing all, or nearly all, of his personal popularity, tries to do what lies in his power to avert the loss, the suffering and sorrow that a war would occasion."

HOLINESS CHURCHES in California are not prospering. Dr. Watson, one of the holiness leaders who has preached in New Brunswick, has visited the Pacific coast, and gives the result of his observations in the *Christian Witness*. He says—

"The people who are leaving their churches on the account of holiness, thinking to find more liberty in the endowment of 'hands,' are finding that there are more crosses and petty troubles to endure in holiness bands, than in the churches which they left."

The so-called holiness churches in California are already split into a multitude of little factions. They are agreed on no doctrine, except the one of entire sanctification; they have no systematic pastoral oversight; no fixed church government; they are largely at the mercy of religious cranks, and incompetent evangelists, who come over the mountains with a Bible under their arm, assuming to teach great and new things. Many are finding it better to come back to their churches and stand up for holiness, and take every cross, every trial, than to fly to others outside."

But is there not a danger that these brethren who remain in, or come back to the churches to press their views, bring in to the churches all the confusion and strife which they have among themselves when separate, and thus do greater evil? The brethren to whom Dr. Watson refers evidently have vague and crude views of truth, and they need the steady power of churches grounded in the faith to keep them from running wild.

THE BAPTIST BOOK AND TRACT SOCIETY, 94 Granville St., Halifax, is authorized to receive subscriptions for the *Messenger and Visitor*. Call and look over the papers in their Reading Room, about which you will hear more next week.

The Originality of the Character of Christ.

(CONCLUDED.)

Nor can the conception of Christ's character be entered with any greater probability to the third standard of heathen perfection. That standard was, as we have seen, the attempt to reach aesthetic culture by the contemplation of natural and physical beauty. It is a notorious fact that to the mind of the first Christians those beauties which form the prerogative of the poet and the artist were rather objects of aversion than of contemplation. It is quite certain that they believed this special form of aesthetic culture to be at variance with their religion, and it is equally certain that they were wrong in so believing. Yet the very fact that the first Christians should have conceived such an impression indicates that the religion of Christ must have introduced them to another phase of aesthetic culture. The truth is that Christianity had brought into the world a new estimate of the beautiful by the introduction of a new law of association. It had succeeded in uniting the thought of symmetry with that which hitherto had been unharmonious. When Paul said that he gloried in the cross, he expressed more than the common faith of Christendom; he indicated the common sense of Christendom to a new association of the beautiful—an association which to the heathen mind appeared the wildest of paradoxes—the union of glory and pain. Christ was himself the personification of the new aesthetic ideal. He unites in one act the hitherto opposite elements of glory and of shame. He looks forward to the hour of deepest human frailty as the hour in which the Son of Man should be glorified. He declares on the road to Emmaus that the disharmony was an essential part of the beauty, that Christ must needs have suffered that he might enter into his glory. He stands under the shadow of the cross, and bequeaths to the world his peace; he confronts the spectacle of death, and speaks of the fullness of his joy. Nay, this aesthetic connection between the cross and the crown, between the Calvary and the Olive of human life, is carried out to a still further length by the minds of his disciples. As if to find the longest possible bridge between the extremes of human thought, they actually give to the conception of Christ as the high priest in heaven. They are not afraid to enter within the

veil, they are not afraid to introduce within the veil the thought of sacrifice and the memory of human pain; heaven and earth never met so closely together as in that association of sacrificial sorrow with spiritual joy. The apologetic importance of this association it is hardly possible to overstate; it is, if we mistake not, that which above all other things stamps the character of Christ with its impress of originality. The founder of Buddhism has been thought to come nearer to him than any other ideal of antiquity; but it is just here that the founder of Buddhism is further behind him than all. Buddha longed for death; and taught his followers to long for death; but why? Because the sufferings of life were too strong for him. The notion of a world redeemed through a cross, and passed through suffering, was at the last possible remove either from his teaching or his thought. Buddha considered the goal of human blessedness to be the emancipation from desire—desire was the source of temptation, and temptation was the source of pain. With what a startling power of contrast does the Christian ideal burst upon our view! "Then was Jesus led up by the Spirit to be tempted in the wilderness." The more deeply we analyze the meaning of these words, the more are we impressed with the radical difference of their standpoint from that of the Buddhist religion. Here is a being who is supposed to have actually reached the blessedness of divine communion. The heavens have opened to his vision, and the voice of heaven has sounded in his ear, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Yet this Nirvana of rest, which to Buddha would have been the goal, is to Christ only the beginning. He is led up from the paradise into the wilderness, into the world of desires and temptations, simply in order that he may experience these desires and encounter these temptations; and as if to make the contrast more marked, he is "led up by the Spirit." The struggle with worldly influences, so far from being, as Buddha's held, a barrier to the religious life, is declared to be itself the highest manifestation of that life, the evidence of its existence, and the proof of its power. From the manger to the cross, from the wilderness to the garden, we are confronted by one pervading thought—the possible glory of human suffering, and the potential gain that resides in human loss; and we are constrained as we survey the picture, whatever be our estimate of its dogmatic value, to assign to it the merit of genuine originality.

The last ideal of heathendom, and that in which heathendom agreed with Judaism, was the reverence for regal majesty, the desire of a kingdom. Now, let us observe that, in the abstract, Christ was at one with this desire. Lord Amberley, in his "Analysis of Religious Belief," has found in Christ's abstinence from earthly greatness a parallel to the saying of Confucius, that there are three desirable objects, and that the possession of empire is not one of them. Lord Amberley has altogether missed the beauty and the freshness of the Christian paradox. The Chinese philosopher meant to state that a man might be perfectly happy though his lot were obscure and his influence insignificant; Christ would certainly have conceded the platitude, but he would not have thought it worthy to be the subject of a special revelation. The leading thought in the mind of the Master is not the abstract undesirability of empire, but the contrary. Empire in its deepest sense is the influence of mind over mind, and Christ professes expressly to establish such an influence. He adopts a principle of natural selection, by which the saints shall judge the world; in other words, by which the best shall rule. He declares his mission to be the establishment of a kingdom, the introduction of a new government into the affairs of men, the domination of worldly views by spiritual forces now despised and disregarded. To this extent he is at one with the Roman and at one with the Jew; he believes, as we have seen, that he is to be a ruler, as an individual, to be incapable of action, and he longs to see them united as the servants of a theocratic power, whose will shall be their will. But at this point the master parts company with the Roman and the Jew, and strikes off on a path which had been hitherto untrodden. He agreed with them in their desire of a kingdom; he differed from them radically in their mode of realizing it. The Roman and the Jew sought to dominate men from without; they strove after an empire which should be won by physical weapons and maintained by physical power. Christ objected to this imperialism, not, as Lord Amberley thinks, because it was a source of human greatness, but because it was, in the strictest sense of the word, it was not a kingdom at all. He felt, and felt truly, that any empire which, like the Jewish and the Roman, claimed to be theocratic, could only be made permanent by ruling from within, that nothing could be called a sacred sovereignty which did not directly influence the mind. He felt

that the ultimate seat of regal authority lay in the heart of a people, that the heart could only be won by love, and that love could only be manifested by sacrifice. It was from this thought, or train of thought, that there emerged the great Christian paradox, "He that is least shall be greatest." To be a king in the most absolute sense was to be ruler over the heart; but to be ruler over the heart, it was first necessary that the sovereign should be a subject. He who would win the love of others must first be dominated by the love of others; captivity must precede captivation. Inspired by this deep principle of morality, the master conceived the grand design of establishing a kingdom that could never be moved—a kingdom not based upon the physical power which was perishable, nor even on the intellectual Platonic power which could only exist through the ignorance of the many, but on a power whose foundation was the nature of humanity itself—the capacity for love. He proposed to conquer the heart of the world, and to conquer it by the exhibition of his own heart. The founders of previous kingdoms had sought to rule by placing in the foreground the display of their personal superiority; the founder of Christianity resolved to subjugate mankind by the sacrifice of himself. The kings of former time had fought their way to empire by shedding the blood of their enemies; the aspirant to this new kingdom determined to secure dominion by shedding his own.

An aim so strange, a plan so paradoxical, would alone have been sufficient to mark out Christianity from all foregoing forms of faith, but to this there must be added another element which heightens the strangeness and completes the contrast. It is now a historical fact that the founder of Christianity has succeeded in his aim; whatever be mythical in the Gospel, there is no mythology here. There is at this hour in the world the nucleus of such a kingdom as Christ desired to found. We mean not the kingdom of the Roman hierarchy, or the kingdom of the Anglican Church, or the kingdom of the Presbyterian worship, but that which at once underlies and overlaps them all—the loyalty of a multitude of souls to Him who is their ideal of perfection. For let it be remembered that Christianity is not primarily, nor even chiefly, a collection of moral precepts intended for the guidance of human life; that were all, it would be easy to find occasional parallels between the maxims of Jesus and the maxims of Buddha, or Confucius, or Lao-Tse. But Christianity is that Buddhism and Confucianism and Taoism are not—the membership in a kingdom, and the loyalty to a king; it contemplates in the first instance, not the special sayings of its founder, nor yet the aim of his united teaching; it contemplates the founder himself, and fixes its eye upon him alone. Christianity includes not the elements of morality united are not the essence of the Christian faith, and simply for this reason, that the Christian religion is faith. It is the subject of the heart that leads him to adore, the captivation of the eye by a portrait in which it reveals the conquest of the will by a law which it loves; Christianity is its deepest nature an aesthetic belief, the vision of a beautiful life, and the conviction that this beauty has become by its union with humanity the atonement for human deformity. There is within this world an actually existing kingdom of Christ, the hearts of whose subjects are ever bowing down before him; and amidst all the changes in the systems of human government, amidst all the transmutations in the aspects of theological thought, this great ideal has found no diminution in his power and reign. The question is, does the ideal represent a reality? and the answer to that question depends on the answer to another. Has the ideal of Christendom sprung from a reality, has it grown out of the natural instincts of the human mind, or does it involve something which the human mind has displayed no ability to create? That is the question which, in these pages we have been endeavoring to answer, and we seem to have arrived at the only possible answer. If we find Judea reaping where she has not sown, and gathering where she has not strewed; if we see her the birthplace of an idea which surpassed her power of origination, and when originated surpassed her power of comprehension; if in her contact with the Gentile nations we fail to discover any germs from which that idea could have naturally sprung; if we find it in evidence and in portraiture directly at variance with all heathen aspirations, reversing the world's ideal of physical strength, transforming its estimate of mental power, casting into the shade its conception of aesthetic culture, and placing on a contrary basis its hope of a theocratic kingdom; if we find it introducing a new standard of heroism which caused every valley to be exalted, and every mountain to be made low; and if, above all, we perceive that when that standard of heroism rose upon the world, it rose upon a foreign soil which received it as an alien and an adversary, are we not

driven to ask if even on the lowest computation if we have not reached the evidence of a new life in humanity, the outpouring of a fresh vitality, and the manifestation of a higher power?—GEORGE MATTHEW, in *Contemporary Review*.

## A Chapter on Church Discipline.

BY R. S. MORTON.

Perhaps there is nothing that can befall a church, that is more displeasing to God, or more destructive of the usefulness and happiness of the church, than the neglect (by the church and its officers) of proper discipline of all its members. So long as there is an Achan harbored in the church, God will be angry, and the church will be feeble. Anything that God has forbidden, if indulged in by any member of a church, will surely bring trouble, sooner or later, not only to the transgressor, but to the whole church. The Apostle knew this, and so, in his letter to the church at Corinth, he commands them to withdraw fellowship from members who had brought disgrace upon the church. The church at Corinth (like all Christian churches), was made up of baptized believers; and its members possessed in a large degree all the special gifts of the Spirit. See 1 Cor. 1: 4-8; 12: 7-10.

Nevertheless, at the date of Paul's letter, dissensions, irregularities, and general corruption characterized some, perhaps many, of its members. And instead of mourning over their degenerate condition, and humbly repenting and seeking forgiveness of God, they were puffed up with pride, glorying in the fact that they, as a church, possessed great gifts, etc. It is to be feared that if due search were made, some of our Baptist churches of today would be found in a like condition. But Paul says to them, "Yours glorying is not good." And the same will apply to any church that is boasting of its success, and at the same time, is neglecting proper discipline, and retaining in its communion unworthy members. The Apostle says, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened." viz. Put out of the church all persons that are known to be habitual liars, slanderers, drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, adulterers, etc., and whatever else is forbidden by Christ; or is dishonouring to Him, and a disgrace to the church, and do it promptly. For as surely as a little leaven leaveneth the whole mass of dough in which it is inserted, so surely if but one habitual transgressor be tolerated in a church, the whole church will soon become contaminated with the same evil. This is the rule the exceptions are few! Nor is it immoral conduct only that is displeasing to God, and ruinous to a church. But *unscriptural* and *false* doctrine allowed in a church, is an evil that God hates! The messages addressed to the seven churches in Asia verify this statement. Read Rev. 2: 14-20, etc. God said to the church in Pergamos, "I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam... and the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate." If any of our Baptist churches are (knowingly) retaining members who are holding spurious doctrine, let that church be assured that God is displeased with it, and let it not forget that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" and let it delay not to purge itself of all such as are holding false doctrine, and also of all who are known to be living in a loose, disorderly manner, and of all who are known to be habitual liars, or slanderers, etc. And let all the churches so make a thorough search and see if there be any among their members who are grossly and habitually transgressors, or any who, like Achan, are secretly taking and consuming in their tent "the accursed thing." Remember God will accept of no excuse for wilful or careless neglect of proper discipline. He said to Joshua, "Israel hath sinned; for they have taken of the accursed thing, and have stolen, and dissembled also. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies. Neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you." And the Apostle said to the church at Corinth, "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." And to the Thessalonians he wrote, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly," etc.

The sense is required of each Christian church through all time. For a church to disregard the teaching of the Scriptures concerning church discipline, is to grieve the Holy Spirit, and incur the displeasure of Christ, and to lose its spiritual power, and so to become "like salt that has lost its savour," "good for nothing but to be cast out!" Nothing but true repentance and thorough reform, can avert the anger of God from such a church! Therefore, brethren, "let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works."

Thus, you will be a power for good, and, by and by, you shall receive the Master's "Well-done good and faithful servants." That will be a sufficient reward. Millville, April 21st, 1884.

## A Good Reply.

(The following correspondence, which recently took place in a certain place in Nova Scotia, between a class leader and a former member of his class, explains itself.—Ed.)

MY DEAR SISTER—I have been told you were going to leave our church, I would ask you why? What has brought about the change? Were you forced into the church? Was it not a free will offering when you offered yourself to this church. I also would remind you of the vows you made before your God at that time. Do you count them an unholy thing and trample them under your feet? If God accepted your baptism at that time, he will never accept another at your hand. I hope you will ponder the matter well in your heart. Be careful and do not offend God to please men.

As I had been your class leader, I felt it my duty to say these few words to you. I hope you will receive them as from a brother in Christ.

## REPLY.

DEAR BROTHER—Your letter of enquiry is at hand. Your first question—"Why, do?"

Ans. I decided to leave your society because I wished to join a church.

Second question—"What has brought about the change?"

Ans. First by giving heed to the warning of Mark 7: 7, 8. Throwing aside pamphlets and other traditions and commandments of men, and giving heed to the commands of God. See John 14: 15, 21; John 15: 10; 1 John 2: 4, 5; 1 John 5: 3. I am happy to inform you that I was led to take the step I have, by carefully and prayerfully reading the New Testament. See Matt. 23: 5, 6, 8, 13, 16, 17; Mark 1: 4, 5; John 3: 23; Acts 8: 35-40; Romans 6: 3, 4, 5; Col. 2: 13; Eph. 4: 5; 1 Pet. 3: 21. I dare no longer triffling with the plain commands of God. See Matt. 5: 19; Rev. 22: 18, 19.

Third question—"Were you tired into the church?"

Ans. No, not exactly forced, nor exactly into a church, but I must say that in simply joining your class the *enquiry* was not only unexpected, but contrary to my wishes.

Fourth question—"The vows, do?"

Ans. If any vows I have unwittingly taken upon myself, are not in harmony with the teaching of Christ, then the quicker they are broken the better.

Fifth remark: If God accepted your baptism, you may well say, "If for when God asks baptism you may depend he will not accept baptism." "If he ask for a fish, will you give him a serpent?"

Sixth remark—"Offend God to please men, do, do?"

Reply: I did that once, but the matter is reversed. If I fail to please men, desire to please God.

Now, dear brother, in the fear of God I have answered your questions in a straightforward conscientious manner. As my class-leader I thank you for the interest you have shown in my welfare. Nevertheless we are divinely taught that "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man." Ps. 118: 8. And again Christ says: "If the blind lead the blind both will fall into the ditch." In the future Jesus shall be my class-leader. That dear Jesus—the Great Public Teacher—whose bosom it was "In secret have I said nothing." John 18: 20. Why should I fear to trust him? He is not a "blind guide" for he has said in Ps. 32: 8, "I will guide thee with mine eye."

It is my prayer that you too, dear brother, instead of raising the pony arm of rebellion, may place your hand into the nail-pierced hand of Jesus and let him lead you along in his footsteps. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God, Rom. 8: 14, and Christ says: If you love me keep my commandments. John 14: 15.

## Yours for truth,

L. B.

## Our Table.

THE RUSSIANS AT THE GATES OF HEBLY by Charles Marvin, with maps and portraits, just published by Charles Scribner's Sons New York, is from the pen of a man who has thoroughly studied the questions at issue between Russia and England in the East. He takes strong grounds in maintaining Afghanistan under English management—as a buffer between Russia and India. His work is brought down to the last moment, and it is a most interesting addition to the literature of the present phase of the question. For sale at Messrs. J. & A. McMillan's.

The Report of the Board of School Trustees of St. John is a neat pamphlet of 175 pages prepared by John Munn, Esq., secretary. It is full of the most exact information, and makes a good showing of what is being done in the city in educational work.