

Messenger and Visitor.

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The "Messenger and Visitor" from this time to the end of 1885, for One Dollar. Do not forget. Get your friends to send in their dollars at once, so as to make the most out of our Special Offer.

"MEN CAN MAKE THEMSELVES LAWYERS and doctors, none but God can make men preachers," so said Dr. Basil Manly at the Southern Baptist Convention. Mere "man made ministers" are a sorry lot. But this does not mean that God fits a man fully for the work of the ministry without man's help. Let a man be sure first that he is God-called to this work, and then let him get all the help he can from both God and men.

—THE PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY in Japan is revealed in the following—
A place in Tokio which was built for a Buddhist preaching service has just been rented to the Presbyterian Mission, to be used as a church. A hall built to propagate infidelity is also rented by one of the churches. The priests of one of the largest temples in Tokio have tried to raise money by offering a mortgage on the temple, but no one will accept their offer.

—THE FOLLOWING DEEDS concerning the question "How to Baptize," was recently recorded by the Montgomery presbytery of Virginia, which met April 30th, at Christiansburg, Va.

In response to an overture from Jacksonville Church, inquiring "Are there any circumstances under which a minister in this presbytery may administer the ordinance of baptism by immersion?" the following was adopted:

Inasmuch as our standards declare that "baptism is rightly administered by sprinkling or pouring water upon the person," therefore be it resolved that it is the judgment of this presbytery that this ordinance should never be administered by immersion.

—Yes, just so, "our standards" not the New Testament. If these brethren should take this latter book as their "standard," it would be better. But still they are glad to receive those immersed by Baptist ministers into their churches.

—A SYMPOSIUM ON PROHIBITION is a program in the *Homiletic Review*. Dr. Baimes, in the May number, argues against the formation of a prohibition party. He thinks prohibitionists can see their power more effectively by throwing it in with the rest of the assisting parties, which most favor their views. Dr. Fiske, in the June number replies. He shows that prohibition is more important than any other issue which divides the present parties in politics, while temperance people have little to hope from the dictators of either side.

How much higher ground politics would take; if, instead of being a perpetual squabble for place and power, they would make a square issue of the greatest social and national evil of the age. It is an everlasting wonder to us how so many good men and true can continue to waste the mighty power of the franchise upon the comparatively microscopic questions of ordinary party politics, when they might use it to sweep the land clear of its greatest curse. But the lesson is working, and a generation shall not pass until there will be a great revolution. "The action of the Senate may hasten it."

—OUR STUDY to the *Halifax Herald* about the question of college consolidation was effective. (See *Herald* of May 28th and 29th). We like to do a friendly turn to a neighbor when he gets a little sleepy.

—THE MONASTERS are writhing under the heavy hand of the law. Polygamy is being spelled adultery and treated accordingly. The leaders have sent a protest to the President of the United States. It is couched in vigorous language. To judge by it one would think all their most sacred civil and religious rights had been trampled upon, rather than their law-breaking sensuality was being treated as it deserves. President Cleveland has too much good sense to concede to their delirium.

—DR. GOSBOURNE, Rev. Mr. Davis, Rev. Mr. Hastings and other ministers were brought up before the police court of Boston the other day and fined. The offence was preaching the gospel on the Common without a permit from the City Council. It is said the police are very alert to enforce the law of the forementioned Puritan city of Boston against preaching in the open air, while they are particularly lax in reference to liquor selling and houses of ill repute. It is to be hoped that there may be a little stirring up of the sediment at the bottom of the municipal waters in the Christian city of the "Hub."

—HOW ASKS the hundreds of young converts added to our churches within the last few months? Are they all living in the light of the knowledge that they are forming their Christian habits, and that their usefulness or uselessness, their joyfulness or joylessness for all life is being decided? How is it with you dear brethren and sisters? Have you begun to live the kind of life, and to do the service which give you the approval of your own consciences, and make you glad when you

think of Jesus and what he has done for you? Are you living in the way you would like him to find you living when he comes? Be very careful and prayerful and earnest for you will condemn yourselves to life long fruitlessness, and rob your souls of a perpetual blessing. How is it with our pastors and the older members of our churches? Are you doing what you can to start these young plants in the garden of the Lord into a vigorous growth? Do not forget that if plants do not begin to grow in the spring time, they make little growth after.

—CALENDAR OF ACADEMIES have been sent to all our ministers, to the alumni, and to some others. The object of this is to spread abroad, as widely as possible, a knowledge of our Institutions and their work. Now there are young men and women in the most of our communities who desire to gain a higher education than they can secure at home, and there are others who might be induced to seek that mental training which would fit them for higher work and usefulness. If all those to whom calendars are sent would but take a little pains to bring Acadia before the promising young people within their reach, how much might be done to fill up our Academies and our College, and to add to the influence of our denomination. With such advantages as Acadia offers, and at the price at which she offers them, it but requires to let the facts of the case be known to secure for her a large patronage. Shall not this be done? The summer is the time when students choose their colleges; let not Acadia be left with a smaller attendance than she might have, through lack of kind interest, on the part of her friends. Other colleges press their claims. Let us not leave our own Institutions at a disadvantage. A word to the wise is sufficient.

—THE BAPTIST QUARTERLY REVIEW, hitherto conducted by Dr. J. R. Baimes of Cincinnati, has been purchased by an association of gentlemen in New York, and will hereafter be published in that city. Rev. R. S. MacArthur, D. D., and Mr. H. C. Vedder will be its new editorial control. Dr. Baimes is entitled to a great deal of credit for the success which has attended his management of the *Review*. Under his new management, doubtless, the *Review* will be able to call to its support new friends, and to win its way to enlarged usefulness.

—IS THIS CLASS-ROOM of President Wayland, more than forty years ago, a student arose and put the following question: Dr. Wayland, don't you think, if Christian people were more amiable, kind, lovely in their dispositions and in their intercourse with the world, if they presented Christianity in its true aspects, don't you think everybody would be so attracted and charmed as to embrace Christianity at once? Dr. Wayland, assuming an air more deliberate and earnest than usual, replied in substance: "There was once on the earth one who combined in perfect symmetry all the graces of Christian character; without fault, absolutely perfect; and what was the result of this exhibition of character in the world? They cried, Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

—EVERYBODY will be glad to hear that Mr. Spurgeon is usually well in health just now. Speaking at the closing dinner of the conference, he said he had enjoyed life more during the last ten days than during the previous ten years. He has been trying a vegetarian diet, but whether that must have the credit of the improvement he is unable definitely to say.—*Baptist*, May 15th.

—ARE THE COLORED BAPTISTS of Virginia Improving? We think so—not only improving, but they are making very considerable improvement. Of course, those who think otherwise are as much entitled to their opinion as we are to ours. Possibly they may be right about it, but here are some of our reasons for hoping that God in his great mercy is preparing this people for a more important part in the world's evangelium. They are gaining knowledge—that is evident to one who witnesses the proceedings of such meetings as that we have just attended in Norfolk. They preach better, speak better, read better, and manifest far better acquaintance with methods for denominational work than formerly. They are gaining knowledge in various directions; and if so, they are that much better off. They are improving in church discipline—their machinery for developing their churches—they are giving more money to the cause of God every year. Look at the beautiful churches they are building in town and city and country—look how well their preachers are supported—look at the parsonages they are securing. These, too, they are steadily and surely, though slowly, increasing their worldly possessions. The tax lists indicate this, as do the increasing amounts contributed by the colored people to good causes.—*Rel. Herald*.

—THERE is one thing worse than ignorance, and that is conceit. Of all intractable fools, an over-wise man is the worst. You may cause idiots to philosophize; you may coax donkeys to forge thistles; but don't think of ever driving common sense into the head of a conceited person.

Principle and Practice.

Whether the strength of principle amongst some grows less, or the force of unfavorable influence increases more, is a question which sometimes is perplexingly put to themselves by observers who note the practice of many who avow themselves, and are, no doubt, Baptists. Meditation, set to work lately on this point after conversation with a minister of a neighbouring denomination. "How is it," said one, who had been asked to exchange pulpits with another, "that so many who eschew the practice of infant sprinkling, and allow that scriptural baptism is that of believers only, and should be by immersion, are in your congregation?" "Oh!" was the reply, "people don't attend places of worship on principle in these days. It is the big place and greater go that attracts." This answer is very suggestive. Is it true? Is one inquiry that arises. There is much to be said in support of the statement. Numbers draw respectability invites. When families have settled down, and their descendants have multiplied, social magnetism is at work. When money is ready to meet any claims, and available to pay for miscellaneous extras and trips, many are prompt to find it agreeable. When the singing is good, even though the preaching is nothing particular, popularity is admitted. Where there is no cross of ordinance to repel, and comfortable surroundings offer their welcome, ease-loving souls are satisfied to gather. It is not that Scriptural baptism is less believed in, but that consistency is more disliked. There may be no decay of principle, but a great decay of conscientiousness. We have known men call themselves, with surprising effrontery, "Baptists to the backbone," who never attended in the course of years half a dozen services at the denominational chapel, trade, or association, causing them to deem it not politic or expedient.

Is it right? Is another question that immediately arises. This, of course, would be an enquiry dismissed with a laugh by the minister who spoke, whose laughter would probably be echoed by those whose conduct is under discussion. But we repeat, Is it right, if we are serious men, if we believe in what is Biblical instruction, and feel ourselves bound to obey? We should like to ask some people, Is it requisite to hold just opinions at all? Is it worth while to know and do the truth, in any respect?—Is it expected of us by our Master? Should it be felt a matter of any importance? Ought it to be required by the Church? It really seems sometimes to us that lamentable laxity is touching everything, an ominous looseness as to religious views and life appears rising in ascendancy. Principles that have been engraven on the rock for ever, now only seem to be written on the sand. Examples that have been upheld as models are languidly regarded as too strict. Time-honoured sentiments and maxims have "had their day," and the opinion, "Well, never mind, it will all come right in the end," is the dream with which many seem satisfied. Now, if the Scriptures were the work of man, and did not contain the authoritative deliverances of God, we might innocently shift about, and none to say us nay. We might, of course, alter according to liking, and vary in caprice as new fancies or fashions arose. But if we have a God-given Bible to obey, and a pattern showed unto us in the Mount, surely it is presumptuous trifling to put on one side what is clearly revealed. Either our premises are wrong, or the practice must be most unworthy to change about doctrine or ordinance as we wish. Yet those who support pseudo-baptism in any shape or form, while they hold the views of our denomination, cannot in this free themselves from blame. They give a tacit consent to what they repudiate and condemn. They allow without protest what they know to be unapostolic. So they help the forces against that truth which others are left in a minority to uphold. Face them with the question, Why do you? They will probably admit they do not agree with the inventions of men; perhaps they may say they contrive to be absent when the human rite is observed; nevertheless, the result is the same, and our ranks are weakened in consequence.

It may be said, to balance numbers, many Pseudo-baptists are to be found in the communion of Baptist churches. This, no doubt, is the case, and where those churches have the larger influence, this also may be the explanation. But we know it would be found in some instances that fuller inquiry into the question discussed has not inconsiderably shaken old opinions, and the outward profession of Pseudo-baptism would have little to support it from within. Be this, however, as it may, we could well spare all from our midst who are not one with us in our Scriptural view, if only we could receive in return those whose enlightenment is akin to our own, and who should be one with us in discipline and enterprise. The importance of principle is a lesson that still wants to be learned by

*Open communion English Baptist. 2d.

many, and sense of the injury and discouragement experienced in the kingdom of Christ by not attending to it is but dimly felt where it should be strong. Is there a Baptist who fails to see that one of the greatest sources of weakness in the church has been error on this point? Is there one who will not own that superstition, priestism, and evil, that follow in such a train, have crept among men and multiplied in the world by perverse disregard of the teaching and spirit of the New Testament on this point? Is it nothing to help the wrong, to countenance the unscriptural, to lower the claims of truth, to suffer error to pass unrebuked? We stand stronger today than ever in the credentials on which we rely. Criticism can only add further light. The freest and most comprehensive enquiry we challenge, in assurance of stronger conviction. We welcome the fullest discovery of genuine old MSS., we rejoice in the largest interpretation of Scripture doctrine. Our flag only rises higher, our vantage ground appears more prominent. No voices can cry us down, no sophistry can long conceal its own falsity. Ingenuously we see its spider's webs to no purpose, and pretended demonstrations that oppose collapse at the slightest touch. It would be interesting to know what our friends on the other side would only give if it could be proved that there was an infant who was sprinkled in the house of the gaoler, or that Lydia had brought a berceuse from Thyratira. Where is the courage of conviction, the firmness of stability, the decision of enlightenment, the fidelity in principle we should see when Baptists in principle turn aside? Happily conscience has not altogether lost her voice, and now and again we see true returning and right views advancing, even as our columns have lately reported, within the pale of the Established Church.

We are engaged in a battle in which conventional trifling, sarcastic flippancy, intellectual obtuseness, and moral perversity are arrayed against us. But we are fighting it on just grounds, and for the honour of our Master and His Kingdom. The question lies deeper than the manner of the ordinance. Disregard is more objection on the score of convenience. The whole question might be narrowed down to this: Are you sincere and serious in your desire to obey and honour Christ, or will you turn to human practices and perversions?—*London Freeman*.

The Father's Hand.

It often happens that events and incidents very trifling in themselves make the strongest impression on our minds. One such incident of my childhood recurs to me with great distinctness. This was nothing more than a short walk with my stepfather in the edge of a late autumn evening. We had passed an hour at a neighbor's some distance away, and before starting for home the deep twilight had already fallen. Taking my little hand in his large and toll-worn palm, my father led me along the familiar road towards our own habitation under the steep, wooded hill.

It was a very lonely road. There was not a house on the way, nor any sign of human life. The dense maples and great rocks by the roadside loomed somber and gloomy before us, the fit abodes of those belching and supernatural beings which a child's imagination so easily suggests. The deep, haunted wood that lay just beyond the sheep-pasture was a black, forbidding space of unknown awfulness, and the weird, unearthly cry of an owl pierced the silence of the hour. Like other children, had I been alone I should have suffered inexpressible terrors. A thousand shapes of evil would have thronged on my fancy. But what made the walk memorable was my sense of perfect security. I felt as safe as ever in the open country, and all these elements of mystery and silence, of shadow and weird noise, were under the circumstances made only romantic and delightful to me. Along with my real safety there went the consciousness of safety which indescribably deepened my enjoyment.

Then as we mounted a little hill and neared our house, I remembered that the lights of home gleamed out from the windows which no heavy hangings or dark shades obscured. How delightful it all seemed! The little red cottage under the hill we could only dimly see; but the lights led the way to it, and were the assurance of its existence.

The child's evening walk has its analogy in human life. A striking feature of this earthly path we all walk in is its profound loneliness. In the truest and most significant sense every human being moves on to his destination alone. We may have friends, close companions, a thousand dear and pleasant associations; but each of us lives a separate, individual life, which no one else can enter. The greatest misdeed has felt this most keenly, but all experience it in some degree, and in hours of deepest thought or feeling cry out for some

more intimate presence and companionship. But with the hand closely held in the Father's this feeling of loneliness and solitude subsides.

Nor is this loneliness of the life-road its only point of resemblance; it is also mysterious. Things not merely hard to understand, but impossible to understand, lie all along the way. The mystery of sin, of suffering innocents of the just heaping the iniquity of the unjust, of unrewarded effort, and many others, throng on our path. These are mysteries that vex and baffle the understanding; but there are others that terrify the soul and fill it with apprehension. Vague, uncertain shapes of evil loom up before us and hide in the dark places of life. Phantoms that we can neither define nor exorcise glide along the misty way, filling the mind with alarming conjectures. These mysteries will always elude; they are in the earthy order of things; but with our hand in the Father's strong, gentle grasp they cease to frighten us. They are there not less, but divested of terror, because a stronger, wiser Being than them all leads us.

Walking along this dim, lonely, mysterious path of life, hand in hand with the Father, we are not only safe, but we are sweetly conscious of our safety. This consciousness inexpressibly gladdens and warms the heart. A wonderful serenity and peace fill it. Through the darkness and chill we move on even joyously to our destination. Sometimes a strange, deep exultation stirs us and thrills through all the being, waking us to a clearer perception of our infinite faculties. Then often, as we ascend some height of experience on the way, the lights of home gleam out to us through the shade, and though we only dimly discern the outlines of the house, we know it is there, and take new courage.

There is something, too, about coming to the end of the journey which is often like the child's experience. Very few feel an unmixed gladness at arriving. For all the darkness and cold and mystery, the human heart is so constituted that it feels a keen pang at the thought that the end is reached and that all is over. But this feeling can be only momentary. How soon the regret will be forgotten in the friendly faces, the warmth, the rich abundance, the ineffable blessedness of home! For is it not only the Father's hand that led us all along the earthly way; it is his house we are come to at last.—*Christian Weekly*.

Mr. Spurgeon and the Priest.

Mr. Spurgeon at the late meetings in London by way of illustrating a point mentioned by the last speaker, described an incident in his personal experience at Rome. He once had a debate in the Forum Triana—a rather curious debate. The room in which it took place was crowded; in fact, there were two rooms, and he did not see all the people, nor did he like the looks of all the people he could see. Particularly he did not like the looks of the priest who came to put him down, and who appeared to be well known to the officer present. He tried to catch Mr. Spurgeon in his speech, and the last-named gentleman said that he should claim the protection of the law, but that the priest could afterwards ask him any question he wished. This he did, asking him some very peculiar ones. One thing he asked Mr. Spurgeon about was his apostolic succession. He said he (the priest) was in a direct succession from St. Peter by the laying on of the hands by the Pope, but that he (Mr. Spurgeon) was nothing of the kind. Mr. Spurgeon replied that it was true he had not descended from Judas Iscariot—(laughter)—nor even from Peter, but that he came by his orders in a very different way; he received them directly from God, the Holy Ghost, without their coming through popes, cardinals, or anybody else. He would put it to the test this way. He said, "Sir, have you brought many thieves in Rome to be honest, many harlots to be chaste women?" As he mentioned about the harlots there was a tremendous laugh went round the room, and he observed that he must have touched the priest in a raw place. He asked Mr. Wall what it meant, and he told him, "They are telling him to speak up, and answer for himself." But he did not. Mr. Spurgeon replied, "The people must take my word for once; but if they will go to my Tabernacle I will guarantee to find hundreds of persons who had been leading an impure life, and who have by the means of my preaching, been totally changed, and are now honourable members of society, so that if you have done nothing and I have, I think my pedigree is better than yours." And I said I would leave the people to judge by telling them a story. There was once a horse race. One of the horses running had three lame legs, and could not stand on the other, but it had a pedigree; it was got by so-and-so and so-and-so—such a long pedigree. Another little horse which was rather stumpy, had got no pedigree, but it went like the wind, and ran at such a rate as to leave

the others all behind. When, however, they were about to give the prize, the owner of the lame horse came forward, and said he ought to have the prize because of the pedigree; but the other said he ought to have it because of the horse's running, and so I (Mr. Spurgeon) left it to the congregation, to decide which of us ought to have the prize. (Laughter and applause.) There was such a yell went up from those Italian throats that he had never heard before. Mr. Wall assured him there was nothing he need fear; but the priest had better look out. He (Mr. Spurgeon) then said to the priest, "I am a poor ignorant fellow, will you kindly explain a point that has troubled me?" The priest at once put up his finger with delight and said, "Oh, certainly." "Will you," said Mr. Spurgeon, "tell me where Cardinal Wiseman is?" "Why do you ask?" said the priest. "Because I went into the church of St. John Lateran, and saw a notice of mass for the repose of the soul of his Eminence, Cardinal Wiseman. Now, somehow or other he is somewhere where he is uneasy." Mr. Spurgeon added that he was a poor, ignorant person, and unacquainted with that region very much; but it was evident that the Cardinal was somewhere where he could not repose. He did not know whether his scorn was shooting, or what was the matter. The priest indignantly answered, "It is a question not fit to be discussed before the vulgar populace. I shall not explain anything of the kind." But he (the priest) offered to meet Mr. Spurgeon at a certain place where he knew he could not be, as he was leaving Rome. The people cried, "Tell the gentleman where he is." Mr. Spurgeon said, "I will say one thing in which the priest will join with me, and that is, that a great man like Cardinal Wiseman, one of the princes of the Church, and do doubt an eminent saint, has gone where he cannot get a good night's rest. (Laughter.) It will be a good deal worse for you than it is for him—such a big swell as he was. What do you think, then, is to become of you? I think I may say confidently that both myself and this gentleman are of opinion that you had better turn Protestant and go to heaven, at which there was such a clapping of hands and uproar. The priest meanwhile left, and he had never seen him since. (Loud laughter and applause.)

Can we enjoy him while living for ourselves, while indulging in sin, while prayerless and cold and dead? Does not God directly seek our highest happiness when he strips us of vain-glory and self-love, embitters the poisonous draught of mere human felicity, and makes us fall down before him lost in the sense of his desirableness and beauty? The connection between glorifying and enjoying him is, to my mind perfect—one following as the necessary sequence of the other; and facts bear me out in this. He who has let self go, and lives only for the honor of God, is the free, the happy man. He is no longer a slave, but has the liberty of the sons of God; for "him who honors Me I will honor." Satan has befogged you on this point. He desires to see you ripen into a saintly, devoted, useful man. He hopes to overwhelm and ruin you. But he will not prevail. You have solemnly given yourself to the Lord; you have chosen the work of winning and feeding souls as your life-work, and you cannot, must not, go back. These conflicts are the lot of those who are training to be the Lord's true yoke-fellows. Christ's sweetest consolations lie behind crosses, and he reserves his best things for those who have the courage to press forward fighting for them. I entreat you to turn your eyes away from self, from man, and look to Christ. Let me assure you, as a fellow-traveler, that I have been on the road, and know it well, and that by and by there won't be such a dust on it. You will meet with hindrances and trials, but will fight quietly through, and no human ear hear the dim of battle nor human eye perceive fainting or halting or fall. May God bless you, and become to you an ever-present, joyful reality! Indeed he will, only wait patiently.—*Life and Letters of Elizabeth Prentiss*.

Enjoying Christ.

—The unbelieving Theodore Parker, after reading Wayland's *Life of Judson*—a model biography of pious man—wrote in his journal, "If Christian missions had done nothing more than to build up such a character, it is worth all it cost."

—For your own sakes, train your children for Christ. God has intrusted them to you as a precious talent; you have consecrated them to him and vowed to train them for his service. How will you stand in the judgment, if you have received a child in trust from God, and are training it for the world, training God's child for the world, sacrificing one of Christ's little ones to the devil, fitting God's child for perdition?