

Messenger and Visitor.

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—CHANGE OF LABELS.—The renewal have been pouring in so fast that it has been impossible to advance the date on the labels the same week the money has been received. We hope to be no more than a fortnight behind time in any case.

—AN EXPERIMENT.—A gentleman in New York, wishing to know the reception a poor and shabbily dressed person would receive in some of the more fashionable churches, let his beard grow, dressed in well worn clothing, and appeared as a worshipper in four of them in succession. He reports that his treatment ranged all the way from civil to warm and hearty. It is doubtless true that the poor would be welcomed at the most of the churches on this continent. But they are sensitive, and fear they might be regarded as intruders. What we want is not only churches that will welcome people of all classes when they come; but also to seek those who are in the lanes and alleys, the highways and hedges.

—WHAT ABOUT IT?—A city minister says, in a recent number of the *Congregationalist*:

"I have the best lot of people in my church I have ever met with. They get up entertainments, suppers, and dinners, which are models of their kind. They pay their bills with more promptness than any people I ever saw. In fact, they do everything in the world except the thing for which the church was legitimately designed. And what can I do about it?"

There are a great many churches, we fear, who not only neglect the things for which the church was legitimately designed, but are far from doing everything else. The truth is, many of our churches do not realize the real purpose for which a church exists. If the minister is paid promptly, and he is able to draw good congregations, if the prayer meetings are regularly held and there is no particular difficulty confronting them, the membership are all too well satisfied. The church is not only a fold for sheep, it is a camp for warriors. The great aim should be to overthrow the works of darkness, and release the slaves of sin. We fear that Dr. Gordon calls the "Cooking stove apostasy," referred to in the above extract, does much to obscure the real high mission of the church from the view of the membership.

—THE CIDER QUESTION.—We have received a letter from a brother referring to our reply to a question about the propriety of christians making cider. He thinks our remarks were not strong enough. Never having lived in an apple growing district, we are unable so well to judge of the evils of cider drinking as are many others. We may not have spoken strongly enough. The *Messenger* and *Visitor* does not wish to give any uncertain sound on any question involving christian consistency or the best interests of men. We give an extract from the letter referred to, and hope the strong words may arouse thought:

"Cider is cursing our Valley in N. S. The boys imbibe a taste for strong drink from the cider barrel. Sweet cider will not remain so long. It very soon has alcohol in it. I don't believe that cider is good for us in any sense, and we should work against it heart and hand. We should not be harsh in our treatment of sinners, but we have very many who are leaders in the church and yet drink strong drink. These should be laboured with, and if they will not give up the use of it, they should be expelled from the church."

—NEW PAPER.—The *Messenger* and *Visitor* has been printed on an improved quality of paper since the first of this year. It was only last week, however, that we received paper according to the sample ordered. We hope our subscribers are pleased with it. One issue of the paper will be printed on the old paper, before very long, as we have some still on hand.

—ENGLISH BAPTISTS HAVE IT.—The *London Baptist* makes a criticism which would hold of Canadian Baptists we fear. It is:

Baptists, when carefully organized, seem a wonderful folk for unanimously passing resolutions and then for allowing the subject to drop.

—CHRISTIAN WIVES.—A startling statement is made in England, namely, that the majority of middle-aged women found in the inquiry-rooms are backsliders, being Christians who had married ungodly husbands, and who had been led back into the world. Of this a writer observes: "Worldly and even immoral men are sometimes specially fascinated by Christian girls; but woe to the Christian girls who yield to their solicitations." This warning should be heeded. Very few men are so bad that they would prefer bad women for wives. There are plenty of men who are in society who are reeking with lust and vice. Who has not known of plenty of cases in which young men of this stamp have gained as wives pure women who would not have touched their hands had they known the truth. From their very purity they were unsuspecting, and were more easily deluded. It is bad enough when a high-souled christian girl links her fate to that of an irreligious man, with all the danger of being

dragged down to his level. It is terrible when a pure christian woman is bound for life to an immoral man. Would that all might take warning in time!

The Way of Life.

BY THE REV. J. CLARK.

How can man be just with God?
How escape the wrath to come?
How avoid the judgment rod?
How attain the heavenly home?

Not by works of righteousness,
Not by alms, or prayers, or tears,
Can we make our guilt the less,
Can we check our inmost fears.

Not by outward forms or rites
Mortals get their sins forgiven;
Solemn sounds or sacred signs
Cannot fit their souls for heaven.

All must die, for all have sinned;
All are prone to err and stray;
Our iniquities, like wind,
Carry all away, away.

Not for aught our hands may do,
Not for aught our hearts may feel,
Will the Lord, in Gospels new,
Faintest ray of hope reveal.

One, the True and Living Way,
Stands from age to age the same—
Shining bright and clear as day,
Mercy through the Saviour's name.

Christ has suffered, Christ has died,
Died that man might never die;
All are fully justified
Who on Him alone rely.

O! He is so good and kind,
Patient, faithful, gentle, just;
All we want at once we find,
When in Him we place our trust.

Hail with joy the Prince of Light:
He to heaven your souls can raise;
His the merit, His the might,
His the everlasting praise.

Middleton, Nova Scotia.

Manitoba Correspondence.

A few notes from the prairie may be interesting to your readers, and coming as they do from the pen of a blue nose, may increase the interest in them, especially with those who are interested in the blue nose himself. It has been so long since I have written to your columns that I do not know just where to begin. I am too late to make connection with the train of interesting events that passed during the first part of this silent period. But with all the speed that events pass there is never a very long time when we cannot hear the hum of a regular or a special bounding post, and some of the latest, with a word concerning some facts that continually face us, will be sufficient for the present. I should have been more faithful in keeping before your readers the pressing needs of this country of "illimitable possibilities." We are confident that the brethren by the sea are loyal to this country, and could we draw the screen and give them a clear view of the mighty panoramas, they would come up with their stamps and help us to roll the gospel chariot to the Rockies. But this screen has not been drawn aside fully, and they can only notice a dim form through the canvas, and hear some strange sounds, but cannot understand what the full meaning is.

There are eight ordained ministers and one not ordained actively engaged in regular work. "But what are they among so many?" It is really wonderful that we have an existence here, in view of the many disadvantages at which we are placed compared with the several other denominations that are here. It is a proof also of the indestructibility of Baptist principles. They blossom and bear fruit here at 40 and 50 degrees below zero, and that in many places without the cultivation of the ordinary ministry. "Not by might or by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord."

I do not know the present population of this country; the census are being taken, and will soon be completed. But the claims of one class demand a word that may awaken our interest in them, and some other time I may speak of others whose needs should call forth our practical sympathy.

Those of whom I would speak a word now are the Mennonites. Your readers are acquainted with the interesting history of this people who have waded the bloody sea with ourselves. They came here from Russia that they might enjoy liberty of conscience in refusing to take up arms in war. There are about 18,000 Mennonites here, and the lines have fallen to them in pleasant places. They occupy a reserve in the south-east corner of Manitoba. They live in villages, but are beginning to adopt the English mode of farming, and are moving out on their farms. They speak

the low German, but are acquiring the English language very fast, and will soon be an English speaking people.

Religiously or irreligiously, they are divided. There are the regular Baptists of the most strict sect who do not consider anyone fit for church membership until they give up every filthy habit, even the use of tobacco.

There is another section who hold these views, with the addition of the literal foot-washing; but these two sections comprise but a small portion of the Mennonite people, and they are greatly opposed by the other sects amongst them, even more so than the Baptists are by other denominations.

There is another section of this people that hold our views as to the subjects of baptism, but substitute sprinkling or pouring for baptism; and yet others who approach very nearly to the views of the English Church; and, lastly, those who keep holiday like the Roman Catholic.

As a people they are generally very temperate, both in the use of tobacco and liquor. They use intoxicating drink in a most dangerous way. Not only do those who ought to have better sense drink, but they bring it home and teach the young children to use it, thus corrupting the whole race. The Lord's day is not a very sacred institution with the mass of them, and the English speaking people have not given them a very good example in this as in their other things.

Their school system—if system it may be called—is of a very low character, and the mixing of the English and German languages leaves them at present in an unsettled state of education. They are a kind and inoffensive people, generally given to hospitality. H. G. MELLIK.

(Conclusion next week.)

Duty.

For the proper wearing and ornamenting of an eastern cloth a number of persons were selected. The cloth was to be ready by a certain time, to be presented to the king. Each person had a particular part of the work to do. There was need of united and combined work regularly and steadily that the cloth might be ready in all its proper parts, at the proper time.

Each day after the work went on joyfully. Each one vied with the other in doing his work well and at the proper time. No one hindered the other. Each tried to help his neighbor workman. Many were the comforting and joyous words that passed between them as they toiled. After the fascination of beginning was passed, and all came to see that real steady work was needed, the strength of their purpose to work systematically and regularly was tried.

One day one of the workers was induced, by the presence of a friend, to remain at home. They thought that one of the other workers could do their part for one day, and as theirs was not a very important part they would not be much missed and the work would go on as usual. But alas! as soon as work was begun that day the particular part done by that absent one was needed. No one knew just how these particular threads were combined with the others to make a small part of the pattern they were working.

What was to be done? Everything was stopped for a while, to see if, after a little, the one missing worker would come. But the hours of work passed and no arrival. That day was passed and nothing of importance done, and that one day, missed by the one, meant the missing by all the others.

So it is in the Christian life. We are working for the Eternal King. We are doing a work that needs a united effort to make a successful day's work. One absent one throws everything into confusion.

How the prayer meeting feels the absence of one needed to take a part. How the social gathering is crippled when those needed for Heaven-work are not there. God does not carry on his work without his workers. If we are employed by the Lord to do work for him how can we refrain from that work, and then at night look up to him for pay, and think that he will pay for work never done. Ah! no! God does not foolish things. He works, and all his people must work. No work, no pay. Spoil the Lord's meeting by absence or silence, and you have a fearful account to give. The churches are filled with members doing that to-day. Some are faithful. Who are they?

A fluent infidel was recently lecturing in London. In the course of his lecture he said that he hoped all the churches and everything connected with them, could be swept out of existence. Mankind would be far better off. Thereupon a man in the audience cried out, "Which one of you will become responsible for Mr. Spurgon's orphanage?" The lecturer collapsed, and the lecture has not been finished yet.

Have you saved any One?

Many people are being saved these weeks, and being added unto the churches. These precious people have been saved, humanly speaking, through some earnest effort on the part of some earnest Christian worker. Now, friends, let us drop this question into our hearts: "Have you saved any one? We mean, of course, as an agent of the Holy Spirit, who desires to use every child of God."

What a searching power there is in the question. An interrogation walks into a man's life as a lighted candle comes into a room. If it be empty, the moment the candle is within its emptiness is revealed. If it be furnished, you see the beauty of the furnishing. Let this question be as a candle and a torch to your life. Let it come and shed its light around. The question asked is: "Have you saved anybody? Is there any living soul that looks upon you as its saviour? any wretched one; any one that was starving; any one that was on the verge of despair; any one that had fallen; any one that was rude, wicked, coarse? that looked upon you, that remembered your name, and says: 'That man brought me to Jesus! That woman led me to Christ!'"

Look within your bosom, and answer truly. Is there within your heart the saviour instinct? Have you the divine characteristic, the heavenly ambition and mood? Have you the joy of the heavenly ones when a sinner repents? Do you fairly represent the class to which you claim to belong?

The Scriptures say: "He that doeth the truth comes to the light." If a man feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, takes the stranger by the hand, and converts the sinner from the error of his ways, he will never lapse from the fervor of a religious life, nor fall into negations and semi-receptions.

In view of these things, therefore, suppose we apply this test of saving people in the measurement of our piety. The markings of this rule are deeply cut, plainly seen, and its decisions cannot be mistaken. If you have saved anybody, anybody, well and good. If you haven't saved anybody, —haven't saved anybody, —what then?

Amid all the fine pleasures of life there is one that is finer than all and amid all the joys that bloom in the landscape of our days, there is one whose flower stands pre-eminent; whose beauty is seen afar, and whose fragrance fills the air. It is the pleasure of bringing back someone that has gone astray; the joy of knowing that you have led one sinner to repentance. There are pleasures that last but an hour. There are joys that fill but the circle of a moment. There are delights that rise with the sun and go down with the same, leaving darkness, and it may be a darkness that has a man a star. But the pleasure of bringing a man back from his evil ways lasts with our lasting; and the joy of finding one who has wandered far off, been bitten by wolves, and lies dying—the joy of finding that wanderer, lifting him to your bosom, and bringing him back to the Father's fold, is a joy that neither rises nor sets with the sun, but stands fixed like an orb that moves not, and whose beams never fade in the firmament of life everlasting. For this is the joy of heaven, and those that are heavenly. —D. D. MacLaurin.

Ten per Cent.

There are not a few Christians who make conscience of giving to the Lord's cause one-tenth of their income, and there are some who insist that this is the duty of every one under the gospel. They say that the tithe was imposed upon ancient Israel, and that the law on this subject has never been abrogated, which, of course, is true. But the same law forbade the Jew to take interest from his fellow Jew for any loan, and this statute has not been expressly abrogated in the New Testament. Is it, therefore, unlawful for a Christian now to lend money on interest to one of his brethren?

And if this law of the tithe was intended to be universal and perpetual, we should expect to see it reiterated and enforced in the New Testament, and the more so as the duty of beneficence is frequently enjoined there. But nothing of the kind is ever hinted at, even though two chapters of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians are devoted to this subject. The apostle tells each of his brethren to lay by in store on the first day of the week "as he may prosper" (1 Cor. 16: 2); but if the statute of tithes were still binding, would he not rather have referred to this as a standard?

The introduction of this rule would obliterate one of the chief distinctions between the Old Dispensation and the New. The former was a system of minute regulations covering the whole sphere of common life, owing partly to the rude state of the people, and partly to the typical character of its institutions. The latter, on the contrary, is a dispensation of the Spirit, burning detail but emphasizing

principles. It is designed to lift its followers above minutiae and routine into an atmosphere of freedom and spontaneity. The measure of service and sacrifice is determined not by line and rule, but by the sense of what the believer conceives that he owes his Lord. Hence the apostle says, "as he may prosper." There are cases in which the gift of a tithe would be very oppressive, and there are others where it would be a very inadequate expression of gratitude and love. There is, therefore, no iron-bound rule of proportion. The Christian has the call of charity presented to him, and he, and no one else for him, is to determine what he is to do. The basis is laid down by our Lord, "Freely ye have received, freely give." It is not the amount but the heart that God looks at. She whom the Saviour commended gave a sum so small that we have no coin diminutive enough to express it, yet her gift was not governed by the law of ten per cent. She went far beyond that proportion. —*Christian Intelligencer.*

"Bread Upon the Waters."

James Brainerd Taylor was a graduate of Princeton, and only twenty-eight when he died, yet he did a work that any man might envy. He got hold of the idea that there was something in this doctrine of the endowment of the Spirit. Studying the subject, he became perfectly sure that the Holy Ghost might come upon him as upon the original disciples. So he prayed, and his prayers were answered. Whenever he went out he stirred all with whom he came in contact. Sinners used to fall before his preaching as grass before the scythe. It was spontaneous. He could not help speaking to men, and his words were mighty.

There is one very beautiful experience in his life. One day he was out driving, and he drew his horse up to a watering trough. It so happened that another young man was doing the same thing. While the horses' heads met in the trough, he turned to the young man and said, "I hope you love the Lord. If you don't, I want to commend him to you as your best friend. Seek him with all your heart."

That was all. They turned and went their ways. But what was the result? The young man thus spoken to was converted, was educated for the ministry, and went as a missionary to Africa.

Said this missionary afterwards: "Over and over again I wished I knew who that man was who spoke to me at the watering trough. But I never knew till some one sent me in Africa a box of books. I opened them, saw a little black covered book, opened it, turned to the title page, and there I saw a portrait—a beautiful face. Ah, said I, that is the man that preached the gospel to me at the watering trough. To him I owe my salvation."

And that of how many more on the Dark Continent! What we want to day is to be filled with the Spirit. We are filled with so many other things—pride, selfishness, ambition, and vainglory. May the Lord enable us to empty our hearts, and have them filled as by a mighty rushing wind! —*Rev. A. J. Gordon, D. D.*

ONE'S MOTHER.—It has been truly said that the first thing that rushes to the recollection of a soldier or a sailor in his direst difficulty, is his mother. She clings to his affection and memory in the midst of all the forgetfulness and harshness induced by a roving life. The last message he leaves is for her; his last whisper breathes her name. The mother, as she instils the lessons of piety and filial obligation into the heart of her boy, should always feel that her labor is not in vain. She may pass away, but she has left behind her an influence that will work for her. The bow is broken, but the arrow is sped, and will do its office. Years of sin may come, but the memory of the mother's earnest prayers may soften the heart, and prepare the way for better things.

Brethren! The time is fast coming when my voice will be silent, and your ears will be stopped in clay. But my evanescent words, in so far as they are Christ's words, are immortal, and will find us yonder; where you will have to give an account of what you heard and of what I speak. I beseech you! Accept and live upon that great message that your sins are forgiven, and your iniquities cleansed in the blood of Jesus Christ. That is what I humbly try to say—poorly enough, God knows! And I know better than you. Unless I succeed in leading you to faith in Christ, and in building you up in that faith my work is a failure. I am not here to win your praise; I am not here to gain your intellectual acquiescence to the truth. Still less am I here to perform a mere routine service, or to tickle your ears with my fancies. You are not here to listen to men's tinklings, but to God's word. And I beseech you—I beseech you to accept it. "I declare to you the gospel which I preach, how that Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the

scriptures." That is the abiding word of God; which will outlast us, the doing hearers and the speakers, and will judge us both. "We be unto me if I preach not the gospel;" and woe be unto you if you accept it not. —*Dr. McLaren.*

Literary Notes.

The American Antiquarian begins its ninth volume with the year '87. The January number has an interesting table of contents. The first paper treats of the Indians of Point Sound. The second is an illustrated article on the Villages and Camps found among the Embriemae Magda. The third describes the Red Rock or the Sacrificial Stone near St. Paul, under correspondence the H-bios of the Inquisito, Mounds near Lake Superior, Gold and Bronze Relics in Nicaragua, Serpent Symbolism, Quartz Implements in Minnesota, and the pipe in shape of an Elephant-Foot found in Kentucky are described, and a list of books on Native Myths is given. The Editor speaks of the Antiquity of man, claiming that it has been overrated. The Notes are interesting as they give accounts of discoveries and explorations.

The Eclectic for February contains the usual wide range of articles, selected from the best Reviews and Quaterlies. Anyone receiving it regularly will get the cream of the fugitive literature of the day.

Anthems of Praise. Another new compilation by a writer whose works are so well known throughout this country, that the mere mention of his name calls to mind many an hour of singing in the years gone by; for the veteran composer and compiler of the above named book, is no other than L. O. Emerson, who has given us this new collection called "Anthems of Praise," a book of carefully selected pieces arranged with accompaniments for piano or organ. The contents will be sure to suit church choirs. There are many choice anthems by different authors; hymns; pieces for special occasions; gospel songs, etc., all of which go to make the book useful in the choir or the large chorus-class. The pages are of octavo shape, containing 8 to 12 staves on a page. Send for "Anthems of Praise," by L. O. Emerson. Price \$1.00. Mailed on receipt of the price by the publishers, O. Dison & Co., Boston, Mass.

This, That, and the Other.

—Many people spend their time in trying to find the hole where sin got into the world. If two men break through the ice into a mill-pond, let him better hunt for some hole to get out, rather than get into a long argument about the hole they came to fall in.

—The *New Princeton Review* for January, contains an article from the pen of the late Prof. A. A. Hodge, in which he speaks of "the Agnostics, many of whom do not really know that they do not know, and only half believe that they do not believe."

—The Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown once gave this advice to students for the ministry: "Young men, take care that whilst you are putting off the old man you do not put on the old woman!"

—To simply work is nothing; we must do it for Jesus' sake. Many of the busiest people in the world forget to consecrate their labor, and then wonder at the absence of expected fruit.

—A certain preacher speaks of a manuscript as a "non-conductor of spiritual electricity between himself and his audience."

An old colored woman hearing the jubilee melody "Nobody knows the trouble I've seen," said, "Yes, and nobody knows how much less trouble we might see if we would stop looking at it."

—The total number of negro Methodists in the United States is 1,196,000, as follows: African Methodist Episcopal Zion, 400,000; African Methodist Episcopal, 391,000; Methodist Episcopal, 225,000; Colored Methodist Episcopal, 185,000; all others combined, 25,000.

—There is no quill, though plucked from the wing of straggles midnight and dipped in the war's blood of millions of bleeding and broken hearts that can ever write out the dark, dark chapters of misery and suffering which flow from the effects of strong drink upon the human mind. What are the effects upon the human soul? Whocan tell? Only he who has travelled through the interminable ages of eternity, and has found out the meaning of a "lost soul." For upon the tombstones of every one wrecked by strong drink God almighty has chiselled the words, "No drunkard can inherit the kingdom of God." —*Selected.*

—And another year—will tell another year's story. Don't you like to think of that sometimes? That the story isn't done ever? That there is always more to tell, out and on? And that means more to do. We are all making a piece of it. If we stayed right still, you see, why the Lord might as well shut up the book. —*A. D. T. Whitney.*