

Messenger and Visitor.

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Trial Subscribers, Please Read.

The MESSENGER AND VISITOR has been going into many new homes, for the last few weeks. It has been sent to a large number at the request of friends, in the hope they may wish to continue its weekly visits, after having read it for a time. It has been sent free, and will be continued on the same easy terms till the first of January. All we ask of those who have received it and do not care to become subscribers, is that they notify us by post card that we do not wish its visits longer. If we do not receive this notification, the paper will continue to be sent, as it will be supposed this is desired. The price of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR for Jan., 1890, will be \$1.50, if paid before the first of Feb. next, otherwise it will be \$2.00. Believing that our earnest longing and efforts to make the M. & V. a blessing in the home is not altogether vain, we urge all to continue its visits if possible. The low price of three cents per week should put it within the reach of all. All pastor's agents.

BOSTON BAPTISTS.—The North Boston Baptist Association has grown from 4748 members in 1848 to 14,101, in 1888. Four new churches were received into membership at the last session.

UNION.—A move next in progress to unite the General and Particular Baptists of England. The former correspond to the F. C. Baptists here. At the annual meeting of this body the question was discussed. While the feeling in favor of union was almost unanimous, it was thought better to defer action till next session, as the attendance was not large. There is also a movement to unite the Disciples (Campbellites) and Free Will Baptists of the United States. Both bodies are wary. A joint committee have agreed upon a very general statement, which is thought to be sufficient for a working basis. It would seem that the chief point of sympathy between these bodies is open communion. How Disciples can welcome those to the Supper they deem unbaptized, we cannot see. They do not believe a man fully saved unless baptized. They, therefore, by their open communion, declare that those not saved have a right to the Supper.

STORY OF CREATION.—Prof. Elmlich, lecturing in Regent's Park Chapel, London, upon the Story of Creation, gives the following suggestive explanation of the first chapter of Genesis:

"The six days fall into two groups. The first three days give three great realms or elements, and the second three put occupants into them: 1st. The sphere of light. 2d. The sun, moon, stars—the tenants of light. 3d. The air and water. 5th. The birds and fishes—the tenants of air and water. 3d. The habitable dry land vegetation. 6th. The land animals and man—the tenants of the habitable dry land. That arrangement is not scientific, but logical, literary, rational. The writer lived in a world where men and women bowed down to sun, moon, and stars, and beasts. He wanted to say that everything was not a God, but the manufacture of the one only God. He made an inventory of the only visible contents, and declared 'God made them all.' With a comprehensive insight which omits nothing, the inspired writer adhered to the leaves of nature, and enclosed each group in a broad volume, and upon the book of them inscribed the glorious declaration that they were one and all the works of their Almighty Author—the Works of God. When God was said to name a thing, a word was used which meant—He gave it its nature. God named everything—it was only another way of saying, as modern science did, that everything was bound by its own characteristic law. So the net result of inquiry is this—that the first chapter of Genesis is not the story of the Creation after all, but the revelation of God the Creator. In one word, it is not geology, but theology."

UNFAIR FACTOR.—In a conversation with a gentleman of sceptical tendencies not long since, we could not but notice the unfairness of his tactics. The topic of conversation was that most solemn one of the future of those who die impenitent. He was very ready to take that obscure passage in Peter of our Lord preaching to the spirits in prison as proof of probation after death. When referred to explicit statements in which the final state of all is said to be fixed at death, and when pressed with the common sense principle that the obscure in scripture should be explained by what is plainly stated, and not the reverse, he took refuge in a denial of the truthfulness of parts of the Bible. When asked how, if the Bible were not reliable, he could quote from it to support his own idea, he was not willing to admit that, should he deny authority to scripture, it would be equally favorable to the generally accepted view, he must throw aside the Bible

altogether as affording any proof on either side, and argue the question on other grounds. He did not seem willing to be drawn to consider the question upon the ground of analogy alone, and had little to say when referred to the undeniable fact that character is tending to fixity, that evil, beyond a certain point becomes hopeless of change, and that, therefore, we have no right to assume that those who grow worse until death grow better after that great and solemn event. It is a sad fact that many intelligent people will deal with a subject of such tremendous solemnity and importance in a way bordering upon flippancy. If there be one subject which should engage the serious and candid attention, it is this. The issues at stake ought to be considered too momentous to permit self-deception.

HOLINESS.—"In this evangelical sense, and as lying back of this hatred of sin and the state of purity, holiness is the readjustment of our whole nature, whereby the inferior appetites and propensities are subordinated, and the superior intellectual and moral powers are restored to their supremacy; and Christ reigns in a completely renewed soul. 'And that ye put on the new man, which is after God created in righteousness and true holiness.'"

This is the definition given of holiness by Bishop Newman, of the Methodist Episcopal church of the United States. In the view of Baptist theologians, generally, this would be merely a general description of a regenerate state. We should not accept less than this as evidence of a state of holiness, or mere state of salvation belittling both holiness and salvation? If this is all that is meant by what is termed by some of our Methodist brethren their peculiar doctrine of holiness, are they in error? Our people believe in all this; but they take it as the beginning of a Christian life, not its great earthly consummation. There is a sense in which all believers are holy; but holiness is the higher sense, and attained by but few, will not be confined in the limits of Dr. Newman's definition.

GRAPHIC.—Rev. C. Williams, in the National Baptist, gives the following graphic account of the oration accorded Mr. Gladstone at the conclusion of his nearly two hours' speech in the Birmingham town hall, to nearly 30,000 people.

When Mr. Gladstone resumed his seat after speaking, the vast concourse cheered and sang and cheered again with rapturous enthusiasm for the space of eight minutes and a half. Those who witnessed will never forget the incident. Earl Spencer, Lord Rosebery, Sir W. Harcourt and Mr. John Morley led the multitude in their acclamations. Not a man or woman in the place retained their seats. Uprising, the many thousands waved hats or handkerchiefs, and with one voice renewed the demonstration till some doubted whether it was ever coming to an end. Edinburgh, even, has never given to Mr. Gladstone such an ovation. The Birmingham tribute to the most popular and most beloved statesman of the age has astonished men of all parties.

DAKOTA BAPTISTS.—Our faithful Dakota correspondent sends us an account of the Baptist Convention of that territory. The Scandinavians are pouring in, rapidly. They number 80,000, and are one-third of the population. The Baptists have but one missionary among them and one colporteur. There are four German churches. The additions to the Baptist churches of the territory amount to 22 per cent. of the membership. Six new churches were formed, and the outlook is hopeful for the future. The people are threatened with severe want from the failure of crops, and must have help from the East.

THE EXCITEMENT IN YARMOUTH.—There is so little excitement in Yarmouth over the statements made by Bro. Adams in sermons preached on the temperance question. He is accustomed to speak out fearlessly and to mention facts at home rather than abroad to point his statements. It seems lamentably to be only too true that there is much secret indulgence in drink in that progressive town. The facts were laid bare with an unerring hand. On one point the statements made were too strong and drew forth a protest. An evidence being shown of this, brother Adams made a manly and public apology. Among other things, it appears that three each doctor of the town have given over one hundred prescriptions for liquor, in the last six months, as the agent under the Scott Act, from whom the liquor must be had, testifies. The sermons have been published and money contributed to secure the free distribution of a large number of copies. The agitation and enquiry aroused must do good.

THE SUCCESS OF MISSIONS.—Under this caption, the Morning Herald has an editorial from the text supplied by a passage in a recent letter from Bro. Churhill, in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR. In it is embodied the substance of Canon Taylor's recent attack on Christian missions. The conclusion is drawn that all denominations should unite their missions as the great means to secure better results. Dr. Lathern, editor of the Wesleyan, gives a

very courteous but able rejoinder in the Herald of Dec. 10th. As has already been referred to in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR, the misleading nature of some of the Canon's statements is shown up. While it may be true that the increase of the heathen is 11,000,000 per year, and that of Christians in heathen lands but 60,000, the percentage of Christian increase in India was 64 for the last decade, while that of the heathen was but 10 1/2. Thus it appears that Christianity is overtaking heathenism with great rapidity. In so using that denominationalism is hindering mission work in heathen lands, the Herald evidently is not acquainted with the methods adopted by the different Christian bodies in their operations in foreign lands. For the most part, their missions are distinct, and there is little friction and less proselytizing from each other,—there is nothing of this done purposely, except in rare instances. There must be other reasons, if missions are a failure. But they are a grand success, showing what might be done were all Christians awake to their importance.

GOOD.—The church is a society of Christian endeavor. The church is a missionary society. The members of the church are all, or ought all to be, children of the King. The church is a society wherein men, women and children can do their utmost for God and for their kind. All honor to the God old society founded in Palestine eighteen hundred years ago and which all Baptists admit is the best society on earth.—American Baptist.

And let all the people say, Amen.

What the Bells Say at Christmas.

Hark—hear the bells,
Whose music tells
Of Christmas joy, as sinks and swells
Each sound that sings
Of happy things,
This birthday of the King of Kings.

Lo, on this day,
The glad bells say,
In Bethlehem, far, far away,
As long ago,
In manger low,
Was born the Christ who loved thee so.

A radiant star
Shone bright and far
Above the plains where shepherds were,
And led the way,
That Christmas day,
To where the young child Jesus lay.

O glorious morn
When Christ was born
Among the garnered wheat and corn;
O happy place
Where His dear face
First shed the sunshine of His grace.

Above the plain
A heavenly strain
Of music rang; and its refrain
Is ringing still,
O'er hill and dale,
"Be Peace on Earth, to Men Good-Will."

Rejoice to-day,
The glad bells say;
Put all the cares that vex away;
Let Christmas cheer
Find welcome here,
And bless this best day of the year.

To Christ, thy King,
As tribute bring,
Thy heart, and let the offering
With love be sweet,
As at His feet
Thy lips in grateful vows repeat.

Rejoice and sing,
The glad bells say,
In honor of the world's dear King;
Let love increase;
May discord cease,
All hail, all hail, thou Prince of Peace!

—Eben E. Reyford, in Youth's Companion.

Christmas Giving.

Christmas time and good cheer are synonymous terms. If there is a period in the whole round of the toiling, scheming, sinning world when life seems less burdensome and home joys more real, it is when *paterfamilias* begins to come home at night with his pockets bulging out with knobby bundles. It is when the youngest boy confers darkly with his mother concerning some secret which has to do with the father. It is when the oldest boy in vain tries to conceal an awkward-looking package, six inches one way, and seven by nine the other, by crowding it into his coat-tail pocket. When the very atmosphere, all about, is redolent of good wishes and happy surprises, and musical words of charity and good-will for all.

"I'm sure I don't know. You might give the two girls those vases we saw in the city yesterday."

"Indeed I won't. I mean to get those vases for Aunt Carol and Cousin Fanny. But" (with a sigh), "we must get them something, I suppose."

"Yes, I suppose we must. What a bother, isn't it?"

Or take an instance of a different kind, like the following:

A young man, a clerk perhaps, with limited means, receives an invitation from his paternal uncle to spend Christmas at his house, where he will meet a host of cousins and friends. He knows that they will remember him in some way, and yet it is impossible for him to make each of them a present without going far beyond his means.

He is forced either to refuse the invitation and to spend the day in some poorer amusement, or to accept, and be mortified at his inability to give presents equal in money value to those which he expects to receive.

Many persons, at Christmas times, are perplexed with such thoughts as these: "How can I give presents to all my friends, though I would like to? They will think I am mean, if I do not remember them."

The time, which of all times should be blessed with peaceful, loving thoughts, bustles with anxious scheming as to how a pint may be made to appear as large as a quart.

Could we read the hearts of many persons, the day after Christmas, we should be more grieved than surprised to read there: "I'm glad another Christmas is gone! I shan't have to make any more presents for a year at least!"

In Christmas to be observed simply as a day of give and take? Shall our best thought concerning it be the thought that the presents we gave were equal in value to those we received? Shall not noble souls try to make the day memorable not by the exchange of gifts, but by the expression of love?

Our beloved Master gave the world Himself as His best Christmas gift.

The Revival.

The Rev. William W. Newell, D. D., writes of his own experience: "I had seen so many revivals averted by the conditions of pastors, that I devoted the entire week of prayer to a preparation of my own heart and life. I believed that I was a Christian, but I wanted to see myself as God saw me. I wanted to be thoroughly humbled and completely emptied of self. I wanted to press upon the church and the world the overwhelming motives of God's eternal Word, with all the magnetism of a fervid, confident, loving, divine spirit. In pleading with Jehovah for others I would obey his command, 'Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.' On Monday I considered the infinitely holy character of God. By this stupendous theme my soul was greatly awed. On Tuesday I considered my own particular sins, in the presence of that Jehovah with whom even the solemn meeting may be iniquity. I asked myself, 'What of your pride, ambition, self-seeking? What have you lacked in love, trust, spirituality, improvement of time, and toil for the lost? On Wednesday I considered God's kindness to me, my family, and my church. I was amazed at my own unthankfulness. But he had snatched away my loved ones, yet he enabled me to say, 'O God, thy will be done; my Jesus, as thou wilt.' On Thursday my questions were: 'Why do you want a revival of religion? Is it chiefly to build up one man or one church, to make your people more genial and loving? Or are you seeking, first of all, to honor Jesus in the salvation of the perishing? Have you been asking God for things which you do not expect to receive, and which you make slight effort to secure?' By this time I was ready to cry with the apostle, 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' On Friday I was prepared as never before to look to Jesus. Mere earthly advantages seemed to me like the idle wind; I confessed and loathed my sin. I looked upon him whom I had sinned, and I mourned for him. I laid myself upon his altar, to do as to suffer his will. With great confidence I sought his Spirit. My view was definite, my feeling was deep; my soul was filled with confidence and peace. Each evening during the week, I had poured forth to my church the experience of the day. At the close of the Friday meeting, numbers exclaimed, 'O what a meeting we have had!' The great revival had commenced."

—From "Getting Ready for a Revival," by Rev. E. S. Lorenz.

—Mr. John Wesley is reported as saying that he did not doubt that certain people would get to heaven but he did not care for their company here. God could get along with folks that he could not.

After Many Days.

Two men sat in their tent in India one Sabbath day. They were out on a missionary tour. The younger of them, the son of a missionary, and born in India, after taking a thorough medical course in this city, had returned to his native land to co-operate with his father in evangelizing and saving the millions there.

To them this Sabbath day came a native lad, and after the usual salutations he asked them if they were Christians. Upon being assured that they were, he said:

"Over in a village a few miles from here is a man who has never seen a white Christian, and he wants you to come over there and see him."

Taking accurate directions as to the way to the place, the missionaries told the boy that when the sun had somewhat declined they would come over.

Upon reaching the village a few hours later, they were met by an elderly gentleman of venerable appearance, who proffered himself in the first at their feet. They raised him, saying, as did Paul and Silas,

"Stand up, we are but men."

"Twenty years ago," said the man, "a neighbor of mine went to a Sunday fair at such a town on the banks of such a river, giving the name of both. 'He brought home a tract given him by a white Christian who was there. He said to me: 'You may have this tract; I cannot keep it. I cannot do as this tract tells me to do. I cannot give up my gods and worship only the God set forth in this tract.'"

The man received the tract and read it. It contained the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Beatitudes, that wonderful verse in John's Gospel, "God so loved the world," and, in short, the kernel of Christian faith and practice. As he read he kept saying to himself, "This is true," and accepting and obeying the truth he gave up his idols, and became an experimental and vital Christian. Seven other persons, his neighbors, reading the tract, followed his example.

Hearing that there were white Christians a few miles away, he sent for them to bear word of the word of God. That day, or the next, these eight believers were baptized and organized into a church, Bible and tracts were distributed to them, and they rejoiced greatly.

When this was reported to the Board under whose auspices these two men were laboring, the old men eagerly consulted their diaries to see if they could learn who it was that had sowed this precious seed. The father of this young physician found in his diary an entry showing that on a certain Sunday twenty years before he had visited the town named by the Indian convert, and preached and distributed tracts there. He found also this comment on the labors of the day: "The word preached did not seem to have much effect, but I hope and pray the Lord will send His blessing on the tracts I distributed."

—Christian Advocate.

Two Ways of Doing It.

I drove with my husband to our nearest town, not long since, and leaving me at the principal store in the place, he went to attend some business further on. After making my purchases I sat down to await his return. Most of the farmers within six or eight miles deal at this store, and to-day there were many coming and going. My attention was attracted to the dry goods counter where a pleasant-faced little woman was looking at some black dress goods. Her husband was standing near.

"Now Sam," said she, "this stuff is forty cents a yard, and this," holding up another piece, "is sixty cents; it's better than the other, but I guess the forty-cent goods will do me." The man came and examined both pieces in a very interested way, and said, "I think, Sally, you'd better take this at sixty cents; you don't often get a new dress, and you ought to have a good one." The little woman was still more pleased at looking as she told the clerk to cut off the dress.

"Sally," said the husband, "I'm going to buy you one of those red tablecloths."

"Sam," said she in an undertone, "they're beautiful, but can you afford it?" He smiled and had one wrapped up. As they went out with their packages, I said to myself, "True enough—a good husband makes a good wife—two such happy-looking people, and love and kindness the cause of it!"

My meditations were cut short by the entrance of another couple—a gruff-looking old fellow, and a pale, careworn woman.

"Now hurry up, Mary," said he, "I've no time to be fooling."

Then Mary said she would like to look at some cloth. She selected a piece that suited her, but when the man heard the price he objected.

"Get something cheaper," said he.

"But," said the wife timidly, "this is f. Tom's Sunday pants."

"I don't care," said he, "I won't pay no more."

So she was obliged to take an indifferent piece at a lower price. After purchasing a few groceries, the husband said:

"Come on; I suppose you've got all your want?"

"Yes," said she, looking wistfully around, but I did want so an apron gingham."

"Never mind that now," was the answer "I'm in a hurry," and off they went.

Al! thought I, here is a poor woman made unhappy by a brute of a man who never allows her the pleasure of going shopping with a little money of her own. She works hard without any reward, not even kind words. Ah! this must be the kind of farmers' wives who become insane. Then I wished I were a good fairy who might put money in her pocket to buy all those things so dear to a housekeeper's heart.

The arrival of my husband aroused me from my reveries, and when, during my ride home I related my experience, he laughingly said: "Just like a woman, to hear and see so much." "And," said I, "I feel like beating that horrid man, and I suppose that's like a woman too."

—Country Gentleman.

Burdette Sermonizes.

"Young Freshbinker" writes to say that "in many instances the words of the Bible are untrue as applied to our own times," and he says, "Take the passage, 'Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?' I say they are not." Oh, well, I agree with Young Freshbinker that the passage quoted may not apply to this day and this generation. But that is the fault of this generation; the Bible is all right. It is only we who are all wrong. Two sparrows were sold for a farthing then, and I don't suppose inspiration itself could foresee that, in the year 1888, in the United States of America, a race of human beings would wring from a starving neighbor \$1.85 for a spring chicken no bigger than a robin, or \$2 for a squab three days out of its shell, and would make butter out of dead cattle, and when their children asked for bread would give them a preparation of alum, and would catch imported sardines off the coast of Maine, and would sell "bob wail" in the public markets and would mix split peas in the coffee and sand in the sugar. I suppose it was the intention to burn the old globe up before a generation arose that was capable of doing such things. Of course you can't make the Bible fit your day, my son. Omnipotence couldn't do that; without making a hopeless wreck of the Bible. But you can make our day and generation fit the Bible. Suppose you try that. Commence at the other end of the bridge, and by the time you get Wall street fitted to the Sermon on the Mount, you will be gratified to see that you have landed the country safely on the old "two sparrows for a farthing" basis.—Burdette, in Hawkeye.

This, That, and The Other.

—Sins of commission are the usual punishment for sins of omission. He that leaves a duty may well fear that he will be left to commit a crime.

—They were talking of a close fisted man just deceased. 'Did he leave anything?' asked Smith. 'He had to,' was the laconic answer of Brown.

—According to the new book of the Disciples of Christ for 1888, they have 6,437 churches, 620,000 communicants, 4,500 Sunday-schools, with a membership of 318,000, and a teaching force of 33,340; number of preachers, 3,263. The value of church property is \$10,368,361.

—It is told of a sweet-voiced canary that it forgot how to sing by having its cage hung outside, where it was constant ly surrounded by sparrows. Association with the wicked will take all the vim and flavor of religion out of our lives, unless we strive to maintain our piety. The sparrows cannot learn the canary's song.

—One man recently said of a neighbor: "He is a very nice man; if you don't have any business to do with him." What a snub was that into a man whose religion is vain! What if sinners have to warn each other not to have business with particular Christians? What if a man's religion cannot be found in his own house? What if the poor are afraid of his heavy hand? No doubt there are such men who are ignorant of their terrible error and danger. They belong to the church; they think of the church as something they have staked in; they have a notion that all criticism is born of hatred of the church. Just because he is reproached for meanness, soon a man now and then plumes himself as a martyr for Jesus. It is a terrible delusion. He is not blamed because he belongs to the church, but because he is dishonest, unmanly, passionate or revengeful—or, in one word, an unrighteous man by the St. James standard.

—Zion's Herald.