

# Messenger and Visitor.

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A MERRY CHRISTMAS! The MESSENGER AND VISITOR wishes to all its readers and friends.

—The *Central Baptist* says: "Every man not only owes it to himself to do the best he can, but to help every other man to do the best he can. Our neighbors would be much more agreeable if all their neighbors were more lovable. The noise which comes over the fence may be only an echo coming from home."

—It is related of Dr. Chalmers that he once, to the great surprise of everybody, succeeded in getting an old infidel shoemaker to come to church. In answer to some one's enquiry as to how he had been induced to come, the old man replied: "Why mon he kens about leather." The astute and tactful preacher had employed the indirect method and caught the shoemaker with guile. Had he tried either to drive or coax the man to church no doubt he would have failed.

—IMPORTANT and voluminous additions to the world's archaeological literature are forthcoming as a result of explorations on the site of the ancient Niffer, near Babylon. One volume, edited by Prof. Heliopricht, has already appeared, and it is stated that not less than sixty volumes will be needed to complete the translations of the cuneiform writings discovered, and for descriptive and explanatory notes and essays dealing with the discoveries. These writings, it is expected, will afford much information of great interest and value to archaeological and biblical students.

—GREAT BRITAIN and the United States will each send a delegate to act with the commission appointed by the Sultan of Turkey, to investigate and ascertain the facts as to the Armenian outrages. The presence of delegates from these two governments on the commission should afford assurance that the investigation will be more than a mere pretence. The person named as likely to be the representative of the United States government in the matter is Mr. Milo A. Jewett, consul at Sivas, Armenia. He is the son of a missionary and was born in Armenia.

—FOLLOWING is, in brief, the programme published by the Evangelical Alliance for the week of prayer:  
Text for Sunday, Jan. 6, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength."—(Isa. 40:31.)  
Monday, Jan. 7, Humiliation and Thanksgiving.  
Tuesday, Jan. 8, The Church Universal.  
Wednesday, Jan. 9, Nations and their Rulers.  
Thursday, Jan. 10, Foreign Missions.  
Friday, Jan. 11, Home Missions.  
Saturday, Jan. 12, Families and Schools.  
Text for Sunday, Jan. 13, "Always abounding in the work of the Lord."—1 Cor. 15:58.

—PROBABLY the highest and most conspicuous hat in the world is the broad-rimmed piece of head-gear attached to the colossal bronze statue of William Penn which has recently been elevated to the top of the tower of the new City Hall of Philadelphia. The distance from the hat to the ground is nearly 550 feet, and it is said to be visible at a distance of twenty miles. There is no particular objection to a high hat under such circumstances provided it is well fastened on, but when the high hat is on the head of a lady who sits in church directly between you and the minister, the case is different.

—THE writer of an editorial paragraph in the *Christian Standard* "has the good fortune to be present at the Crystal Palace in London when with such extraordinary splendor the opening of the Suez Canal was there celebrated, and a reception given to Count de Lesseps, whose genius conceived, planned and carried through that great enterprise. Those who on that occasion saw the name of the great engineer shine forth in letters of fire during the pyrotechnic display, can hardly have anticipated a day to come when the glory of it should be clouded, as so many great names are given up to dishonor, at least for the time. This proved to be the fate in reserve for De Lesseps, though probably not so much by his own fault as was at one time supposed."

—THE question, we believe, was discussed some time ago whether or not Sir John Thompson was himself ever a member of a Methodist church. The following sentence from Dr. Lathern's pen in the *Halifax Wesleyan* should settle that matter: "During an early pastorate of the editor of the *Wesleyan*

in Halifax, John S. D. Thompson, then a promising young man, was a member of Brunswick Street Methodist church, as was his venerable father, a Protestant of the most stalwart North of Ireland type." It will appear to most Protestants incomprehensible how a man of Mr. Thompson's mental calibre, and with such ancestry and early training, could honestly adopt the principles and practice of Roman Catholicism. No doubt the new relations into which he came at his marriage had much to do in bringing about the change in his religious views, but that the change was sincerely made and that he lived afterwards as a devout Catholic, there appears to be no reason to doubt.

—THE University of Cambridge has recently published a Syriac version of the four gospels which was discovered two years ago in the Monastery of Mount Sinai by Mrs. Agnes S. Lewis, an English lady. The manuscript discovered by Mrs. Lewis is believed to belong to about 400 A. D., but the translation itself is thought to have been made about A. D. 150. Like the Vatican and Sinaitic manuscripts, this Syriac code omits the last twelve verses of Mark, the story of the woman taken in adultery, the doxology at the end of the Lord's Prayer and some other passages. It gives the name of Jesus as Barabbas, making Pilate say, "which will you that I release unto you, Jesus Bar-Abba or Jesus which is called Christ?" The version, however, shows traces of alterations to conform to the heresies which sprang up in the early Christian centuries relative to the non-miraculous birth of our Lord. It reads, in Matt. 1:16, "Jacob begat Joseph; Joseph to whom was espoused the Virgin Mary" begat Jesus, who is called "Christ." That these were alterations is apparent from the fact that many passages which affirm the supernatural birth of our Lord are left unchanged—for example (verse 18), "she was found with child from the Holy Ghost," and (verse 20) "that which is born of her is of the Holy Spirit." Despite these blemishes, the new version will rank as one of the highest authorities among Biblical scholars.

## PASSING EVENTS.

THE news of the death of Sir John Thompson, which occurred at Windsor Castle on Wednesday last, came as a great and painful surprise to the people of this Dominion. From his appearance Sir John was generally taken to be a man of robust constitution, and it was supposed by most persons that, apart from being somewhat jaded from overwork, he was in the enjoyment of vigorous health. But since his death it has transpired that it was known to the premier's intimate friends that for some time past the condition of his health had not been satisfactory, and one of his objects in visiting Europe at this time was to consult specialists in reference to a disease that was preying upon his system. His health had not improved as he had hoped; his physician had advised rest, and it is said that it was his desire as soon as possible to return to Canada. Rest to one in such a position whether at home or abroad, is well nigh impossible. Sir John had been particularly active during the recent weeks spent in England and on the continent, and there is little doubt that his sudden and untimely decease is to be charged to overwork. He had been attending public meetings in London in reference to Canadian affairs, and on Tuesday evening had addressed the Colonial Institute in respect to matters dealt with by the Ottawa conference. It was remarked on that occasion that Sir John appeared unwell, and he abbreviated his remarks on the plea of indisposition. The next day, in company with Lord Ripon and other imperial ministers, the premier, apparently in good health, visited Windsor for the purpose of taking the oath of office as a member of the Privy Council, and was received by the Queen. After these ceremonies he lunched with the ministers, and during luncheon was suddenly taken ill. A few minutes afterwards he expired. The Queen is said to have been much moved by the sad event, and sent to Lady Thompson, at Ottawa, a message of personal sympathy. The death of the Canadian premier caused a profound sensation in London, and many messages of condolence were received from eminent persons by Sir Charles Tupper. Men of all parties will agree that the taking away of Sir John Thompson in the midst of his years and his fame is a serious loss to Canada. It is probably true that Sir John had little love for the business of politics. He was not a born manager of men. He

lacked that envious of manner and bonhomie which contribute so much to the success of men like the late Sir John MacDonald and Mr. Laurier; but in parliamentary discussions, in dealing with legal, judicial and political questions he exhibited ability of the highest order. Whether he possessed the kind of ability required to hold together for any great length of time the diverse elements of which governments in Canada are necessarily composed, is a question which will now remain unanswered. That, in his private life, his moral conduct was above reproach and that in his public life he was personally incorruptible and sought to promote purity in the administration of public affairs, will be admitted by friend and foe. The *Montreal Witness*, which in many respects was not in sympathy with the late premier, says:

"His death will be a loss to the country; he was personally pure, and we have no doubt that he did all short of resigning or smashing his party to rid the government of corruption. . . . He was a man of great ability, and devoted to what he believed to be the good of the country."

SIR JOHN THOMPSON was born in the city of Halifax, Nov. 10, 1844. His father was John Sparrow Thompson, who came to this country from Waterford, Ireland. J. S. D. Thompson was educated in Halifax schools, studied law in the office of Mr. Henry Prior and was called to the bar in 1865. He rapidly rose to distinction in his profession and in 1887 entered the provincial parliament as member for Antigonish and in connection with the Conservative party, at that time in opposition. At the next general election his party was successful and Mr. Thompson became attorney general in the Holmes-Thompson government. A notable piece of legislation introduced by this government was the Municipal Corporation Act. Under the popular opposition which it aroused the government was defeated in 1882. Shortly afterwards Mr. Thompson was appointed a judge of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia. In 1870 he had been married to a Miss Ailcock of Halifax, a Roman Catholic, and then a year or two later became a member of that body. He had been reared under Protestant influences, his parents being Methodists. In 1885 Mr. Thompson resigned his judgeship to enter the Dominion parliament and was made Minister of Justice, a position which he was specially qualified to fill. He was knighted in 1888 in recognition of services rendered in connection with the negotiation of the Chamberlain-Bayard Fishery Treaty in 1887. After the death of Sir John MacDonald in 1891, Sir John Thompson became the leader of the government in the House, with Sir John Abbott in the Senate as premier, and upon the death of the latter, Sir John Thompson became in name, what he had probably before been in reality—the head of the government. It is stated that the late premier had accumulated but little property and that his sudden death leaves his family but poorly provided for. The British government will send the remains by a war vessel to Halifax, where they will find a resting place.

FERDINAND DE LESSEPS, who died on the 7th of the present month at the age of 89 years, was one of the most notable men of the century. He was of noble birth and endowed with nature with splendid ability. "Inheriting a powerful physique and immense vitality, abstemious and temperate in his habits, of great will power and almost inexhaustible personal resource, with the audacity of an idealist and the skill of a diplomatist," M. de Lesseps would seem to have been a man raised up by Providence to execute a project which men of scientific and practical wisdom united in declaring impossible, the construction of the Suez Canal. M. de Lesseps was no master of scientific or of practical engineering. He was an idealist, an enthusiast and a diplomatist. He conceived that a Suez Canal could and should be constructed. He had boundless faith in his project and in himself. He knew how to persuade men and to inspire them with some measure of the confidence which he himself felt in his undertaking. So in spite of the ridicule of engineers, the distrust of capitalists and the opposition of governments, after fifteen years of indefatigable effort, de Lesseps' scheme was realized and the Suez Canal became an accomplished fact. This was in 1869, when de Lesseps was 65 years of age. The event brought him a world-wide reputation and covered him with glory. The canal proved a great success.

Shortening the voyage between Europe and India by 3 000 miles, it revolutionized trade with the East. Great Britain, which had opposed the project, now that the canal was completed, secured through the astuteness of Disraeli a controlling interest in it, which led to her occupation of Egypt in order to protect her interests in the canal. For ten peaceful years the great Frenchman enjoyed his well-earned fame, and if he could have died then, it would have been to escape great trouble and disaster with loss of honor and prestige. It is sad when, as in the case of our Canadian premier, just fallen, a man is taken away when what seems the noonday of his career, when his work seems but half done; but it is infinitely sadder when a man outlives his renown and tarnishes the splendid reputation he has made. In 1879, when 75 years of age, M. de Lesseps embarked upon another undertaking of colossal proportions—the construction of a Panama Canal. No doubt the great idealist, as he has been called, was honest in undertaking this later project as he had been in the other. He believed that it could be accomplished, but his faith seems to have been based rather on the conviction that nothing was impossible to his genius than on any sober calculation of the actual conditions and the resources necessary for overcoming the difficulties to be encountered. His great name and fame led persons of all classes to invest their money freely in the scheme. He did not know, as he was in duty bound to know, the conditions of the problem he had taken in hand, and the kind of men who were associated with him in the project. It is charitable, and probably just, to suppose that "the old man was blind" to the fact that in a few years his great project had become little more than a great swindle. He was the dupe of his own imagination, of his limitless faith in himself and of the crowd of schemers by whom he was surrounded. The events connected with the Panama scandal are matters of recent history as not to require repetition here. That a man of so high position and remarkable genius and the author of so splendid achievement should, in his extreme old age, be dragged down into disgrace, loaded with obloquy by his own countrymen, convicted of felony and sentenced to imprisonment as such (a sentence which, however, was never carried into effect) is one of the saddest things in recent history.

WE are inclined to believe that Dr. Sargent, director of physical training at Harvard, is quite right in insisting, as he has done in a recent issue of the *Graduates Magazine*, that the physical education provided for in the gymnasium should be incorporated in the curriculum and made a regular part of the college course. Dr. Sargent would have the physical training work put upon the same level as the studies of the class room, requiring the students to devote at least four hours a week to physical culture, with appropriate examinations, the results being marked, as in the case of other examinations, in reference to a degree. It should be recognized in the training of young men and women for the work of life that a well-developed and healthy physique is scarcely less important than a well-trained mind, and that a strong and cultured intellect united to a weak and diseased body is terribly handicapped in the great race. Dr. Sargent states that only about half of the three thousand students at Harvard made use of the gymnasium. Many students are not disposed to take much physical exercise, and the less one takes the less he is inclined to take. When students, of both sexes, are required, as a condition of obtaining degrees, to carry on, under competent instruction, the work of the gymnasium hand in hand with the work of the class room, a more valuable all round class of graduates will be the result.

THE new Reichstag building at Berlin which was formally opened two weeks ago by the Emperor is a fine structure, of which the German people are proud. The corner stone was laid ten years ago by Emperor William I. The cost thus far is over \$7,000,000, and the building is not yet complete. The first meeting of the Reichstag in its new building was a stormy one. The Socialists, who form a strong faction in the body, were in an angry mood, induced by the introduction of a bill of a stringent character directed against them, along with the well-known and declared opposition to them of the Emperor, and their belief that the removal of Chan-

cellor Coprivi from the chancellorship was due to the lenient policy which he pursued toward the Socialists. Accordingly when the president of the Reichstag called for cheers for the Emperor, the Socialist deputies kept their seats and remained silent, and when other deputies called upon them to "get up or get out," there were angry retorts from the Socialists. Whether the Emperor's "blood and iron" policy will bring about the end he desires remains to be seen. There are those who fear for the result.

THE sudden death of the Premier of the Dominion has naturally given rise to much speculation as to his successor and the reconstruction of the cabinet which the death of the Prime Minister *ipso facto* dissolved. The question of succession has been settled, for the time being at all events, by the appointment of the Hon. Mr. Bowell, the late Minister of Trade and Commerce, to the premiership. The problem of reconstruction is yet to be worked out. There is talk that Mr. B. B. Oser, of Ontario, may enter the Cabinet as Minister of Justice. It is also said that Sir C. H. Tupper may be called to the department of justice, in event of which it is supposed that Mr. Kenny, of Halifax, would become Minister of Marine. It is also mentioned as among the possibilities that Governor Chapleau, of Quebec or Dr. McTague, M. P., for Haldimand, Ont., may one or both of them find seats in the Cabinet. It appears to be settled that Mr. Bowell will continue in the Senate and that Mr. Foster will be the government leader in the House.

AFFAIRS in Newfoundland are in a condition of great disturbance. For several months past the colony has been afflicted with political difficulties of a serious character, and last week it experienced a financial panic in which several important business firms succumbed and two banks, the Union and the Commercial, suspended payment. In the case of the last named the suspension is said to be permanent, but the Union bank is expected to resume payment after a few days. The Goodridge government, which evidently did not enjoy the confidence of the people, has, on request of the governor, resigned. The real causes of the collapse in financial matters is not very apparent. It would appear, however, to be the fact that the political difficulties and the business difficulties of the island are intimately connected. The Credit system in Newfoundland whereby the people have been kept under the domination of the trading houses has wrought much evil; and it is to be hoped that the troubles through which the colony is now passing may be preparatory to the establishment of a sounder business basis.

## W. B. M. U.

MOTTO FOR THE YEAR:  
"Be ye strong therefore and let not your hands be weak for your work shall be rewarded."  
Contributors to this column will please address Mrs. J. W. Manning, St. John West, N. B.

PRAYER TOPIC FOR DECEMBER.  
For the missionaries at Valangrum, that their faith fail not and that the seed sown there may bring forth an abundant harvest.  
For weak and discouraged workers in Aid Societies and Mission Bands in the home land.

A Christmas Dream.

Among the cushions by the glowing grate Marion was fast asleep. Christmas shopping had tired her out. She had planned and worked for days, and her closet was full of pretty gifts, designed to give a pleasant surprise to many friends. She thought her work was done. But as she slept she dreamed.

One stood by her side. He called her by name, he took her by the hand. She could not fail to know him. It was her blessed Lord and Saviour. "You have made gifts for many," He said; "have you provided ought for me?"

Marion's heart sank before this question. It was true! She had forgotten her Lord. Yet she took courage, and asked the old, old question: "How, Lord, can I give anything to Thee?"

"Arise, He answered; "walk with Me and behold gifts for which I long—gifts within the power of every child to give."  
In her dream, Marion stood in a dark, foul courtyard. A girl no older than herself, with her head shaved and the marks of many bruises on her half-naked body, crouched in a corner. Miserable, abused, tormented, she was on the point of taking her own life. She had no friend in earth or heaven; why should she live? She had com-

mitted many sins. Her wretched soul yet shrank from the dark abyss awaiting it, should it quit the shuddering body. Ah! what would she gain if she should venture all and die?

As Marion looked she trembled. A sigh of ineffable sorrow and tenderness from Him, upon whom she did not dare to look, rent her heart.

Again, in her dream, Marion saw passing, one by one, the daughters of many countries. Favage, untaught, unclean, some filled her with pity, some with terror. Each one in passing turned and looked her in the face.

"Who hath made us to differ?" "Why, why have you all things and we nothing?"

"Let us eat even the crumbs that fall from your table of peace."  
"These, and cries like these, rang in her ears and assuaged her heart."

She turned and looked at her Guide. He had forgotten her. His eyes, full of pity and longing, were fixed upon the passing throng.  
Even as she gazed, He was gone, vanished from her sight. She could ask nothing, but she knew in her own soul that, if she would offer gifts to the Lord, she must bring Him souls.

When she awoke, she wept over her empty purse. Never again did her Christmas money flow only in the accustomed channel. She gave to her friends, but she gave first to her Lord. She made first for Him her little cake, no matter how small her handful of meal.

"She Runneth."

You know who "she" was—the one who came the risen Saviour spoke in accents which have never ceased to echo with sweetness and blessing to woman-kind. She had run quickly to tell the others of His empty tomb—not slowly or languidly could she get to bear such tidings as this, or to seek the help which she wanted to find Him whom her soul loved. Can we doubt that when she found Him, when she heard from His own lips that He had indeed "risen, as he said" she ran yet more quickly to tell the glad news?

Oh, that "running!" Would that we all did more of it! We walk so slowly, nay we creep, and even lie down on our way, to make our Saviour known to those who are yet ignorant of Him. Why do we not run with the blessed message? Are there not some that may wander away out of our reach before they hear it, if we lag so sadly in the telling?

How little Mary knew of the deep, high meaning of the news she carried, beyond its glad significance to herself! We know something—a little—of the glorious hopes it unfolds, of the light it sheds on the darkness of the tomb, of the life from the dead that it brings to all who receive it. Yet with all this knowledge, so blessed to us, how rarely we "run" to carry it to those to whom it has not come!

The angel told the women to "go quickly" to bear the glad Easter tidings. Was there no reason for haste then than now? They hastened to tell a few waiting disciples of the risen Redeemer. We tarry in carrying the knowledge of Him to a world lying in sin.

Oh, let it be said of each one of our Christian women, "she runneth" to bring the glad message of redeeming love to all who have not heard it!

"What was the first angelic word that the startled she heard heard? 'Fear not.' Below it it came to you as a Christmas message most sweet and true. As true for you as it was for them in the lonely fields of Bethlehem. And as sweet to-day as it was that night. When the glory dazzled their mortal sight."

Christmas Carol.

Add to your brilliance, all ye stars of night;  
Sing as ye fly, ye rapturous hosts of light;  
Earthward He comes, the best beloved on high.  
As man to live, for sinful man to die.  
Hail Him, ye tribes and people, bond and free,  
Rude and refined, adoring bend the knee,  
Cultured and savage, royalty and slave  
Worship the Heavenly King, earth-born to save.  
—W. H. PERCIVAL.

For Croupy Children—Miner's Honey Balsam.  
For Spasmodic Coughs—Miner's Honey Balsam.  
For Biliousness—Miner's Family Pills.  
SKODA'S LITTLE TABLETS  
Cure Headache and Dyspepsia.  
Many can testify to the great healing properties of LARDER'S LINIMENT.