

MESSENGER and VISITOR.

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Messenger and Visitor

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 1891.

OUR DAY.

Good and evil come to every generation. Every age has its harvest of good things and its signs of promise; it has likewise, like weeds and briars among the growing wheat, its troubles, its difficulties, its present or impending dangers. Today, as in all past generations, the helps and hindrances to faith are present. They are not wise who spend their strength and saddle their souls in fruitless sighing for the past. They are not wise who say, "The former days were better than these." The former days were not better, but if they were, no power of faithless, fretful man can bring them back. It is impossible that the wheels of time shall be reversed to permit us to go back to the conditions under which our fathers lived. If it could be so, the backward revolution would be to us something worse than a disappointment. Let us have faith. Let us be confident in God. The world moves on because it is His will. It moves according to His purpose, revealing His omniscient plan. The divine hand has placed us where we are; our work and our reward, our battle and our victory belong to the age in which we live.

No doubt there are for the children of God in this age peculiar difficulties and temptations. It is an age which boasts of scientific attainments and accuracy of knowledge. It boasts its victories over the fables and superstitions of the past. It is an age of unrest and upheaval. All conclusions that men had reached in the past must be reconsidered in what is declared to be the incomparably greater light of the present. All that had come down from the past bearing the labels "fact" or "truth," must be stretched upon the dissecting table of the scientist or flung into the crucible of the critic, that its real value might be determined. Nor have religious opinions and beliefs escaped the scalpel and the crucible. We need not say that many of the burning questions which this age has discussed or is still discussing, are more or less directly connected with the Bible and the Christian faith. Such questions will readily suggest themselves to everyone who has any acquaintance with the current literature of his time, and we need not pause to name them.

The questions which more than any other, perhaps, are having an influence to disturb the minds of some and are not unlikely to do so for some time to come, are concerned with the date and authorship of certain of the Old Testament Scriptures. These questions are being eagerly studied and discussed, and there are important differences of opinion expressed by Christian scholars, whom we cannot but regard as equally careful and sincere. The results which would flow from these investigations, if the views of some of the scholars alluded to should prevail, in modifying, more or less, the generally received views as to the inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures, indicate the reason for the feeling of unrest and uncertainty which is being felt in certain quarters. We doubt not that all the eagerness of research in connection with the Old Testament Scriptures which marks the present time, all the prolonged trial to which these Scriptures are being subjected in the name of scientific criticism, will result in demonstrating more clearly than ever before the value of those ancient records of the faith, and of confirming in the heart of the believer a deeper and more intelligent conviction of the priceless value of his Bible. No light, really necessary to our faith and to our efficiency in service, will be permitted to become obscured. No question as to details of authorship can make the Bible other to us than a revelation from God, for this revelation is, not a thing of form but of substance. The Bible is the Word of God to us, not simply because it was precious to our fathers, nor because it comes to us accredited as divine by ecclesiastical councils or the consensus of Christian opinion, but, also, and especially, because it holds in itself the seal and stamp of divine authority; because it arouses the conscience, cleanses the heart and brings the soul into fellowship with God. In the meantime, however, the which we have named is one added to other influences which operate to disturb the Christian consciousness in this present time, and to prevent that perfect rest of faith which the hearts of believers long for.

But if this is peculiarly an age of questioning and unrest, it is not therefore an evil day. Great and manifold are the peculiar blessings of the present. "If we would declare and speak of them they are more than can be numbered." There have always, hitherto, been min-

strains mingling in the music of that anthem which the church has sung marching onward through the centuries. But in a larger sense than ever before, since Christ came, this is "a day of salvation." Like every other age it belongs to God, and His people are moving forward to final victory.

In this age, marked, as we have seen it is, by some features of uncertainty and unrest, it is of great importance that we should be firmly established upon the great verities, "the things which cannot be shaken." The revelation of God in Jesus Christ, the divine eternal Spirit interpreting and making real to the believer Christ and His word, the Comforter and Helper of the Christian; the perpetual, divine law of love, indicating in all ages the way of duty and the path of peace; the practical duty for every man "to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with his God;" the practical religion which consists in keeping the life unspotted, and in showing active sympathy and helpfulness to all who are in need—upon these imperishable foundations, if a man build, he shall never be confounded. The contingencies of criticism will not alarm him. Questions as to who wrote the Pentateuch and the Psalms will not much vex his soul. He shall "not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day." Blessed is the man whose confidence is not based in some human opinion or churchly creed, but whose "refuge and fortress" is God.

AN ADVANCE MOVEMENT AT BRIDGETOWN, N. S.

Bridgetown is well known by the Baptists of these provinces. One of our largest churches is located there, and a number of our ministers, whose names are honored among us, have been its pastors. We need only mention the late Dr. George Armstrong, who for twenty years held an influential position in the community as the scholarly and faithful pastor; Rev. John Clark, now of Antigonish, and Rev. W. H. Warren, of Sackville. The present pastor, Rev. F. M. Young, is highly esteemed by the people, and his labors have received marked approval of the Saviour in spiritual blessings to the church. A large number of conversions and additions have taken place under his ministry.

For some time the need of a new house of worship has been felt, and now the work of building has been begun. The corner stone was laid on the 9th inst., in presence of a large audience. The pastor conducted the services and made statements in reference to the work. The honor of laying the stone was properly bestowed upon Mrs. Young, the pastor's wife, who was presented with a silver trowel by Mrs. Abner Foster, on behalf of the ladies of the church. Mr. Geo. H. Dixon had charge of the music. Prayer was offered by Rev. K. B. Kinlay. Addresses were made by Prof. Keirstead, Rev. F. H. Wright, (Methodist), Rev. S. H. Cain, and Rev. R. B. Kinlay. The service was impressive and stimulating. Of course Deacon J. B. Kinney, of Yarmouth, is the architect.

It is expected that the house will be ready for use about the first of January, next. It will be complete in its provisions for the service demanded of a church in these days. The cost will be \$6,000 or more. We wish the brethren at Bridgetown all success in this good undertaking.

This effort of the Bridgetown church is in many ways suggestive. It shows the financial ability of our churches. Every year we are glad to report the building of large and well equipped houses of worship. Each one of these houses costs thousands of dollars. The people raise the money and are not embarrassed by the effort. Many a church has no idea of its own strength until some work of large dimensions like this is undertaken. Then it finds that when all the resources are brought in there is abundance. Now if these large amounts of money can be raised for local purposes it is hard to see why proportionate amounts could not be raised for benevolent work outside the limits of the church. Of course as a church could not erect a new building every year, it could not, perhaps, be expected to raise so many thousands every year for missions. But the fact that so much can be raised for a church edifice suggests the question, whether want of financial ability is the reason why our churches give no more for mission work. If the churches that are not at present engaged in building would make efforts on behalf of our Convention Fund, at all in proportion to what the churches that are erecting houses of worship are doing, what an increase would be made in our funds for denominational work! And why can they not? If our people felt the crying needs of the world as we feel their own local needs, what an advance we might make! And what spiritual gifts would thereby be brought to all our people.

Rev. H. Foshey, of Yarmouth, occupied the pulpit at Wolfville on the 28th ult., and his sermon was highly appreciated.

When Does Our Denominational Year End?

Will you, Mr. Editor, throw some light on the question of the best way of regulating and harmonizing, and collecting, and tabulating our denominational statistics? Of course statistics are of far less importance than the facts which they are meant to summarize. Yet the subject is worthy of consideration.

We are likely to get into difficulty in this matter, on account of changes made by several of the associations. In fact I take it we are there already.

Three, if not four, of the seven associations now hold their meetings in September, after the Convention. The N. S. Eastern and the N. B. Western are both to convene this year on the 11th of September, the N. B. Southern on the 10th, and the N. S. African will probably meet in the same month, as they did last year, and it does not appear from the minutes that a different date was appointed.

Now the first question I have to ask is: Would it not be well for some person—say the president and secretary of Convention, or, better, the moderators of these associations—to request the churches to send in their letters to the clerks of the respective associations immediately? Then the statistics (made up to May 31st) may be properly tabulated, and sent to the chairman of the Convention committee on the State of the Denomination, who will thus be enabled to prepare a fairly complete report for Convention.

The second question is the one at the head of this article. The blanks for "Associational Letter," sent out to the churches in all the associations, I presume, indicate that the statistics are to be made up for the year ("ending") ended May 31st, 1891. But according to the tables in the last Year Book, one association made its statistical year end July 31, 1890, and another association September, 1890. This year one or two other associations, which meet in September, may decide (or their clerks may decide) to obtain the statistics and make them up for the period ending July 31, or August 31, be it twelve, or fourteen, or fifteen months. It is evident that, if our statistics, as a denomination, are to be worth anything, this sort of thing must not continue.

There are several ways of overcoming the difficulty:

1. The associations might give up to the Convention the whole matter of gathering statistics, in which case harmony would easily be secured.

2. If this is open to objection in the minds of brethren who are jealous of the Convention, all the associations might have their statistics made up to May 31, regardless of the date of meeting, and the final summary would then be made by the committee above named, or by the secretary of Convention, after the meeting of the latest association, and no attempt be made to report to convention on this matter until the following year.

3. The statistical year, in all the associations, might be made to end June 30, thus bringing the facts a little nearer to the date of the report to Convention. In that case, of course the associations which meet in June would have to direct their clerks to receive the letters and tabulate the facts during the month of July, and the reports to these bodies (after one year) would be nearly a year old.

What course is to be adopted this year?

CHURCH CLERK.

Immediate Reforms Demanded at Acadia.

NO. 11.

ACADIA SEMINARY.

A crisis is upon this school. Enlargement is demanded, and must come. Advancement or retrogression is inevitable. The governors ask thirty thousand dollars for building and equipment—a modest sum for the great needs. Did our people fully realize this need, the full sum would be in the treasury inside six months. Thus the yearly pledges now asked for, to pay the interest upon the money now necessary to borrow, might be used to the highest good of the seminary in providing the highest type of instruction. But why set apart so much of the proposed building for classrooms, when from five to eight thousand dollars will provide the much needed fire-proof stone library and museum, leaving several classrooms in the college building? Let us put our money into men and women rather than elaborate buildings.

The governors ask for thirty thousand dollars. I propose to add forty thousand more. For what purpose, pray? For men and women! Thirty thousand dollars would endow the principalship with a permanent salary of fifteen hundred dollars a year. With the remainder I would establish scholarships, to aid young women of ability, particularly those engaged in teaching, whose lack of means practically debar them from a course of superior mental culture. Here are some of our noblest young women. Help them to make the most of their possibilities. The much abused prize system! Possibly that system's greatest abuse is its entire disuse.

The endowment is preparatory to

another reform, viz: An energetic male principal. May this even preclude the endowment. This is not intended in the slightest to reflect upon the present efficient principal. I treat the question upon its own merits. While recognizing the ability with which ladies have presided over this school, this presents itself to some as a more excellent way. No one should be better fitted to press the claims of a school upon its constituency than its principal. For this purpose an energetic male principal is needed. Again this need has a purely educational basis. The majority of the seminary students have had but little training except from the female teacher. I make no claim for the excellence of the male mind, but simply ask if history does not show the best results where the minds of both sexes come in contact? Further, from the larger number of trained men, it is more likely that the most efficient person could be selected than from the more limited number of highly educated women. Again, more definiteness would be given to the scope and aim of the school with the proper man at its head. Is internal testimony to the advisability of this change needed? Then, such a scheme has been proposed to the ladies of the seminary, and has met a generous approval.

Thus the present policy of entire separation from college and academy, seems false to the highest good of Acadia Seminary. Why not continue and foster more than in the past the policy of students of the seminary joining in class-work with those of the academy and the college? This means the saving of classroom, and probably of an additional classroom, the payment of better salaries, securing the most efficient teachers, and the strengthening of scholarship in the seminary.

Who should be called to this position? The best man available. He is not a moderately successful and highly respected minister. His work is in the ministry. But he should be one proven as a Christian, an educationist, a scholar, and a teacher. And to keep pace with our rapidly developing sentiment of Canadian nationality, what more fitting than that he be a Canadian. Such men may be found among Acadia's graduates. Every effort, too, should be put forth to strengthen the now excellent scholarship of the seminary, while the fine arts of music, elocution, drawing and allied subjects now progressing so favorably, should be pressed even more vigorously.

R. OSGOOD MORSE.

A Resolution Proposed.

I am greatly grieved and alarmed at the state of our educational affairs. Evidently we have been sound asleep, and have been leaving the management of our institutions in the hands of the wrong men. Come to think of it, it is hardly to be expected that old men like Dr. Sawyer, Dr. Saunders, B. H. Eaton, and the other members of the Board would know how to run a college or an academy in these modern times. They may have gone to college when they were young men, but that was so long ago, and the college of that day was such a mean affair that you could not expect them to know the appalling needs of the college of to-day. And as to an academy, why, of course, they don't know the first thing about it.

Now, Mr. Editor, in view of this unfortunate condition of things I rise to make a motion:

Resolved, That the present members of the Board of Governors be politely requested to resign, and that the new Board be chosen from some of the brainiest of the young men in the classes of '90 and '91.

I limit the selection to these two classes because their parchment is still fresh and clean, and they ought to know what is needed if anybody does. H.

Which is Mistaken—The Dorchester Circuit Meeting, the Sackville District Meeting or the Conference?

At a meeting of the Dorchester Circuit, on the 15th ult., a resolution was carried with the following preamble: "Whereas, under the present arrangements the resident Methodist minister is not allowed access to the Dorchester penitentiary in his ministerial capacity." This preamble and the resolution annexed was reaffirmed by the Sackville District Meeting, held in Moncton, on the 18th ult., and then recommended to the favorable consideration of the Conference. On the 27th ult., the memorial containing the resolution was read at the conference, then in session at St. Stephen, and in the report it is stated that "the discussion brought out the fact that no Methodist minister was refused admittance to the penitentiary at Dorchester when he requested it."

Here in Dorchester the preamble to the resolution has been received as the undoubted truth. Ministers not connected with the Catholic or Episcopal churches are admitted to the penitentiary on the same terms as laymen, on certain days by paying a fee of twenty-five cents. We only know of one case where a person not in "holy orders" was allowed to conduct service there. When Mr. Gow, a probationer of the Presbyterian church, was here on one occasion during the absence of the Episcopal chaplain, the former took his place and read to the guards, keepers

and prisoners the Episcopal church service. We suppose that any other layman under similar circumstances would be allowed to do likewise, but are inclined to think that no such liberty would be allowed to a dissenting minister. We know the Methodists of Dorchester too well to suppose for a moment they state what was untrue, and therefore take the deliverance of the conference *cum grano salis*.

In common with the Methodists of Westmorland, we believe that the chapel in the penitentiary should be thrown open to all evangelical ministers. Baptist ministers in the past have done good work in prisons where many of them were admitted, that will stand to their credit throughout eternity. Two of them in the prison at Phillipi proclaimed the great truths of Christianity, and a wonderful revival followed, that resulted in the conversion of the warden, keepers, guards and criminals. A Baptist minister was admitted to Bedford gaol and did a work that has been perpetuated until now. Who that knows our history does not associate John Bunyan with his wonderful allegory, now printed and read in every language in Christendom? Eternity alone will reveal the impressions that allegory has made on human minds. The cases I have mentioned are only two of the many where Baptist ministers have preached from behind prison bars. It is said that the only wet eyes ever seen among the prisoners in Dorchester penitentiary was when a Baptist lady was allowed to address them on temperance; that forgetting the ban under which she was placed when admitted, she reasoned not only of temperance, but of righteousness and judgment, and sang revival hymns.

The Christian denominations of Dorchester parish are Catholics, Baptist, Methodist, Episcopalian, and Presbyterian. We name them in the order of their numbers, the Catholics being the most, and the Presbyterians the least numerous. The Episcopalians have more wealth than all the others put together, pay their minister the highest salary, and have that salary supplemented by the \$550 he receives as chaplain of the penitentiary. The chaplaincy of the penitentiary, and we are informed it is so with all the penitentiaries in the Dominion, has always been held by an Episcopalian, and Episcopals are to day receiving as such chaplains out of the Dominion treasury \$3,950; in other words, other denominations pay the largest part of that amount to support a church with which they are not in sympathy, and in the teachings of which they do not believe.

While we do not see how Baptists can be in any way peculiarly benefited by a change in the chaplaincy of the penitentiary, as it is contrary to their principles to accept state aid, we yet think that the doors of a public institution, in which all are alike interested, should not be closed against Baptist ministers desirous of preaching the Gospel to the unfortunates imprisoned there. If two Baptist ministers in one night, under divine inspiration, were able to restore to society, not only as reformed men but as Christians, the inmates of a Phillipian prison, might we not expect similar results in the present day from the successors of the ministers whose preaching produced such glorious results. All evangelical ministers should be allowed on Sundays, when they can spare the time, to enter, after previous appointment, each of the penitentiaries of the Dominion, and, from the pulpit in the chapel, preach to the prisoners who desire to hear them. In churches built by themselves no one disputes the right of Episcopals to say to the ministers of other denominations, "Stand aside for we are holier than thou;" but in the chapel of a penitentiary no such rule should exist, and the prisoners should have the same right to say who should minister to them there that they would if at large.

We suggest that the rule that should be made to govern penitentiaries in this: that the preferences of the prisoners having been ascertained each Sunday morning, they should be found in equal, and under the guards and keepers who were connected with the church they professed, each equal should be paraded to the church of their preference, and there allowed to worship in accordance with the dictates of their consciences.

CHAS. E. KNAPP.

S. S. ASSOCIATION.—The 7th annual session of the Kings Co., N. B., Sunday-school Association was closed at Hampton, on Friday evening of last week, by a public meeting in the Baptist church. These meetings were interesting, commencing on Thursday in the Methodist church, when a paper on "Our aim in this convention" was read by Rev. A. Lucas. The Rev. T. F. Fotheringham delivered an address on "Our Text Book," and the Rev. G. O. Gates discussed "How to study the Book."

A Model Railway.

The Burlington Route, C. B. & Q. R. R. operates 7,000 miles of road, with termini in Chicago, St. Louis, St. Paul, Omaha, Kansas City and Denver. For speed, safety, comfort, equipment, track, and efficient service it has no equal. The Burlington gains new patrons, but loses none.

The P. E. Island Association.

This association met according to appointment with the Summerside church at 10 o'clock a. m., Friday, July 3. The association was called to order by the moderator, Rev. R. H. Bishop, and a half hour was spent in devotional exercises. Bro. Arthur Simpson was appointed clerk, and the list of delegates was read by the clerk, after which the association adjourned to meet at 2 o'clock p. m.

When the association reassembled at 2 p. m., the duty of electing officers was taken up and resulted in the choice of Rev. J. A. Cahill, moderator; Bro. A. Simpson, clerk; Bro. J. G. Clarke, assistant clerk, and J. G. McLeod, treasurer.

Bro. A. Simpson, for the committee on Denominational Literature, presented the report, which was received and laid on the table. The committee on Sunday-schools reported through its chairman, Bro. W. B. Howatt, and was also received for discussion. Revs. A. Freeman, J. Miles and Bro. W. J. Illsley, lic., were called to the platform and welcomed to the association.

FRIDAY EVENING.

This session, after devotional exercises conducted by Bro. W. J. Illsley, lic., of Alberton, was devoted to a discussion of the report on Sunday-schools, which was read by Bro. W. B. Howatt, who was also the first speaker. In emphasizing some points in the report, Bro. Howatt spoke of the importance of the teachers' meeting. Every means should be employed to make the work of the teacher as effective as possible, and one great means for doing this is the mutual study of the Word by the teachers. Wherever this is possible, and generally it is possible, it should not be neglected. The report showed that there had been a gratifying increase in the contributions of the schools within the association. Some schools were doing well in this respect, but in many there was great room for improvement. The contributions of the schools, he believed, should go to some benevolent object. The young people should be taught to give, not in order that they might receive, but because they had received. There could be no better way of training the young people to feel an interest in missions than to train them to give regularly to their support.

Bro. George McNeil, the next speaker, said that those who had received a blessing were bound to strive to make others sharers in it with themselves. This was binding, not only upon those who were called to preach the gospel, but upon all who had been blessed with a knowledge of the divine truth and salvation. The teacher should prepare for his work as carefully and conscientiously as the preacher does. But with all possible preparation, love must be the inspiring principle or there will be no success in the work. There is great reason for love: "we love because He first loved us."

Bro. W. J. Illsley spoke of a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures as essential to the equipment of the teacher, but knowledge in itself was insufficient. The love of Christ must be in the heart to make knowledge effectual. The grand purpose of the teacher must be the salvation of the unconverted and the development of those who are Christians. Much effort was needed to draw the children into the Sunday-school, and much loving and patient effort was necessary to do them good after they had become members of the school. But the restless and mischievous boys who most tried the teachers' patience, often made the best and brightest Christians when converted.

Rev. J. A. Gordon said there were doubtless some things which were impossible, but things which were counted impossible were often not so really. One of the possible things he knew to be to electrify people with interest in the study of the Word of God. He had found it possible to hold his Bible class together, in Charlottetown, against any outside attraction that might be presented. The hope for the future of communities and nations is in the training of the children. The most important part of this training consists in inculcating the young minds with the facts and principles of the Word of God. We think we recognize the importance of this, but it is to be feared we do so only in a feeble way. God who made man has given His Word for man's guidance, and no life can be a success which is not lived in accordance with that Word.

In reference to the advancement of the kingdom of Christ on earth, the study of the Word is most important; when the hearts of the parents turn to the children, and the hearts of the children to the parents in mutual desire to teach and learn the Word of God, then will come the crowning success of Christian work. From a patriotic point of view, also, the training of the young in knowledge of God's truth is immensely important. Only through the influence of such training can a people become and remain strong and great. It should be remembered that the grand aim of the Sunday-school must be to teach the Word. Other things which attract and please have a certain value, but the thing of supreme importance is to inculcate the Word of God. Again, the heart must be reached through the intellect. Pious nonsense is nonsense

after all, and cannot of teacher must be willing, continuous study, to get his own mind and help sent time many helps the teacher. The ex Bible study arranged was alluded to as of every one who would be gent student or a suc the Word.

Bro. A. Cohoon speaking his deep interest work. The Sunday school at work. It is a great in this work, per and helpers of other back with a sense of reason why some pers little for the Lord is themselves up to His Him to develop their Sunday school does in lence, he believed it school and not as the school, and the be considered simply church's work.

The discussion closed from the editor of reference to the opposed to young Chris study of the Word of to their Master's selves for important as for Christ and for the

SATURDAY

Devotional exercises by Rev. J. Miles, after citation proceeded to on Denominational Lit been received and lai day before. After the port by Bro. Arthur spoken to by Revs Cohoon, S. McC. Black, C. Archibald, J. A. Davidson, and Bros. G. man McLeod, and W. points adverted to w portance of supply schools and homes w some literature; the pains in this matter; parents may and ch the taste of their ch the appetite for perni cultivating a taste for the value to the b Book and Tract Socie national paper, and the paper, its position especially in view of Baptists are a democ trolled by synods or Bro. Archibald, in sure at the advances made in the depart consideration during absence in the East, nings of a denominat appearing among the

The digest of letter was prepared by Rev. Cavendish. The preloft occupied the rem session and the fi afternoon, and was re interest.

The circular letter was read by the writer. The subject was "The ter was freely discuss man, A. Cohoon, J. A. Black, J. A. Cahill, Simpson, Brown and taking part therein. rally had reference to the Young People's all were agreed that divinely established which distinctively C be carried on, there the brethren present attitude toward the there was within the organization of its y through which the y be educated and work, and the effici as a whole should be the question seemed to others it appeared serious consideration unanimously to adop quest its publication and visitor.

The report on Sys was presented by Rev recommended the r ings for the raisi and benevolent fun every way worthy churches.

SATURDAY

The report on Te sent by Rev. J. A evening was dev speeches on this imp report notes the pr sentiment, the token the duty of the fric make their influen ballots and the grow the members of th the use of tobacco. speeches were deliv Davidson, Des. Arthur N. J. McDonald, fol dresses from Rev. A moderator. The nee tive legislation for rum power and of cative work for the d from the appetite fo the development of ment, were both ins