

# Messenger and Visitor.

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**NOTICE**—At a meeting of the Directors of the Maritime Baptist Publishing Company, held at Amherst, N. S., Aug. 22nd, it was unanimously resolved to offer the **MESSENGER AND VISITOR** to new subscribers from the date of their subscriptions to the end of the year 1856, for \$2.00, if paid before the end of the year.

It was also resolved to give the paper to all old subscribers at and from the beginning of the new year at the rate of \$1.50 per year, if paid within 30 days from the beginning of the year, and to new subscribers at the same rate, from the date of subscription, if paid within 30 days from the date of subscription. If not so paid, the price in all cases will be \$2.00 per year.

The **FRAGS**, generally, are very severe on Dr. Newman's sermon on the life and death of General Grant. It was full of exaggeration. One journal says "the fangs of the great hero of Appomattox will arrive" it, and seems to think this is the highest tribute to his praise.

From what we read about the England, and especially the London, of today, we might suppose the present the worst time in her history. It is well to peruse the following extract of a sermon preached by Bishop Litchfield in 1734, and be convinced of the contrary.

"The Lord's day is now the devil's market day. More lewdness, more drunkenness, more quarrels and murders on this day than on all the other days of the week put together. Sin in general is grown so rampant and rampant as that immorality and obscenity, great and profane books find so good a market as to encourage the trade of publishing them. Every kind of sin has found a writer to teach and vindicate it. Every sixth house in London was a licensed grog shop, and sellers announced on their sign-boards that they would make a man drunk for a penny, and find him straw to lie on until he recovered his senses. Among the lower classes laziness and dishonesty were universal. Superstition flourished. Every old man had a ghost, and every parish a witch. During the year 1738 fifty-two criminals were hanged at Tyburn, and 12,000 persons in two years were convicted of smuggling. Sunday traffic had become general. A committee of the House of Lords to examine into the causes of the present immorality and profaneness, stated in their report that they had sufficient grounds to believe that a number of loose and disorderly persons had of late formed themselves into a club under the name of Blasters, and were using means to induce the youth of the Kingdom to join them. The members of this impious club professed themselves to be rotaries of the devil, offered prayers to him, and drank his health. They also had been heard to utter the most daring and execrable blasphemies against the sacred name and majesty of God, and to use such obscene, blasphemous and irreverent expressions as the Lords' committee think they cannot ever mention. The committee further report a greater neglect of divine worship and of due observance of the Sabbath than had ever before been known in England. A want of reverence to the laws and a due subordination in the several ranks of the community. There was an abuse of liberty, neglect of education, and a want of care in training children. Idleness and gambling, and an excessive use of intoxicating liquors had grown into an alarming magnitude."

Some of our American contemporaries are very sanguine over the effects of Gen. Grant's death. They suppose that the bitterness between North and South will be buried in his grave. The dying words he uttered with a view to promote a harmony between the parts of the United States which struggled in bloody conflict for the mastery, a few years ago, have doubtless been a means to this end, and the sympathies of all, from the Canadian border to the Gulf of Mexico, which centered in him as he met death so calmly and bravely, have drawn both sections nearer together. But we fear it will be many years before the rancor induced by war long and so desperate as that in the United States, will be removed so readily. As for all real progress in unity and concord, chief reliance must be placed upon the churches of the North and South, as they fraternize and cultivate good feeling.

A good example. We learn from the news of the churches of last week, that the Wolfville church has already made its arrangements to push vigorously the work of collecting funds for our Convention work. Four churches ever are to do their best, they must begin this work at the commencement of the year, and continue it to the close. How many churches will follow this good example of the Wolfville church, and begin at once? How vast are the interests depending upon our contributions to the Convention Fund. The Lord wants all to think of his glory in all the earth, and plan and give to advance it. We notice that Wolfville has obtained the privilege of increasing the work of gathering the contributions to some of her strongest members. This is important work and should be left in strong hands in all our churches.

How pleasing it is to read incidents like the following, which occurred a short time since:

"Two ladies, whose husbands are now candidates for the office of Governor of Virginia, have been guests for some time at the Hygeia Hotel, Old Point Comfort. The following incident occurred, and left an indelible impression on those who witnessed it. The news of General Lee's nomination for Governor of Virginia reached the hotel when the guests were generally at dinner. As soon as she heard it, Mrs. Lee arose from her table, passed over to Mrs. Lee, and congratulated her, saying, 'If my husband is to be beaten, I would rather he should be beaten by your husband than by any man living.' Mrs. Lee returned thanks and said: 'Mrs. Lee, I only regret that both our husbands cannot be elected Governor of Virginia at the same time.'"

What another thing politics could be if such civility and courtesy prevailed! And why should it not? Nothing is more disgraceful than the wholesale abuse which is heaped upon politicians, by those who are opposed to them, or by opposing politicians upon each other. Politics must be a strange business if all must cease to be gentlemanly and kindly when they enter it.

It is owing to us for reasons for pure women and innocent children to learn what is worth knowing of the world's doings without having the details of vice and crime thrust before their unwilling eyes.

Yes, it ought to be, but as the secular press is now conducted it is not. A newspaper is not considered enterprising unless its columns are filled with all the details of all the vice that is committed on a continent. Under this influence we are rearing our children. What will be the result?

This is all too true, and this is not the worst. In our trips through the country, we find many homes with no religious paper, while there are very few indeed without one secular weekly, while some have three and four. The children in the families are becoming so familiar with crime and immorality as to lose their horror of them, while the parents, professing Christians, perhaps, do not care to have a pure, high-toned religious paper in their homes, having no relish for this kind of reading. Yes: what will be the result?

COLLEGE ALLEY, a famous infidel in his day, had a consecrated woman as his wife. The mother instructed her daughter in the truths of Christianity. The daughter sickened and died, but immediately before her death she said to her father, "Shall I take your instructions or mother's? I am going to die, and must have this matter settled." He replied, "My dear, you had better take your mother's religion." Doubt and unbelief never afford a resting place. Nothing but faith can do this. It is the weakness of all that opposes the Christian religion that it falls when put to the most serious trials, and when most needed. It is the glory of the faith of the gospel that it is as good to die by as to live by. Paul's boast, "I know him whom I have believed, and am assured that he is able to keep me," can be made by the humblest believer, and by no one else. There is such an agreement between what the Christian religion declares and promises and what the conscience feels and the soul longs for, that there is an evidence of its truthfulness within. Atheism and infidelity cannot be believed until conscience is alienated and the highest yearnings of the heart crushed. Thank God for a faith which holds through life, and is all the stronger in death.

A MANLY SOUL, whose heart had been touched by the spirit of Christianity, resolved to attend a Sabbath-school against the wishes of his father who was a profigate unbeliever. On the evening of every day that attended the school he was regularly whipped by his father with a piece of rope. After this had been going on for several weeks the boy appeared before his father one Sabbath morning, handing him the instrument of torture, made this request: "Father, as you are determined to whip me every time I go to Sabbath-school, and I am determined to go, I would ask you to punish me now before I disobey your orders, so that I may not have to think of the coming punishment when studying the Bible in the Sabbath-school." The result of that boy's pluck was to bring his father and all the family within the fold of a happy Christian life.—N. Y. Observer.

What a grand boy! The following is from a correspondent in the Christian Index. It gives a good account of the state of the Indians in the Indian Territory. A Baptist College building has been erected at a cost of \$25,000. The United States laws and the laws of the Territory both prohibit the introduction or sale of spirituous liquors under severe penalties, and there is not a saloon in the Territory. What little whiskey gets here must be smuggled in, and that very stealthily, by the general and local officers are very strict in this matter. The Creeks, in point of intelligence, morality and general advancement, are fully up to many sections of Georgia, Texas, Alabama or Tennessee. They have farms, stores, and many houses of worship. The country well adapted to agriculture and stock raising, many of them are well-to-do merchants and farmers. They have a public

school system, and appropriate more money per capita to public education than any State in the Union.

"I AM AN CHRISTIAN," says the practical man, "I do not pretend to be pious or religious." And then he looks up in your face as if he had settled the whole question, as if his entire business thenceforth were just to stand by and see what sort of a Christian you were, and how your piety came on.—*Phillys Brookes.*

How strange it is that men can delude themselves with the idea that neglect of the first duty, relieves them of all responsibility concerning what follows from it. What should we say of the child, who did not pretend to obey his parents, and should claim, as a consequence that he was freed from all obligations to conform to their wish? Yet this is what men do in reference to God and his commands.

—ONE OF OUR SUBSCRIBERS in a Kentucky town says: "A Baptist sister moved to our town, some time since, and we were all delighted to welcome her, supposing that she would reinforce the Baptist cause of our community; but, after a few weeks, she took a pew in a Pedobaptist church, giving as a reason that the Baptists were poor and did not have access to the best society." Also for that sister! Why did she not turn in and make the Baptists respected? Is the truth of God so poor a thing that it can be traded off for fine clothes and good eating? Paul could have had "access to the best society" in Rome, but he preferred bonds and imprisonment and a good conscience. Roger Williams could have had the best society in New England; but he preferred the wilderness and his convictions.—*Ed. Her.*

Also that such unprincipled conduct should be found everywhere. The "best society" is not judged of by grace and loyalty to the truth in the heart; but by money in the pocket, or the apparel on the person. The "best society" is usually less fastidious about an earnest Christian life.

—WE ARE SORRY that a number of annoying typographical errors occurred in Bro. McLean's sermon.

## Is Christianity Declining?

In the North America Review for July is a notable article by Dr. Parkhurst on this question. It is well to have this question considered, when there are so many ready to affirm that the Christian religion has lost its power. The following is an extract from this able and suggestive article:

"A word or two will be in place in regard to church attendance and church membership. Dr. Griffin, became pastor of the Park Street Church, Boston, in 1811. So unpopular was it to be seen in attendance upon an evangelical church that, as Dr. Nehemiah Adams relates, gentlemen of culture and standing who ventured into Dr. Griffin's church on Sunday evenings, attracted by the reports of his genius and eloquence, went in partial disguise, sitting in obscure corners, with caps drawn over their faces and wrappers turned inside out. That was in Boston less than eighty years ago! I find that in New York City less than sixty years ago a mob prevented the holding of a meeting planned by Dr. Spring and others for promoting the better observance of the Sabbath. In the year 1800 there were in the United States 2,030 evangelical churches; in 1850, 45,072; in 1870, 70,148; and in 1880, 97,000. A gain of 27,000 in ten years, ending in 1880, and this is what the critics have been pleased to call an infidelity! The 'Year-books' and 'Church Minutes' the number of communicants in evangelical churches in the United States has been as follows: In 1800, 364,000; in 1850, 3,229,000; in 1870, 5,875,000 and in 1880, 10,965,000. Of course during all this time there was an immense increase in population, but the increase in church membership a good deal more than kept pace with that of population. Taking the whole country through, there was in 1800 one evangelical communicant to every 144 inhabitants; in 1850 one to every 41; in 1870, one to every 31; and in 1880, one to every 5. Even during the period, since 1850, in which materialism and rationalism have been subjecting Protestantism to so severe a strain, while the increase in population has been 116 per cent, the increase in communicants of Protestant evangelical churches in the United States has been 185 per cent.

The same pronounced drift Christianity evinces itself if we consider the matter of American colleges and college students. Writing in 1810, Bishop Meade, of Virginia, said, 'I can truly say that in every educated young man in Virginia, whom I met I expected to find a skeptic, if not an avowed infidel.' When Dr. Dwight became president of Yale College, in 1795, only five of the students were church members. In the early part of Dr. Appleton's presidency of Bowdoin, only one student was a professing Christian. In 1830, according to returns obtained from American colleges, 26 per cent of the students were professing Christians; in 1850, 39 per cent; in 1865, 46 per cent; in 1880, according to the Year-book of the Young Men's Christian Association, out of 13,963 students in 55 colleges, 6,981, or a little more than half

were professors of religion. An American college is one of the very safest places in which a young man can be put. And it is by such steps as these that the religion of Jesus Christ is undertaking to die out from the respect and affection of our American people! So far from Christianity betraying the first symptoms of exhaustion, there has been no time since the Jordan baptism of Jesus when Christianity has moved with such gigantic strides, and put forth efforts so vigorous and herculean, as during these years of our own century when the disciples of Voltaire and the imitators of Paine have been most active in their production of obituaries and accumulation of embalming spices.

"It is during this time, in fact within the last forty years of it, that there have sprung up all our Young Men's Christian Associations, with organizations extending North and South, East and West, in North America and South Europe, Asia, the Sandwich Islands, Australia, Madagascar. A strange way it is that Christianity has of dying! Our Sunday-Schools, too, are all of them a growth of the present century, numbering only half a million pupils in 1830, with an increase of six millions in the fifty years following.

"It is during the last eighty years, likewise, that the American Church has shown its colossal vigor in the inauguration of its missionary enterprises. Beginning with the second decade of our century, with a contribution of \$200,000, the total amount raised for home and foreign missions in this country up to 1880 was \$129,000,000; and 88 per cent of that was raised during the last thirty years, the period during which Christianity is supposed to have betrayed accumulating symptoms of debility and senility. Seventy thousand mission communicants in 1830 had become 210,000 in 1850, and 860,000 in 1880.

"All of this, to say nothing of other organizations of evangelization and amelioration, the Bible Society, the Tract Society, and the rest, which have sprung from the found soil of our own magnificent Gospel territory.

"Such are the facts. Like the Scribes and Pharisees, would you see a sign from Jesus? There are the signs. The books are accessible, the facts are verifiable. To him who thinks he knows it all, and is going through life under cover of the impression that the world is tired of Jesus, and that the intelligence of the age has passed the defunct body of our senile faith over into the hands of the undertaker, let it be recommended to review the matter, and to treat it with the candid and studious respect due to a cause that in point of vitality, growth, vigor and productiveness is incomparable with none that solicits the attention or engages the interest of mankind."

## A Call to Spurgeon.

The congregation of Smith's corners met lately for the purpose of extending a call to a minister. There was a fair attendance, and a considerable amount of interest was taken in the proceedings, as it had been mentioned for some time that the Corners' people would probably ask the great London preacher to become their pastor. The meeting having been duly opened, the chairman, after a few remarks on the importance of the work before them, asked those present to proceed to business.

Mr. Diotephe Highley then rose, and said he had a motion to make which he felt sure would secure the support of all present. They had now been vacant for over two years, and had heard about fifty candidates. Some of them were good enough jobs, but some of them came up to the standard required at Smith's corners. They needed a first-class man in their church, and there was no use in calling any other. The Methodists were getting a good man, and they must have the best possible talent in their church or they might as well close it. Their people demanded the best pulpity ability in the country, and they were willing to pay for it. They could raise at least three hundred dollars a year, and no doubt they could get a supplement. He had been carefully looking over a list of those who had preached and of the most effective men in the Church, and he was persuaded none of them were suitable. They wanted a man of peculiar qualities to fill the Corners' pulpit, and he was convinced they would have to go to another country for him. He had been looking in the record of a few of the best men in the British cities, and on the whole, he thought Spurgeon had made about as good a mark as any of them. He moved that they call Spurgeon.

Mr. Amiasold Stuckup seconded the motion. He wished to direct the attention of the meeting to the financial aspect of the question. Spurgeon, if he accepted the call, would no doubt draw, and the more people the more money. Spurgeon would draw on the other churches, and bring their people in, and a considerable amount of the funds now going into the other churches would flow into the Corners' treasury. His opinion always was that the

minister should raise the money. Two things had to be kept in view—one and money. A minister coming from London would give tone to the Corners' church and the money would come in. He had great pleasure in seconding the motion.

Mr. Strallace said he was opposed to calling Spurgeon. It was well known that Spurgeon smokes, and no man who uses tobacco would stand in the Corners' pulpit with his consent. No Christian would smoke. Smoking produces idiocy, insanity, and crime, and sends thousands to the goal, gallows, and an early grave. Spurgeon might be a good preacher, but what does his preaching amount to if he smokes? If Spurgeon were called he and his family would leave the Corners' church.

Mr. Smallbone made the same objection. If he called Spurgeon he would stop his subscription. He had never paid less than two dollars a year; but if they called Spurgeon, or any other smoker, he would withdraw his subscription, and then where would they be?

Mr. Humdrum said they had another objection. Spurgeon was sensational. He published his sermons in the *Globe* every week. He would have nothing to do with sensational preachers.

Mr. Dry-as-dust said his objection was of another kind. Spurgeon often said humorous, racy things in the pulpit. He could give any number of illustrations of this fault from his published sermons. In a sermon on Jonah ii. 9, he said Jonah was a Calvinist, and added that he hoped none of his Arminian friends would have to learn Calvinism where Jonah learned his. It was not in good taste to make such allusions. He believed in pulpit dignity. He was opposed to putting a man in the Corners' pulpit that said such things in his sermons. He liked to see a stiff, dignified, ecclesiastical-looking man with a proper amount of clerical starch in his composition. Spurgeon looked like a business man, and never talked in "pulpit tone." He would never sign a call to such a man.

Mr. Theophilus Pedant, B. A., said Spurgeon was not a graduate of any university, and for his part he never wished to hear a man that was not a graduate. He admired "culchaw," and had reason to believe that Spurgeon was not a scientist. He would not vote for Spurgeon.

Mr. John Talkative said his objection was of a more practical kind. It is well known that Spurgeon does not visit his congregation. He had lately read some remarks of Spurgeon's that made light of visiting and tea-drinking in the congregation. Now he (Mr. Talkative) believed in visiting. He liked the minister to come often and bring his family and spend "the whole afternoon." He would not press too heavily on a minister and ask him to read and pray when he visited. Nor did he believe that a minister should catechize families and speak to them on matters of personal religion. That was tedious and laborious, and could not be expected. What he wanted was that the minister should spend half a day occasionally talking about current events. That was the way to build up a cause. If Spurgeon had spent the time going round among the people that he spent in writing books, and editing his magazine, and working at his Orphan and Pastor's College, how much better it would have been! If there was any reason to believe that Spurgeon would improve his methods, and do more visiting, he would not oppose the call; but Spurgeon was too old now to reform. He would not sign the call.

Mr. Veal said he was opposed to Spurgeon on account of his age. He had already passed the deadline of fifty, and a man over fifty was not capable of filling the Corners' pulpit. Spurgeon might have experience and piety, and a fair amount of pulpit ability, but he could not be magnetic at fifty. What they wanted was a magnetic young man. A young man was always better at getting up socials, helping at tea-meetings, and all that sort of thing. Spurgeon had the rheumatism in his toes, and could not get around lively for dishes and things when the Corners' people were getting up their annual tea-meeting. What they wanted was a young active man.

Mr. Gusher said he had a more serious objection to Spurgeon than any that had yet been urged. Spurgeon was combative. He gave the Ritualists, Rationalists, and other people of various kinds some fearful knocks. Now, he did not like a minister of that kind. He liked a minister that said "Dear brother" or "Dear sister" to everybody. There was nothing he liked so much as to speak at a "union meeting." He had no sympathy with these men who were always exposing errors and denouncing abuses. For his part, he was ready to join hands with Ritualists, and all other men, and sing, "Blest be the tie that binds." That was the hymn he liked. This business of contending for the truth was behind the age. Spurgeon would be sure to make trouble with somebody if he came, therefore he would not sign his call.

At the close of Mr. Gusher's remarks the meeting adjourned.

Moral.—Objections can be made to calling even Spurgeon.—*Canada Presbyterian.*

## Parting Words.

The parting hour has come. We separate never to meet again in this world. We go to the right and the left, to the north and the south, to the east and to the west; we seek our varied fields of labor, or journey to our several homes. We shall cross continents and oceans; our feet shall tread strange shores; we shall, it may be, traverse distant lands, explore far-off regions, and lift up in the wilderness the herald's voice, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

"The vineyard of the Lord Before his servants lies; And lo! we see the vast reward Reserved in paradise."

A world lieth in wickedness; a thousand million human beings are without God and without hope. Christ alone can save them; his gospel alone can accomplish the redemption of a ruined race. Shall we not carry this one remedy to the suffering, sorrowing, dying sons of men? The voice of our Redeemer sounds to us from the throne, as it sounded in his disciples' ears on the slope of Olivet, "Go teach all nations," "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

How strong the motives which urge us to enter upon this work. A man in the east of London stood viewing some workmen who were trying to dig out some laborers who had been buried by the falling of an embankment. He was interested, but put forth no special effort, until a woman said to him,

"Billy's brother is down there!" Instantly throwing off his coat, he leaped down among them, and working as it with the might of ten men, he struggled to save his brother's life.

Man of God; redeemed, rescued, saved, while you look at the pit from which you were digged, do you forget that "Your brother is down there," that thousands and millions of your brethren languish in the darkness, without God and without hope?

But how often we labor in vain, and spend our strength for naught. How often we see our fruit, and seem to be full, without result. We seem powerless to accomplish the needed work. Sometimes in passing through the city we see a sign, "Power to Let." But in the Gospel there is power to give away! The Saviour said to his disciples, "Tarry ye here in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." That power has been bestowed upon the church. It is here! In the power of the Holy Ghost, which dwells in every believing heart; the Holy Spirit of God, which he has given to lead, and guide, and help the infirmities of his people, and make their words effectual, and their labors fruitful to his glory. Let us yield our hearts to divine control, and thus be led by the Holy Spirit of God. And if we do this we shall find that He who has promised to be with his people to the end, will never leave us nor forsake us, but will fill us with his power, and will crown our labors and reward our toils.

But unless we possess this power from on high, unless we have truly saved of the Lord, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, our voices will be like the sounding brass and the tinkling cymbal, and our testimony will have no power over the hard hearts of sinful men.

For months and years hundreds of men had been toiling and drilling and laboring beneath the waters of New York harbor, excavating the vast masses of rock which beset the narrow channel at Hell Gate. But when the excavations were finished, the explosive placed, and the wires laid, there was still a need of something else to give effect to all which had been done. But when little Mary Newton touched with her baby hand the button of the electric machine, then one fiery spark rushed through the darkness, exploded the mines, and whole acres of rock, and stone and water leaped up into the light and fell back in brokenness and confusion. That little hand made the connection between the labors of man and the electric power, and the work was accomplished.

So if we are to do anything for God, when all our plans are laid, and all that we can do is accomplished, we must expect the power from on high, the night of the Holy Ghost, to accomplish the work. For without this we can do nothing. But if we go in the strength of the Lord God if we make mention of His righteousness, and his only; if we are led by the Spirit, and walk in the paths which he has appointed, our lives will be blessed of God and a blessing to those around us. And though we need no more on earth, our scattered paths through the desert shall at last converge; and at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him, "we shall see each other's faces in peace, and return with joy, bringing our sheaves.—*Christian.*