

Messenger and Visitor

Published in the interests of the Baptist denomination of the Maritime Provinces by

The Maritime Baptist Publishing Co., Ltd.

TERMS: \$1.50 per annum in advance.

S. McC. BLACK

Editor.

85 Germain Street, St. John, N. B.

Address all communications and make all payments to the MESSENGER AND VISITOR.

For further information see page nine.

Printed by Paterson & Co., 107 Germain Street, St. John, N. B.

For Christ and the Church.

The relation between the individual Christian and the church with which he or she is connected ought to be regarded as a very sacred thing, the bond is one which is not to be lightly severed. For the church is Christ's bride, and because of this mystical union there is a oneness of life and spirit between Christ and the church, which must be for the individual Christian in the highest degree significant and precious. And if it is said that when the church is regarded as the bride of Christ, it is the invisible church, the whole body of believers, that is thought of, it is to be said in reply that every local church, rightly constituted, is the visible representation of the invisible church and can truly claim to sustain this mystic, spiritual relationship to Christ, its Head. In every individual member of the church, then, there should be the consciousness that he is one of a number of living members that make up the body of Christ. He is not merely a unit in the church, but he is a living member in vital union with every other member and with the Head. His life is a part of the church's life and the church's life is a part of his.

Where then is the place for the self-centred, arrogant, dominating spirit that too frequently manifests itself in our churches? How frequently do the words and actions of church-members indicate that whether or not they will continue in fellowship with the church is a matter to be decided by their own inclination, or according to the impulse of their feelings. If the minister whom the church as a body chooses to be its minister is not their individual choice, they will "leave the church"; if this or that thing which they do not personally like is done, or if this or that thing which they personally desire is not done, they will "leave the church"; if someone, wittingly or unwittingly, has offended them, they will absent themselves from the services and walk no more with the church until they have been sought out and a salve applied to their wounded sensibilities. Surely if we correctly apprehend our true relation to the church and the relation of the church to its Lord and Redeemer, we shall not be able to treat Christ's body with contempt and act toward the church as if our connection with it or our attitude toward it depended merely upon our individual whim or will.

There is a class of persons who feel impelled to leave the church because of what they regard as the church's worldliness and lack of spirituality. The church has been to them a minister of salvation; through the preaching of its ministers and the prayers and exhortations of its members, they were led to repentance and faith, received spiritual life and walked in its fellowship for a time with great comfort and joy. But since then they have received more light, have entered as they believe into a larger experience of spiritual life and power, and now the church seems to them cold, worldly, spiritually inert and unsympathetic; they feel chilled by its atmosphere and they are persuaded that, for their own spiritual health and as a protest against the church's unfaithfulness, they should denounce it and separate themselves from its fellowship. Now, suppose that they have made no mistake in believing that they have received greater light and have entered into a far richer spiritual experience, and that the church as a body is cold, inert and full of worldliness, does this justify them in separating themselves from the church and its fellowship? Surely in their church—even as in Sardis—there must be a few names which have not defiled their garments, and if Christ does not forsake the church, why

should his servants do so. The following words of the late Dr. A. J. Gordon of Boston seem worthy of being pondered in this connection:

"What the lungs are to the air, the church is to the Holy Spirit; and each individual believer is like a cell in those lungs. If every cell is open and unobstructed the whole body is full of light; but if through a sudden cold, congestion sets in, so that the large number of these cells are closed, then the entire burden of breathing is thrown upon the few which remain unobstructed. With redoubled activity these now inhale and exhale the air till convalescence returns. So we strongly believe that a few Spirit-filled disciples are sufficient to save a church, that the Holy Ghost, acting through these, can and does bring back recovery and health to the entire body. Woe, then, to those who judge before the time; who depart from their brethren and slam the door behind them before which Jesus is gently knocking; who spew the church out of their mouths while He, though rebuking it, still loves it and owns it and invites it to sup with Him. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death," writes the apostle. This is the method of the Lord's present work, death overcome by life. "I cannot sweep the darkness out, but I can shine it out," said John Newton. We cannot scourge dead works out of the church, but we can live them out. If we accuse the church of having pneumonia, let us who are individual air-cells in that church breathe deeply, and wait patiently and pray believingly, and one after another of the obstructed cells will open to the Spirit, till convalescence is re-established in every part."

Editorial Notes.

—President Roosevelt is reported as saying that he is getting more advice than any man living, and that most of it is bad advice.

—To live with a congregation that is always wrangling, Ian Maclaren says, is like living in the middle of a spring cleaning, and he would rather worship God in the open street than with such a people.

—We do not know whether Brother Freeman will be able to dig himself out from under the avalanche of question and criticism that has fallen on him this week. However, he is not easily crushed, and, not unlikely, will have something to say for himself in another issue of the paper.

—The two sermons of Dr. Maclaren recently preached in his own church, and printed in our this week's and last week's issues, surely afford no evidence of failing power. After more than fifty years of service in the pulpit, his bow abides in strength.

—It is related of Dr. Lyman Beecher that one night he had a dream in which an angel came to him and reminded him that God was managing the affairs of the Universe, and that he might save himself a good deal of worry if he would keep that fact in mind. It is rather difficult for some of us to believe that if we had the ordering of all things it would not be for the welfare of the Universe. But the angel that visited Dr. Beecher in his dream was probably well informed.

—An apple of gold in a picture of silver is the following quotation from Dr. Alexander Maclaren:—There is an old legend of an enchanted cup filled with poison and put treacherously into a king's hand. He signed the sign of the cross and named the name of God over it, and it shivered in his grasp. Do you take this name of the Lord as a test? Name him over many a cup which you are eager to drink of, and the glittering fragments will lie at your feet and the poison be spilled on the ground. What you cannot lift before his pure eyes and think of him while you enjoy is not for you.

—Solomon had no great hope of the man who has a tremendously big opinion of himself. Indeed he felt constrained to say very bluntly that there was more hope of a fool than of such a man. But as there may be some hope for fools in the school of experience, we ought not to give up in despair even the case of the man of colossal conceit, until it is seen what the discipline of life can do for him. Large and frequent doses of experience is the best prescription for swelled head. It takes time of course, but if the patient does not die under the treatment, a great improvement, if not a complete cure, is likely to be effected. Even Col. Sam Hughes might be able to wear a hat if he could have sufficient time and opportunity to exploit his military genius in South Africa.

—Dr. T. L. Cuyler thinks—and probably is correct in so thinking—that in these days there is too little preaching that has for its distinct aim the conversion of sinners. "Too many discourses," he says, "are addressed to nobody in particular; preaching to Christians has been relatively overdone and preaching to the impenitent underdone." What is needed is not "denunciations that only irritate or mere hortations that are only a waste of breath," but "that the preacher should so hold up the ugliness and the doom of sin before the sinner's eye that he should feel his own guiltiness, and so present Jesus Christ that the sinner should flee to him as his only

Saviour. 'Warn them from me' is God's solemn injunction to every minister; he has therefore no more right to cap Sinai or conceal hell than he has to hide the sin-atoning cross of Calvary. In short, I mean logic set on fire by love."

—Dr. Cuyler does not accept the theory that in order to awaken sinners ministers must preach first to awaken Christians. Nothing stirs comatose Christians like the sight of awakened persons going into an inquiry room with their pastor, or so moves the worldly church member as to see his son or daughter under concern of mind. Dr. Cuyler recalls the example of great preachers, from the Master Himself down, who have preached to the unconverted repentance and the remission of sins. "The most successful preachers from Whitefield and Wesley on to Spurgeon and Moody were men whose chief aim was to awaken the unconverted, and to lead them straight to Jesus Christ. Spurgeon never had any 'revivals' in his great church; and for the good reason that there were no spiritual declensions to be revived from. He sowed the gospel with one hand, and reaped conversions with the other. His church was like the orange trees I saw in California; there were white blossoms on some limbs, and ripe golden fruit on some other limbs. Unless a minister intensely loves souls, and longs for souls, he will never save souls; if he does, and uses the right means, seasoned with prayer, God will give him souls converted as the rich reward."

Inter-Collegiate Y. M. C. A. Convention.

The 12th Annual Inter-Collegiate Y. M. C. A. Convention was held in College Hall, Wolfville, on Nov. 28, 29, 30, 31. There were present eight delegates from U. N. B., five from Mount Allison, eleven from Dalhousie, two from Sackville Academy and one from P. W. C., Charlottetown. A very cordial welcome on behalf of the University and town expressing sympathy with the purpose of the Conference and willingness to assist in any and every possible way toward making the Conference a success was extended to the visiting delegates by our beloved and esteemed President, Dr. Trotter. Messrs. Vane, Porter and Hennigar, presidents of the visiting Associations made appropriate replies and hoped the stay at Acadia might prove a blessing to all.

The report of nominating committee which was adopted in full made appointment of officers as follows: Honorary President, Rev. E. M. Keirstead, D. D.; Pres., S. J. Cann, Acadia; Secretary, E. Crawford, U. N. B.

Devotional half hours were conducted at each of the morning and afternoon sessions by the presidents of visiting Associations which were among the most precious seasons of the Conference and proved very helpful. The first speaker of the Conference was Rev. Henry Dickie of Windsor, who is a brilliant speaker, and who gave a very pithy, strong and helpful address on the happily appropriate subject "Individual Work for Individuals" striking the last secret of effectual Christian work and the keynote of the thought of the Conference.

The Conference was particularly fortunate in being able to secure the services of Mr. C. F. Park, International Student Sec'y. in Preparatory School Work, New York, and Mr. A. B. Williams, International Student Sec'y. for Canada and the East, New York. These men out of their rich and varied experience in association work, and knowledge of the many difficulties connected with the work in colleges and the most successful methods of procedure, were able to offer many practical solutions of existing problems. Mr. Park gave us two helpful addresses. In the first he discussed the "Preparatory School Problems" stating the successful methods employed in dealing with these problems, in the other he gave some very encouraging facts concerning the recent advance in student work on this continent. The main success of the Conference is due to Mr. Williams. He was the principal speaker of the Conference giving us three powerful addresses and conducting the discussions on papers presented. Mr. Williams has a very pleasing manner and commands attention, his many helpful thoughts and suggestions will not soon be forgotten. His first address was on the theme "Winning Men for Christ." His earnest appeal for definite, personal effort in helping men to find Christ touched all hearts. His second address was entitled "The Relation of College Men to Men of Non-Christian Lands." He said, two visions are needed, one of the field and one of the Lord Jesus Christ. One of the world's great need and one of the world's great Saviour. What is our obligation to these men of non-Christian lands? We are bound to pray as we have never prayed before. Bound to give of our money and our life. The missionary spirit is the spirit of devotion for Christ. It is a vision of the exalted Spirit that gives the missionary movement its veneration. It has always been so. Paul's missionary enthusiasm was of that kind. Behind his absorbing love for men there was a passion for Jesus Christ. Paul had seen the face of the crucified.

Rev. D. Hutchinson addressed the Conference on "Thought and its Fruit." No end yields fruit more quickly than thought. Everywhere and in everything we behold the fruit of thought. The greatest power that