

Messenger and Visitor,

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 John, N. B.

Messenger and Visitor.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 1885.

HAND PICKED.

"They are all hand picked," said a western pastor of some converts added to his church. By this insignificant expression he meant to say that each one had been led to Christ by personal, individual effort.

Yes, this is the true idea. To grapple soul with soul as Christians seek to save the lost, is most in keeping with the urgency of the case. When a ship's crew are perishing in the surf, each man on the shore is required to do his best, as an individual. It is not enough, then, to have given money to pay men to man the life boat. If he can reach a drowning man himself, he must go to his help, or be recant to a sacred obligation. Now, men lost in sin are on all sides. They are in terrible danger, a danger which is increasing, every hour. They are within our reach. Can we be guiltless if we do not more than perhaps assist to pay a minister to warn and help them? It is not thus men do in politics and other things that interest them. It is true men are engaged to advocate the object, whatever it may be, but each man chooses his subject, and does his best by individual effort. Now why could not this be done in what pertains to the Kingdom of heaven?

This is what our Lord did. He preached, but he also spoke personally to the women of Samaria, to Nicodemus and to sinners. We believe it is a fact that few are brought to Christ without this personal work. Dr. Chayler remarked of the 3000 souls received into his church during his ministry: "I have handed every one." Our own experience has been, we presume, that of most others. The large majority of those with whose religious experiences we are acquainted, were awakened, or led to decision, by the direct conversation of some Christian friend.

We believe this individual work for and with the unsaved, is the great need of our time. THE UNSAVED NEED IT. They cannot reject it as done for pay. They cannot evade the force of these personal appeals by applying them to others. The earnest solicitude of the Christian who is pleading with them to seek salvation cannot fail to impress them. As with the force of electricity, when soul is thus put in contact with soul, the warmth and yearning of the one is brought with full power upon the other, and will arouse it from its lethargy if any human means can. We can recall how it was in our own experience. We could and did listen to sermons all the year round, and were impressed by very few. But no Christian friend ever spoke to us personally about our soul's welfare, when we were not profoundly moved. The very fact that thoughtless people shrink from this direct religious conversation, usually indicates that it has great power over them.

How many there are too, who have difficulties which can only be met by personal converse with an experienced Christian. We have found numbers of such cases who have long been kept from decision for Christ, because of troubles which reticence kept them from making known. How many are longing to have help, and yet are afraid to seek it? But worst of all, how many there are who do not attend religious services. What is to become of them? Have we no further responsibility than to throw open our church doors which we are sure they will never enter, if we do no more? Our Lord did more than throw open the door of heaven. He came down to seek and save the lost. Will he be content if we also do not seek those poor blinded, lost souls, and strive to draw them to him by the magnetism of our personal solicitude and persuasion?

One great reason why preaching is not more effective is that the impressions made are not fostered. There is a hallowed influence around the unsaved church-goer for two or three hours on Sunday, and he is left to the world, the flesh, and the devil, the rest of the week. The feelings aroused one Sabbath are swept away long before the next. But if all Christians were engaged in this personal work, these would not be left at the mercy of worldly influences; religion would be kept before the minds of the careless; and impressions would not be lost because not cared for. The unsaved need this help now especially. The devil is pressing them as never before, all the week long. Shall we leave them to his power? Shall we not, as his means to hold men to sin and unconcern are multiplied, redouble our diligence in persistent, personal, hand to hand work with souls?

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CHRISTIANS NEED THIS WORK. While nothing awakens the concern of the soul addressed like personal religious conversation, this direct work is equally fitted to stir the soul of the labourer. A man must be sluggish indeed, who can address a man about interests which are eternal and infinite, and feel that it is possible for power to be given his words to lead a soul to everlasting life, and not be moved. How earnest becomes the prayer for the one for whom we have thus manifested solicitude! How we wonder at our old carelessness about the lost!

How many Christian lives are almost less than a living death! In most cases it is because they are not active for others, and so are kept down to the death and drought of their own self-seeking. What they need is Christian work. If Christians could get into the habit of personal work, it would afford a limitless sphere which would quicken all that was Christlike in the soul and lead up to heights of shining Christian attainment which would make all skepticism hide its sneering face.

THE CHURCH NEEDS THIS KIND OF WORK.

Is not lack of this personal labor with the unsaved one chief reason why our work as churches is not attended with greater success? Are not our people depending too much upon preaching? Is not this why churches seem to lose all power when pastorless? If all were engaged in this direct individual work, how great might be the result! Then churches might be left pastorless for a season and not suffer so much. But we fear even the few who assist in public meetings for prayer and such religious services, do not all engage in this individual labour with the unsaved. Christian parents leave this personal conversation with their children, almost altogether to S. S. teachers and pastors. We fear there is danger of this sense of individual responsibility dying out.

We long for the time when our churches will be delivered from a spasmodic life, when ingathering will be continuous. We believe this constant work of soul with and for soul will bring about this day, and that nothing else will. We want to be free from bickering and strife. If all our people were about the Master's business, they would be on ground high above this devil's work. We desire the church to have her full moral power. This can never be until her members are free from the reproach of absorption in worldliness, while they believe men all around them are in such danger of eternal loss as well might stir the heart of a demon to pitiful activity. We can be saved from an inconsistency, well nigh boundless, and one fitted to make men doubt the reality both of what we profess, the truth we hold, only by giving ourselves up to this personal labor for Christ and souls, as we have opportunity.

Dr. Pierson, in a recent article, gives some

STARTLING FIGURES.

If each converted man should make it a habit to bring one soul to Christ per year, it would only take 10 years to save the whole world. If there were but one godly man on earth to-day, and it became the rule with him and all saved after him to bring one soul to Christ each year, it would take only 31 years to have all the tribes of the earth at the Savior's feet.

Brethren, sisters, what shall we say to these things? We are not to be here long. Shall we longer allow precious souls to press on to perdition

within reach of our hand and not stretch it out to help them? Yes, it is trying to begin, but see what great things are at stake. Shall we let this year pass and not try and be the means of saving one soul? The Savior is ready with his help. For the sake of our own spiritual life, for the sake of the perishing, for the sake of our dear Redeemer let us not shrink longer from this personal, hand to hand work with souls.

IS THIS TRUE?

A good brother has taken us to task for publishing what Spurgeon says of his temptation from wandering thoughts, and what McCheyne confesses of the deep corruption of his own heart. He thinks this will not help people up, but down. He supposes, also, that the experiences of these men of God, as published in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR, of Feb. 11th, must have been when they were very young Christians.

Our brother is wrong, we are sure, in both these statements. Any one who reads the journals of such Christian giants as Jonathan Edwards, Andrew Fuller and Murray McCheyne, will find, that as years advanced, and they became more mature in Christian growth, their descriptions of the evil of their own hearts became more dark. In this they were but sharing in the experience of the apostle Paul. When he was a young Christian, he said, "I am unworthy to be called an apostle"; in middle life, he had gained such a view of his own heart, that he said, "I am the least of all saints"; but it was when he was an old man, with all the light of heaven in his soul, which had been gathered during a long life, that he declared, "I am the chief of sinners." The greater light from God revealed the greater darkness in themselves. They kept very distinct what they were in Christ, through the substitution of his righteousness in place of their sin, and what they were in themselves, with the remnants of the old nature still clinging to them.

Neither do we think it will help any one down, for Christians to confess the corruption which still exists in their hearts. Where diseases are imaginary, a man may become well by thinking himself so. But the disease of the soul by reason of sin is no fancy, but a terrible reality; and in this case, merely to think ourselves whole; will leave us at its mercy. For some reasons we could wish that we might leap up at a bound to where sin would trouble us no more. But we find no such second instantaneous experience as that declared by our higher life friends, referred to in the N. Testament. There the Christian life is represented as a warfare, a gradual struggle upward. It is enough for us to know that this is the divine and appointed way to attain to the heights our Master desires us to reach, to feel that this must be best. But we can see wisdom in his rule. This struggle, like all others, strengthens our moral powers, and makes us abhor our enemy sin all the more. It gives us an opportunity to test our love to our Master, and is attended with other benefits to the nature. We expect to be stronger in spiritual force from this long struggle, just as the body grows stronger through the laborious years. For us to be relieved from this spiritual conflict through the intervention of divine and miraculous power, would seem to us to condemn man to spiritual impotence. What we need is a purity that has been conquered through the help of Christ, and a freedom from temptation through development of strength which masters it without effort, rather than these as gifts, without our effort.

Now in all this, we do not wish it to be understood that we are unaware of the fact that the most of us make progress which is all too slow, while many do not seem to advance at all. Neither are we blind to the danger that some are in, from a reaction to the opposite extreme from the higher life. We fear some do not distinguish between real sin in the nature and a consciousness of that sin, and so, because it is a mark of higher Christian attainment to see the evil in the heart, take a little self righteous pride in being real sinners, supposing they are thus made superior to those who profess more than themselves. Let us yearn and struggle after likeness to Christ. In order to attain to it, let us seek to know

how unlike to him we are, as the first condition to growth up toward himself. Let us not wish to escape the conflict, which is to make our spiritual powers strong, neither let us be discouraged at the thought that it is before us. We can have help from our Master. When his blessed purposes are accomplished, and we are tried as gold in the fire, we shall be taken up to where the fullness of strength and grace makes all service a joy.

COMPENSATION.

The resolutions in favor of compensating brewers and malsters for the loss sustained, should prohibition carry in the Dominion, are significant. Liquor dealers are evidently convinced that their business is doomed, and they wish to recoup themselves out of the public chest, before they make their parting bow. They evidently see that public sentiment is making such rapid strides prohibitionward, that if they are to get any favor they must strike at once. If they ever get Parliament prohibited, they will have a strong aid in defeating any such measure; for there are many who desire to see the liquor traffic stopped, rather than help pay the dealers for their loss, would vote against prohibition.

The question of compensating the liquor dealers is a difficult one. It seems just that those who have profited by the business should make good the loss to those who carry it off. The question arises whether the dealer himself might not recoup himself out of his own surplus gains, as he seems the only one benefited by his traffic. It may be said, however, that the government has gained in revenue, and therefore should pay these men out of the revenue, from custom duties on their manufactures. But this is a broad question. The government has had to pay the bills of this traffic in keeping up insane asylums, penitentiaries, etc., etc. It has also sustained a loss through the traffic in the smaller income from the many it has kept and made poor. Besides all this the people have paid what has been added to the revenue through distilleries etc. The distillers got their profits, all the same, and it seems unfair for the people to have to pay again into the distillers' pockets what their traffic has led them to pay into the treasury of the Dominion. Then if we had been cursed and smitten by the traffic, as so many tax-payers have been—if we had lost sons and been made poor and wretched by it—we should feel that no more burning wrong could be done us than compel us to help pay these men for the loss of what they had gained at the expense of our property and happiness. Were it not that we have legalized this wretched traffic so long, the case would be perfectly clear. Let them bear their own loss. This they can abundantly do out of the rolling wealth they have made out of hard working tax-payers. Neither are we prepared to say that any compensation should be given them in any case.

UNION OF THE BAPTISTS OF THE DOMINION.

As the outcome of correspondence from the Baptist Union of Canada, laid before our last Convention, resolutions were there adopted, expressing willingness to "consider the advisability of forming a general society, composed of delegates from the churches throughout the Dominion, to be entitled the Baptist Union of the Dominion of Canada."

It was suggested that the objects under the control of this society be, "General Home Missions in Manitoba, the North-West, British Columbia, and among the French in the Province of Quebec, Theological Education, the distribution of Religious Literature in the interests of the Denomination, and such other subjects as may be deemed desirable."

The following brethren were appointed a committee to confer with similar committees from the Baptists of the other Provinces, and report at our next Convention, viz.: Rev. Dr. Sawyer, John Marsh, Rev. A. C. Coombs, Dr. Rand, Rev. Dr. Saunders, Rev. Dr. Day, Hon. A. F. Randolph, Rev. D. A. Steele, Rev. Dr. Hopper, Rev. Dr. Walton, Rev. G. O. Gates, Hon. Dr. Parker, E. D. King. This committee is a very able and representative one, and all must feel that

the matter is safe in their hands. While we have very strong opinions on the question of this union, and desire to see it accomplished if practicable, we are inclined to leave it altogether to these brethren to whom the Convention has given it. If they think it wise to open the discussion of it in the paper, we will welcome their communications. If not, it might be well to await their report.

A Few Words for the Sisters.

In taking a retrospect of the past year with reference to our work as W. M. A. Societies, we have great reason for thanksgiving and praise. For some years past it has been the desire of many sisters to see the three Provinces united in a general society. This has been accomplished during the past year in forming the W. M. A. of the Maritime Provinces. Another cause for gratitude, is the fact that in answer to earnest prayer the Master has put it into the hearts of two young sisters to go forth bearing precious seed for Him in foreign lands.

A short time ago we were deploring having no missionary supported directly by us, and were considerably discouraged at the prospect. How much better "God has been to us than all our fears." Letters have been received from our sisters at different points on their voyage, all speaking of a prosperous journey and bright anticipations of future usefulness. In the last received, Miss Wright says "But now as I feel I am nearing the land I desire to spend my life in a great burden weighs me down. I cannot describe it to you; but there seems to be a cloud overshadowing, so to express it. Still onward in His name I would press, looking to the prize, even that of winning souls for my Master. The work is His, and I am confident it will succeed." These dear sisters are our representatives among the heathen; but they cannot do our work. This remains for each one of us at home, not only to give our money for their support; but our daily earnest prayer, that the Holy Spirit may accompany them, and assist in acquiring that most difficult language. Think how many weary months of toil before they can utter one sentence in the Telugu language, of the gracious message they have gone so far to carry—oh, let us pray that God may open the hearts of our ignorant, benighted sisters, to hear their words and accept the Christ they offer.

We also may greatly encourage them by our words. It would cost each of us but little time and effort to write them once in three months, and yet what a source of strength and encouragement it would prove to these homesick, tongue-tied ones, to know from our own words that we thought of and prayed for them. Another cause for thankfulness is the continued health of our missionaries. God has in his wisdom seen fit to call home in the midst of his work, one of our brethren in connection with the Upper Canada Board, Fallen at his post. We will read no more his cheering words in the Link, yet the blessed memory remains—"their works do follow them." While we "weep with those that weep"—is it not meet that we should thank God that He has dealt so graciously with us and not only spared the lives of our missionaries; but as far as we know given them uninterrupted health. Mrs. Archibald writes in a recent letter written in text: As I sit here talking to and teaching these dark faced people in a strange language, miles away from any white person, I almost wonder, if once I lived in Canada. Had my breakfast a few minutes after six this morning and before I got the text righted up for the day, about 30 women called to see me. They were on their way to their daily work, which is digging grass, for you know it is not out here but taken up by the root. We left Bobbili a week ago, came out the high road about 15 miles, and are visiting all the villages in different directions. Do not know when we will get back. We propose spending the cool season in touring. No missionary was ever here before, and the people look around in crowds. On Sabbath morning until after dark it was almost constant preaching, and we did not have to leave the tent to do it either. I got very weary talking before

the day is over. The Bobbili field is new and contains more people than there are in all Nova Scotia. In many cases the missionaries and their helpers make their visits, pass on, and "are seen no more until the next year." A Home Missionary would despair with such a work before him; but here with very few travelling conveniences, and every thing to be communicated in a foreign language, we feel our need in a peculiar way, see how very little we amount to, and look to Him who never loses sight of the tiniest seed, for His blessing. And one of these days it will come upon the Bobbili field rich and abundant. For this, my sisters, are you praying? Are your hearts burdened with prayer following us and constantly going up to the Father on our behalf that this touring season may be a success in every sense of the word. Two were baptized in Bobbili the day before we left, and we feel the work is growing in every direction. Dear sister in view of such an extensive field and such devoted self-sacrificing missionaries what is our duty? We who are rejoicing in the glorious light of the gospel. Can we think calmly and unmoved upon the multitude of our perishing sisters who are toiling upon the tempestuous sea of life amid the darkness, without a single ray of light to guide their way. Should we not hasten to send this light of life to those who sit "in the shadow of death."

May the God before whom we shall all appear enable us to perceive and know what things He would have us to do, and give us grace faithfully to perform them.

Halifax, Feb. 25th. S. J. M.

Dakota Correspondence.

How true it is that "time changes and we change!" How unexpected often are the changes we witness and experience! A few years ago when the writer had the pleasure of meeting with you in Ontario, and visiting with you several of the Associations there, in connection with Our Father's business, little expectation had he of being the Dakota correspondent of the paper you have the honor of now editing. But we shall not indulge in any regrets for now occupying these relative positions. For several years the Visitor has been very heartily welcomed to our home in the North-West, giving us extensive information of our numerous and energetic brethren in the eastern Provinces of the Dominion, and of the progress of the cause among them; and an occasional letter from "Bozalis" has, through its columns, given some light on the state of the cause in the land of the setting sun.

Your predecessor in the editorial chair, Dr. J. E. Hopper, by several years' paper acquaintance, holds a large place in our esteem, both for his work and his worth; and yet we often felt as though we would be nearer to him had we the privilege of looking squarely into his eyes and shaking hands with him, as we have done with the present Editor. We have in the past years, since our acquaintance, had a deep interest in the best success of our weekly Visitor, and none the less now that it is happily in wedlock do we fervently wish it long continued Goodspeed in its high and noble work. Some months ago, the Visitor had some imperfect notes of the good work in North Dakota—made more imperfect by some misapprehension of the communications between the pen and the press, and perhaps for that, and other reasons, a few more notes might be in place now. During the last year a good deal of material and spiritual success has attended the efforts in the good work, by the American Home Mission Board, through its missionaries, north of parallel 46. The untiring and energetic General Missionary, Bro. G. W. Huxley, reports during that time, eight new churches organized, six houses of worship built, two hundred and seventeen converts baptized into the fellowship of the churches, and two hundred and thirty three added by letter and experience. The mission work has been in operation here less than four years, and there are now reported in all, seventeen houses of worship, thirty-two churches organized, with an aggregate membership of seven hundred and sixty-three, holding property valued at \$60,000. But there is yet much ground to be occupied, as the whole field embraces a space of 75,000 square miles.

About the mid or rather about the harvest, one of the Rochester Seminary made a tour into some friends, and gave heed to the preach." In one or four churches mission stations seasons in evangelistic results, greatly revived, led to decision, to Jesus, and made the momentous work I do to be saved with this movement seventy were added. Severe domestic away, when he commenced in the meantime the work on at different points having passed through of affliction in the beloved and very he has come back well begun work we shall have columns of God's boy of love in the Grant takes charge at a six-month M. & M. R. R. City, but will exercise opportunity evangelistic work ing pastors and In Grafton since was observed, an effort by the ministerian and Methodist with the written some degree val, and the souls to the S however, in compromising effort with trouble the shaves, leaving the settled comfort such so-called unpromotive of real highest degree. They invariably the declaring of God, and often cussion. You have doubt ed of the crushing happened two or the family of on brethren here, the brutal murder young boy, his years old. While away holding meetings, and the real at school in Grand man, who had months' acquaintance whole family's brutally committed the dead of night were fast asleep. nal had six days not having been neighbours for a few days after he was captured. He confessed his awaiting his indignation through try, and the execution of the with crime, make ful whether he have an undisturbedly prevalent here makes human life continued, will very desirable o The apparent seemed to be to session, for a little or three hundred venge, made bl by strong drink. Spall, emigrated years ago from doubtless were of the readers and Visitor. O afflicted brought or four years in missionary work ing an extensive deserve, as well pathos and pray everywhere, in his bereavement.

NOTICE TO have appointed bald and Mr. D. D. solicit advertisement ENGER and Vi offer exactly the be secured by a WEEKS & P