

Messenger and Visitor.

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SPECIAL OFFERS.—The responses to our special offers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR are coming in thick and fast. Still let them come. All we ask of those to whom the paper goes free to January 1st, is to drop us a card at the end of this time, if they do not desire to become subscribers. We hope none may desire us to discontinue sending them the paper; but will enclose us \$1.50 which will pay for its visits till January, 1890. If any wish, however, to discontinue, send us the card with this request, we shall drop their names but still hope that they may yet become subscribers.

DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH OF AMERICA.—This church has a membership of 85,543. This last year they made a fine record in their foreign mission work. The average contribution to this grand object reached \$1.84 per member. Their mission in Japan is wonderfully blessed. During the year eight new churches were formed and sixteen hundred new members added. Of the fifty-eight native churches, over half are self-supporting. At home about five thousand have been added to the churches. The committee on the State of Religion fear that the ordinance of baptism is "underrated and neglected" because but 4751 infants were brought to the font, only about half of those born into the families of the members, according to the usual rate of increase. As in other cases so here, when a body becomes earnestly evangelic, infant baptism gradually declines.

CITY EVANGELIZATION IN GERMANY.—The destitution of the means of grace in the great cities of Germany is something well nigh appalling. Berlin, with one million and a quarter of inhabitants has but 38 places of worship. There is another million on the outskirts of the city. These have but 38 ministers. Each pastor for less than 20,000 to 30,000 souls to care for. In Hamburg, Koenigsberg, &c., it is not much better. Leipzig is a rapidly growing city, yet the first new church for nearly four centuries was built two years ago. It is no wonder that so much that is anti-christian flourishes as the natural consequence of this state of things. This is seen in the alarming spread of socialist ideas, which the iron hand of Bismarck can hardly suppress. At the last election a Socialist received 30,000 votes in a parish of Berlin containing 100,000 inhabitants. A sign of promise is to be noted, however. Although crippled by state churchism, a City Mission Society has been started, which is doing aggressive work. The state will not assist, but private benevolence is backing it up. It is, however, but the day of small things, as its income is but \$35,000 a year.

CARDINAL TESTIMONY.—Dr. Schaef, in the volume of his Church History, just published, says: "The mode of baptism was not an article of controversy at that time; for the Reformers either preferred immersion (Luther), or held the mode to be a matter of indifference (Calvin)." Is a note referring to Luther's position in his Taufbuechlein, he says: "In both editions dipping is prescribed ('Da nehme er das Kind und tauche es in die Taufe'), and no mention is made of any other mode." The first English liturgy of Edward VI. (who was baptized by immersion) prescribes triple-immersion (dipping); the second liturgy of 1552 does the same, but gives (for the first time in England) permission to substitute pouring when the child is weak."

All this has long been well known by those who cared to be informed. It shows Dr. Schaef's fairness that he makes no attempt to conceal the facts. Sprinkling and pouring are comparatively recent perversions of scripture practice by Rome.

A CHRISTIAN DELIVERANCE.—The Christian Register, a leading Unitarian paper, has the following criticism on the Mohawk Indian Conference:

In a recent discussion between a number of Presbyterians, Methodists, and other sectarians (Christians?) on the best scheme of education for the Indians, it was evident that the majority had more anxiety about 'saving the soul' of the red man than about educating him. They were willing to do both, but the opinion chiefly expressed was that his preparation for the next life was more important than his preparation for citizenship in the United States of America.

These earnest Christian men will probably be able to ensure the conspicuous allusion of this paper representing a body that has ruled the name of God out of their declaration of doctrine, because they consider the eternal interest of the soul of more importance than the preparation for citizenship in the United States of America. It is to be noted, however, that those who recognize the supreme importance of eternity and the soul, are ever ready to do the most for the temporal interest of the body and soul alike. The Unitarians have not been noted as philanthropists. It is only about a year since they sent out their first missionary.

MERRY OLD HERRING.—It was our good friend to attend a meeting in the People's Church, Boston, at which all the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the

United States were present, with one exception. The speaker who bade these fifteen leaders of this great body of Christians welcome referred to the great powers placed in their hands. They have absolute power to assign spheres of labor to from 13,000 to 15,000 ministers every year. They have also, almost unlimited power as to the appropriation of the funds of the church. As they are elected for life, it shows what care should be taken in the selection of these men to this high office. The gentleman who stated these facts lauded the Episcopal idea of the Methodist body very highly, and was much applauded.

To one who has been brought up to the belief that the settlement of a pastor over a people is to come through the mutual drawing of people and pastor toward each other, under the deep conviction that the Lord is guiding them in answer to prayer; this interjection of the will and judgment of sixteen men between the free action of thousands of men and churches, so that all divine guidance in the matter must come through them, seems strange and out of harmony with the freedom of the gospel and the individual responsibility it enjoins. The bishops, however, are a fine body of men, ranging in age from the seventies down to middle age. If a criticism of the speeches of the evening might be ventured, it would be that there was too much of glorifying in being the followers of John Wesley, rather than of looking beyond all human leaders to the great Captain of our salvation.

ROMANISM IN ROME.—A recent visitor to Rome investigated the question of the attendance at Catholic churches in the Eternal City. He visited seven between 9.30 and 12.30. Although these were the principal ones, the average attendance, including visitors, was only 167. At the seat of its power, Catholicism has but little hold upon the people. Her character is too well known there to meet with the highest favor. It becomes more and more apparent that Romanism flourishes best at a distance from Rome, where its real character can be more easily concealed.

ENCOURAGED.—Bro. Gordon is much encouraged in his work. He has been out in the interest of our Seminary at St. Martin's, and has met with a very good reception. Upon the fields whether he has gone, the people have made a very general response to his appeals. The promise of stock taken and the names will be given later. He goes this week to Hillsboro, Surrey, Hopewell and Harvey. We bespeak for him a hearty welcome and a generous response. We are glad to hear that our pastors are taking hold of the vital matter of securing stock subscriptions with great vigor. This is as it should be. Let all co-operate, and success will be assured.

REGRETS.—The bay route between St. John, Digby and Annapolis has had no steamer on for the last two weeks. This has disarranged the mail service so that the MESSENGER AND VISITOR has not reached many of its readers at the usual time. This we very much regret, and hope it may not occur again.

GRAVE TIDINGS.—The graphic communication from Bro. Chubbill will be read with serious concern. In our own highly favored country, it is scarcely possible to conceive of the terrible calamity a drought is in the crowded eastern lands. The misery is awful. Let us pray that in the case of the Tennessees at Bobbili, Bimlipatam, and Chinnole, as in that of those at Ongole a few years ago, their desperate need and extremely may prove God's opportunity. Our missionaries will also be pained in serious straits; let us not forget them.

A LAST WORD.—The following contains the pith of the reference of the Presbyterian Witness to our criticisms of week before last:

What we regard as undue ritualistic rigor on the part of our brethren is, not that they hold firmly to their own view of the mode and the subjects of baptism, but that they make their own view a dividing line in regard to communion. As Baptists, of course, while your light requires you to be Baptists; but do, if you can, get over the narrow view that you cannot sit at the Lord's Table with Christians of other names and who differ from you as to the mode of baptizing.

Let us see just what this amounts to. Our brother of the Witness would not invite one he esteemed unbaptized to the Supper. Baptists do not invite those they esteem unbaptized to the Supper. Very good; so far we are agreed. Our brother believes immersion to be valid baptism. On the principle upon which we agree, he can receive us to the Supper. We do not believe sprinkling or pouring to be valid baptism or baptism at all. On the principle upon which we are agreed, Baptists cannot invite the sprinkled to the Supper. We hope this is plain enough for our brother. When he says, therefore, that it is willing we should hold to our own idea of baptism, he is in error. He is not

willing that our idea of baptism shall determine, in our practice, what shall be insisted on as prerequisite to the Supper, as he claims the privilege of doing in his own practice. This is inconsistency and intolerance combined. Still, we are glad he will not accept the absurdity that the unbaptized who are not eligible for church membership are to be received to the Supper in a church of which they could not become members. But if it will be any pleasure to him to attempt to argue against us a little prejudice while he strikes out at our strict communion, which is only putting in practice the same consistency with our views of baptism he seeks to maintain himself, we shall try and bear with him as well as we can, in hope that he may yet see the inconsistency of his course.

Bible Topical Studies.

BY H. F. ADAMS, YARMOUTH, N. S.

Quite a number of believers neglect the bible, because they have no definite method of studying its contents. Some read a chapter every day as a duty, but having only read it, its contents pass out of memory. To get strength and inspiration from God's thoughts, we must settle down on them one at a time, just as a bee lights on a flower, enters it, and sucks therefrom sweetness and strength. It is not how much of the bible we read, but how much we eat and digest into the spiritual man, that is more important. One of God's precious thoughts, is as much as a soul can receive and assimilate at a time. I have always found that to get one inspiring verse into the heart at the outset of the day, is better than trying to hold the substance of a whole chapter. A chapter every morning for the family, but a verse for the individual is a good and practicable rule.

With a desire to promote regular and topical study of God's wonderful Word, I have a plan which I am going to ask my members, and especially my young members, to work out next year. I shall furnish them with lists of passages which will be connectedly unfolded and illumined by bible topics. For January I will give them a verse for each day of the month except Sabbaths, which we reserve for the golden text of the lesson for the day. Through these verses there will run one topic, which like a golden cord will hold them all together. While one idea will be kept before the mind from day to day; each verse will present a different aspect of the leading thought, like a kaleidoscope the thought will be turned round every day, but only to present to the mind a new and increasingly beautiful suggestion.

This is not to take the place of family worship, but is intended to secure to the individual believer a distinct thought that will be connected with its predecessor and successor, and to train him to study his bible topically. I shall ask my people to underline the passage for the day, and commit it to memory so that it may abide with them throughout the day. In Christian families, it would be a beautiful custom for each member of the household to recite the verse at the breakfast table before eating. Even if there be only two or three, it would be possible and helpful. Such a practice would impress the youth of the family with a habit that would never be forgotten, associated as it would be with a parental reverence for the Word of God. And who can tell how many seeds of thought could be sown in growing hearts that would germinate in the future of the boy and girl?

Any one can see that this practice would involve very little effort and time; a few minutes would suffice to underline the verse and memorize it. And when we think of the accumulated treasures of 365 golden thoughts stored away in the memory every year, and then carefully packed in twelve distinct compartments, who would begrudge it a little endeavor requisite to attain a blessed result? Such regular work in the King's banqueting house, would ensure as good spiritual health as regular and wholesome meals contribute to physical health.

For seven years I have used different colored inks in marking my bible, and have found such aids very helpful in locating passages, and finding them quickly. For sometimes when I cannot remember in which of Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians a chapter and verse are, I can remember on what part of the page, and which page right or left, the marked verse is located; and in turning over the leaves my eye very often catches on to the text by the color of the ink with which it is underlined.

The following inks I have used in this way. All passages in which *atonement, redemption, sacrifice, blood, occur*, that is in which these topics are represented, I have underlined with *Orison* ink. With *Blue* ink, I underline verses signifying *Heaven, Hope, Promise*. Blue I associate with the *skies*. All verses in which *Love, Affection, occur* I underline with *Violet*. Violet I have associated

with love-letters. *Faith, Believing, Trust*, I have underlined with *Green*. When a boy I remember looking at an eclipse of the sun through a piece of green glass. Then wherever *Distinction* signified *Gold* ink served to indicate at sight the topic of the verse, especially in the appropriate color for the 365 titles of the Lord Jesus (and there is another for leap year). The devil has only 35 titles, Black would best suit him, and sin, and temptation, &c., &c.

If one cares not to take so much trouble with the sacred task of studying the word of God, he may use black for all. My own young people are enthusiastic to join in this little effort to advance in Bible knowledge. And it occurred to me that the results of my studies for them, might also be useful to many others. And if the Editor of our paper will allow me space, I will most gladly furnish monthly lists of topics for the service of its 6,000 subscribers. And supposing that each copy is read by four persons, what a grand result would be attained if all would be induced to study together the Word of God topically. Here are the verses that we will underline and memorize in January, taking the thought of a New Year.

1. New Mercies—Lam. 3, 22: 23.
2. "Creation—2 Cor. 5: 17.
3. "Heart—Ezek. 36: 26.
4. "Spirit—Rom. 7: 6.
5. "Life—Rom. 6: 4.
6. Golden Text.
7. New Song—Psa. 40: 3.
8. "Things—Matt. 13: 52.
9. "Babe—1 Pet. 2: 2.
10. "Doctrine—Mark 1: 27.
11. "Testament—Heb. 9: 15.
12. "Way—Heb. 10: 20.
13. Golden Text.
14. New Song—Psa. 96: 1.
15. "Man—Ephes. 4: 24.
16. "Lump—1 Cor. 5: 7.
17. "Commandment—John 13: 34.
18. "Tongues—Mark 16: 17.
19. "Song—Psa. 98: 1.
20. Golden Text.
21. New Song—Psa. 149: 1.
22. "Covenant—Heb. 8: 8.
23. "Fruit—Gal. 7: 13.
24. "Tomb—Matt. 27: 60.
25. "Name—Rev. 3: 12.
26. "Song—Rev. 5: 9.
27. Golden Text.
28. New Song—2 Pet. 3: 13.
29. "Earth—Rev. 21: 1.
30. "Jerusalem—Rev. 21: 2.
31. All Things New—Rev. 21: 5.

The following months we will take distinct topics, such as "The Blood," "Faith," "Fruit," "Holiness," etc., etc. The tools requisite for the execution of this plan, are simply a short ruler about 4 or 5 inches long, a few fine pens, and the different colored inks. If you use the various colored inks, it is desirable to have a holder and pen for each color, as the inks would run into each other, and thus defeat the object of their use. Pomeroy's inks are good, and obtainable in neat small square bottles. If you have a good sized type bible, the underlining can be done with greater safety. If you have a very good small type bible, the lines of the print being very close together, in order to avoid touching the type with the underlining, you can, instead of underlining, make a neat bracket at the end of the verse next the outer margin. If your bible be old, I advise you to get a well-bound bible, thick paper and not smaller type than Nonpareil, Minion would be better still. Ruby, Pearl, or Diamond types cannot with safety be underlined, except by one who has had some experience in marking Christmas and New Year's days will soon be here, and these anniversaries afford us and our friends opportunities to present one another with a good new bible, and thus begin this work on clean new pages.

Do not think I am inaugurating a new society, but simply desire to promote amongst our great Baptist brotherhood and sisterhood, a new way of studying God's glorious thoughts. I invite my brother pastors to urge upon their young people the pleasure and profit such a simple and easy task would bring to their hearts, and greatly help their establishment in the truths of the bible.

Should you decide to join me in this labor of love, please cut out the verses for January and put them in a place in your bed-chamber where your eye will catch them first thing on awakening. Before beginning your toilet attentions, fix the verse for the day on your mind, turn it over while completing your toilet, till you have it memorized; then underline or bracket it. My Hebrew tutor told us in class, that he learned Hebrew while shaving. First its grammatical structure, and then sentence building. So let us master the verses, and the chapters will take care of themselves. If you, Mr. Editor, will grant me permission, I will announce the portions for February in January's paper, say about the last week. And if any of our readers will unite with us in this form of bible study, will you please drop me a postal card and say so.

At a meeting of brewers in Soudsky, O., recently, the following was posted on the wall as a motto: "Down with the white-livered clergy and the Sunday schools."

Support of the Church Poor.

In the MESSENGER AND VISITOR (last week the question is asked "Should a Baptist church allow its aged and worthy poor to go to the Poor House?" This enquiry you have answered in the negative, with very pungent remarks in connection. You infer that the asking of such a question should cause every true Baptist to blush. Whether I am a true Baptist or not I leave for those with whom I have been in church fellowship for over fifty years to judge, but it would not cause me to blush, or to be ashamed of having a poor church member placed in the Poor House, so called, for to be better cared for than would be the case generally, if placed in another poor family who would likely be the only one who would wish an aged, infirm boarder—or pauper—to reside with it. But why limit the church to caring for its poor members only; the Spirit of the Master would lead us to care for all the poor around us without distinction of denominational name or of any church connection. Christ never stopped to ask his applicants for aid, whether they were Jews or Gentiles, the only enquiry made: were they needy? and at once their needs were supplied.

What the individual church could not do in providing for the poor, society in general, influenced and taught by the spirit of the gospel, has done. Animated by sympathy for distress, it has caused laws to be enacted to meet the case of all needy and helpless ones; and to meet the wants of the poor, whether deserving or not, have taxed itself for all expenses, erected almshouses, and provided for their right management and support. Members of the Christian Church are equally taxed with others, and having been included with those outside the church in their share of finances, have a claim to the support of their poor members in the asylum which they have helped to provide.

What objection is there to a Poor House? Is it not the name rather than other causes that tend to fix a stigma on those entering it? A retreat for aged women is called an Old Ladies' Home, although it is occupied by those peculiarly destitute, and placed there usually by some friend who pays a moderate sum for their support, but actually it is an asylum for the destitute and infirm. There are many Poor Houses—or Poor Farms—where the needy are accommodated or boarded by the county or town in which they are situated. Did you, Mr. Editor, ever visit one of these? If not, you cannot judge of their comforts and conveniences. As a general thing these are under kind and sympathizing keepers and matrons, watched over and directed by a board of unpaid guardians, whose duty it is to see that the wants of the inmates are well cared for. I live in a county where there are three Poor Farms; have visited one of these frequently, have found the rooms clean, airy and well heated, the beds clean, with plenty of coverings, the food ample and not more plain than would be on the table of average farmers. I have seen the elderly women in a clean sitting room, with their knitting work, chatting together, seeming contented with their situation; the men in another room with their pipes, enjoying social intercourse, all apparently better clothed, better fed and better housed than they were in their poor homes before changing to the poor asylum.

There is no disgrace in being poor; how then can it be such to have a comfortable home provided by a Christian community that they should not suffer for what they could not provide for themselves? The religious advantages in the Poor Houses I have known are not few. Churches around supply services every Sabbath, and books and tracts to supply reading at other times.

The church poor are usually from the laboring class, and therefore have but few comforts at home, and suffer often when cold winter arrives, or sickness visits the family. Removed to the home for the poor they have warmth and food in abundance, and when sick, medical attendance and nursing.

Now, Mr. Editor, what objection could a poor person have to go where his or her comforts would be greatly increased? And what reproach should a church suffer for having its poor placed in such comfortable keeping?

You ask, "is this the way any church member would like to be treated were he old, poor and infirm?" I answer, Yes. I would much rather go to a well regulated poor asylum than to be placed in such a family as are willing to board the poor.

Rev. Jno. Angell James, an eminent Congregationalist minister of Birmingham, G. B., has written on this subject, taking mainly the view I have expressed, and does not consider the church answerable for the support of its poor members when there is a house provided for them to go.

A church cannot do too much for its poor; and if looked after systematically, in time, few would ever become a county charge. There are in every church needy families. A good committee of ladies, working with the deacons, will find them out, and a little timely aid will keep them from what so many dread, the Poor House.

AS OLD BAPTIST.

Nova Scotia, Nov. 27.
[We are glad to give the "other side," as it is so well done by "an old Baptist." We are glad, also, that his church supports its own poor. We regard the church as a family; its members bound together by the closest and dearest ties. When we can bring ourselves to the idea that, should our brother or sister succumb to the flesh become poor, it would be approved by God should we permit them to go to the poor house while we had the means to care for them, we may feel it right to permit our worthy brethren and sisters in the church to go there. We also believe that our brethren and sisters in the church have a first and special claim upon us over and above that had by the poor generally, just as our own families have such a claim. As the same time, there may be churches with so little means as to make it impossible to support their own poor.—Ed.]

The Test of Love.

In one of his letters to the Danvers de Beauvilliers, Fenton says, "Your enquiries should be full of trust in God who loves you more, the less He spares you." Of course, this is but passing in other words the declaration of the author of the letter to the Hebrews, "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." There is a seeming paradox here, but it is only seeming. At one of the Northfield meetings, a brother (we believe Mr. Rialford from London) told this incident: "A gentleman saw a dozen boys teasing an aged beggar. The gentleman stepped up to them, and taking one of the boys by the collar, he shook him, and took him home (presumably for further discipline). But the other boys he did not meddle with. Now, why did he punish that boy and leave alone the others? At once the answer came from a doctored voice, "Because it was his own son."

There is a great lesson here. Once on a time, the writer thereof was a teacher of rhetoric and composition. It fell to his lot to have to look over a vast multitude of essays (how just and expressive is the word!) Often out of the same batch, one I would correct over and over, cutting out, interlining, changing; another would be returned with not a scratch. Why this difference? Because the one was worth correcting, would repay the labor, had some promise; the other had absolutely nothing in it. To correct it, would be a wicked waste of time. What would be the use of crossing out or changing a faulty sentence? The only way of correcting would be to take a fresh sheet of paper, a new subject and a new author. The closeness, the apparent severity of the corrections of the one essay, which perhaps brought tears to the eyes of the mortified writer, were, in fact, the highest testimony to its possibility of excellence.

There is hardly a more terrible sentence in the Word than the words, "Ephraim is joined to his idols; let him alone." Here is a man who seems to be allowed unlimited prosperity; he has no chastisement; wealth, the good words of men, success, all come to him. But perhaps a God is only letting him alone. He is without chastisement, whereas all are paid takers.

The very word "chastise," to make a chaste, to make pure, has a depth of significance.

BE KING TO DAY.—A little child may brighten scores of lives every day. There is not one of us who may not gladden and strengthen many a heart between every rising and setting sun. Why should we not live to bless the living, to cheer the disheartened, to sweeten cups that are bitter, to hold up the hands that hang down, to comfort those who mourn, to bear joy into joyless homes? Kind words will not spoil man. If a sermon helps you, it will do the preacher no harm as to tell him so. If the editor writes an article that does you good, he may write as still better one if you send him a word of thanks. If a book blesses you, do you not owe it to the author to write a grateful acknowledgment? If you know a weary neglected one, would it not be Christ-like work to see an opportunity to brighten and bless that life? Do not wait till the eyes are closed, the ears deaf, and the heart still. Do it now. Post-mortem kind words do not cheer. Flowers on the coffin add no fragrance backward over the weary days.

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