

[Rev. Dr. Bill sends us the following with a request for its publication.—Ed. C. M.]

AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSIONARY UNION, TREMONT TEMPLE, BOSTON, Nov. 21st, 1881.

REV. I. E. BILL, D. D.

My Dear Bro.—The History you have recently completed and published, a copy of which you so kindly sent me, and in the reading of which I was profoundly interested, brings upon us Provincial Baptists, a debt of gratitude to you we can never liquidate. As I have gone over its pages, and especially those recording and transmitting events and names with which I am familiar through personal knowledge, how many precious memories were revived in my mind! The workers, their works and their words come so clearly, so vividly before me! I see and hear the Mannings, the Hardings, the Dimocks, whom I, in my boyhood adored as some superior, almost supernatural beings, delegated from heaven to deliver divine messages to the lost on earth. How much comes into my mind that I want to say to you about that history—preserving and perpetuating records so entertaining and instructive. The elders in our ministry and churches cannot but feel deeply thankful to you for the service you have performed in the preparation of this volume; and the generation, who have come into our ministry and our churches since the departure of the men who made that history should have and read the chronicles of the giants and their heroic deeds.

But I must pause in this rambling writing, and to my work that is sorely pressing me just now. Some time when I have a little leisure, if ever I can have any leisure, I want to write a few of the thoughts which your book awakens in my mind.

Wishing you every blessing, and with kindest regards to Mrs. Bill.

I am yours cordially, W. S. MCKENZIE.

For the Christian Messenger. Home Missions.

THE GROUPING OF WEAK CHURCHES.

In their Report to the Convention in August, 1881, the Home Mission Board say: "Our Policy has been to group the weak churches into convenient fields sufficiently large to give the hope of becoming self-sustaining in the near future." To this policy the Board still adheres. There are many advantages arising from having these weak churches thus united under the care of one pastor.

1. It creates greater sympathy and union among the churches themselves. The pastor becomes a bond of union, besides helping to make them better acquainted with one another. In this way the evil of having so many separate organizations is remedied to some extent.

2. It gives them more continuous pastoral care. When these churches do not act in concert, but each endeavours to care for itself, it often happens that one or two secure a pastor for a time while the rest are pastorless. Then the order is reversed, and so on.

3. It tends to more rapid growth. The increase of the church depends largely on the ministrations of the word and pastoral oversight. It has already been shown that the grouping of the churches gives greater probability of such ministrations and care being continuous. Besides, as the minister is living on the field, he is able to care for and work up stations which must be neglected by one who comes from a distance once a month or fortnight. But the working up of these stations is an important means to the growth of the church.

4. It enables the Board to render assistance to many more churches than it otherwise could.

In several of the groups assisted by the Board one or two churches pay for what labour they receive and if these were not in the groups, the expense of supplying the fields would be so much greater, that only a few fields could be assisted. Such churches therefore by consenting to the grouping arrangement, instead of obtaining a portion of the labours of some distant pastor, not only receive greater benefit themselves but help their weaker sisters and the cause generally.

The principal hindrances to the carrying out of this policy are

1. The occupation of one or two of the more important churches or stations naturally belonging to a group by a non-resident minister. So long as the most important portion is thus held the

remainder cannot be cared for by the Board except at great cost and trouble.

2. The desire of some churches for "smart" ministers. Unless such a minister can be found to take charge of the group they refuse all co-operation, preferring to remain pastorless or to have the occasional visits of a "smart" man.

It is right to covet "the best gifts," but churches should remember that "the things which are despised hath God chosen." It is the faithful man who builds up a church—not the "smart" one.

It is hoped that ministers, churches and quarterly meetings will assist the Board in carrying out this policy, and that the time will soon come when all our weak churches will be cared for by faithful pastors.

A. COHOON, Cor. Sec'y. Hebron, Nov. 25, 1881.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., November 30, 1881.

DEATH OF REV. T. H. PORTER.

The following brief telegram received from Dr. Rand, at Fredericton, N. B., announces the fall of another standard-bearer in Israel:

"Mr. Porter died very peacefully a little before nine o'clock on Saturday evening."

Mr. Porter has for several years been, as it were, lingering on the borders of the grave, and evidently becoming more and more prepared for the change which almost day by day was expected. His health was impaired when he was called to the pastorate of the Fredericton Church in 1870, but he continued to labor on with much acceptance for several years, and tendered his resignation only when he found himself unable to fulfil the duties of the pastoral office. Subsequently, on a partial recovery, yet unable himself to preach the gospel regularly, he had a desire to serve the Master by aiding his brethren, in making their ministrations more effective and powerful. With this end in view he gave himself to the study of Elocution, and the giving of lessons on that subject, and for some time past he had succeeded marvellously in doing this, and has derived a small income from labors in that direction. Still he has preached as occasion offered, and that with much acceptance and profit to the churches wherever he happened to be. Although the church at Fredericton accepted his resignation, yet, as his health was so feeble, and his life apparently drawing to a close and being warmly attached to him they have continued to afford his family a generous support in addition to sustaining their present pastor.

Mr. Porter has travelled over a large part of the Maritime Provinces, and is therefore favorably known to a large portion of the Baptist churches, but has been perhaps more generally known by his communications to our pages. His writing was always clear, and to the point, often sharp and incisive. He was not afraid of controversy, and was not often driven from the advanced position he took. He had a large view of the claims of Christ. He was never satisfied to confine his sympathies to one locality, but in all his plans and purposes he regarded the general welfare of the body to which he belonged as paramount to that of any section. He has never been an idler, but beyond his strength he has striven to carry out the commission given by Christ to preach the gospel to the world. He was ordained in 1861, and has therefore labored for a period of 20 years.

He now rests from his labors and his works will follow him. Those who have known Mr. Porter best will pronounce his life, although comparatively a short one, yet successful in all that constituted him a faithful minister of Jesus Christ. We shall probably have some more definite notice for our pages from some of his many friends.

NOVA SCOTIANS are to be found everywhere. We have just received a copy of The Valley Blossom, a lively paper published every Saturday, at Montevideo, Minnesota, by H. E. Wadsworth and W. B. Wilson. The latter gentleman is from Truro, N. S.

We purpose making the Monthly Christian Messenger a paper that will be welcome everywhere, filled with news, religious intelligence, and every variety of profitable reading, in all respects equal to the weekly, and if possible the best number in the month, yet complete in itself.

NEWS OF THE WORLD.

At the banquet to Sir John A. McDonald at Toronto, on Wednesday last, Sir John made a great speech on the position and prospects of the government and of the party by whom it is supported. The speech was received with much enthusiasm by the large audience present. Sir John read a letter from Mr. George Stephen, promising that the Syndicate would have the road to the Rocky Mountains by the winter of 1882. The proceedings of the convention were fully reported in the Globe.

The total value of goods exported from the Dominion during the month of October was \$13,628,512, of which \$13,163,831 was the produce of Canada, and \$464,681 the produce of other countries.

The contractors for constructing the Canada Railway between Ottawa and High Falls were to commence work last week.

A quantity of curious Indian relics has been placed in the Geological Museum at Ottawa.

Things seems to be settling down in Ireland. The decisions of the Land Commission appear to be giving general satisfaction. There has been some disturbance arising from hunting over the farms. During the hunt of the Kildare hounds on Wednesday, three hounds were poisoned at Sallins and a mob of 500 attacked the Armagh Hunt Club, at Ballymaenab. Many of the horses were severely stoned.

The storms of the past week did great damage to shipping on the coasts of England, Ireland and Scotland.

The London newspapers, published congratulatory articles on the betrothal of Prince Leopold to Princess Helene, of Waldeck.

The passenger train from Edinburgh, whilst approaching Tayport Station, collided with a freight train. The engine of the latter, was driven bodily into the van. Four persons were killed and eight injured.

Lord Cowper, Lord Lieut. of Ireland, and Lady Cowper visited Belfast, on Tuesday of last week, and were loyally welcomed. In alluding to the state of Ireland, he said he held no hope that the Government would be able at present to relax coercive measures. Lord Cowper continued: "I am afraid things do not look very bright. Dissatisfaction and ill feeling are deeply seated."

Russia is still enduring the troubles arising from fresh discoveries of plots against the Czar. An unsuccessful attempt by the Terrorists against the life of the Czar was reported on the 26th. The Imperial family have, in consequence, decided upon removing at once from Gatchina. Among the prisoners are a chief of police of an important provincial city, two daughters of a high state official, and two Jewish merchants, besides a number of students and active members of the Nihilist party. The plot was to cause a balloon to ascend near Gatchina carrying dynamite and explosive fire balls together with appliances to cause the balloon to fall within the palace yard, when it would explode and set the palace on fire. In the confusion it was intended to seize the Czar and family.

A secret printing office, with hand presses, was discovered at Vasilidistran, on Friday last, a Faubourg of the city. Six persons, including a woman, were captured and several university students arrested.

Some fearful excesses have been perpetrated in Turkey. Some Turkish officers and soldiers have massacred a Christian family at Lucea and carried off sixteen men, women and children and £200. Anarchy is reported throughout Macedonia.

Advices received at Constantinople state that the cholera, probably disseminated by returning pilgrims, has appeared at Burum, Kakallah and Chehr.

An official telegram announces the outbreak of cholera in Alexandria.

Great latitude is being allowed Guiteau during his trial at Washington. On Friday last he was permitted to read a paper in court. In which he affirms that the Lord inspired him to the act of shooting President Garfield. He persisted in interrupting witnesses while giving their testimony. The Judge threatened to have him gagged if he continued. The effort of several witnesses is to show that Guiteau is not responsible for his actions. In which case of course he will be placed in confinement.

Jones, who was committed to jail on Monday of last week, on a charge of

assault with intent to kill Guiteau, was released on \$50,000 bail.

New York has enjoyed a big explosion on Monday afternoon of last week. Fifteen thousand panes of glass were shattered by a dynamite explosion.

Twenty horses daily die of "Pink-eye" in Brooklyn.

The United States and Mexico are now united by railway. On Tuesday last the construction train of the Texas and Mexican road crossed the temporary bridge near Laredo.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

We beg respectfully to suggest to those of our Subscribers from whom we have not as yet heard this year, that we are very anxious to hear from them. Our necessities are great and pressing. It would be esteemed a special favor if they would send on without further delay, as we are desirous of meeting the obligations incurred to furnish them with their weekly supply of Christian literature.

If the Baptists of Halifax were to attempt to start a Denominational Seminary, or Foreign Missionary Society, in our fair city, and on finding themselves deficient in funds to carry forward their designs were to ask with a whine

"Did a N. B. Association ever speak kindly of our Seminary, or give anything to it? We hope so, but do not know the facts. We hope further that many of our N. B. brethren will see the propriety of returning some of the kindness our people have shewn the N. B. Home Missions and Foreign Missions. Why not?"

If, we say, we were to use such language, we should be only using the language and adopting the policy of our St. John contemporary, in endeavoring to defend himself from the plain facts and forcible arguments of a correspondent.

Efforts to divide the Baptists of New Brunswick into "champions of the Convention," and friends of the N. B. Education Society, will, we doubt not, when duly considered, meet with their due reward in the estimation of brethren who consider the important interests entrusted to the Convention.

In the acknowledgement of an error and misstatement, it will not avail our contemporary to finish by suggesting as he does, "Such evil fruit growing out of our relationship, cause good men to ask, can we not serve God better apart than in a union which is a misnomer and a reproach to us as Baptists." If that be the price he is willing to pay for a St. John Seminary, we think he will not find many in N. B. to join him.

LECTURE BEFORE THE ACADIA ATHENEUM.—Prof. McGregor of Dalhousie College delivered a lecture on Friday evening last, before the Acadia Athenæum at Wolfville, on "The Origin of the Solar System." The lecture was a popular Exposition of the Nebular Hypothesis, and was accompanied and illustrated by views thrown upon a screen. These views represented different kinds of spectra, the decomposition and recombination of light, several nebulae and an imaginary view of the Embryonic Solar System, in the process of aggregating from nebulous matter. The learned Professor exhibited the reasons assigned by scientific men in favor of this cosmical theory, but was careful to say that it was only a theory and by no means proven. It was however a very instructive and interesting lecture, and was well received by the Students.

ZION'S DAY-STAR, is a small monthly paper published in New York, at 50 cents a year. The editor claims it as one of his chief virtues that he "aims to teach the truth, as free from the isms of the times," and says: "We are not in bondage to any creed, party or sect, but we claim to be the Lord's freemen." This boast pretty clearly indicates the particular party in Zion from which he hails. The Day-star is modest in its proportions, but it may grow if it lives.

THE ANTICHRIST: his names, personality, origin, work and end by Mrs. Geo. C. Needham, pp. 72, Gospel Book and Tract Depository, St. Louis, 15 cents.

This is from a collection of papers which have appeared in "The Truth." It will doubtless possess a charm for a certain class of readers. There is, perhaps, more value in the book because of its conciseness, than in its containing anything new on the subject.

ENLARGEMENT

OF THE

Christian Messenger For 1882.

We propose making an enlargement of the CHRISTIAN MESSENGER in the coming year, to meet the growing demands of our already large and increasing list of subscribers. We shall be able by this means to introduce other improvements, so as to supply our patrons with a greater variety of valuable reading matter.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER is the oldest religious newspaper in the Dominion of Canada. It has done good service in promoting the best interests of thousands of families, and in advancing the cause of truth and sound education in the community.

To its Patrons THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER has been a practical Christian Educator, a true Temperance Lecturer, a Preacher of some of the best Sermons ever delivered. It has been a regular and intelligent Sabbath School Teacher, a Home Missionary, a warm friend of Missions to the heathen, and a faithful promoter of Lord's Day Observance. The Farmer has been aided by it in making the soil more productive. Parents have been assisted in the management of their children, and many times in preserving and restoring their health. Ministers have found that the readers of the CHRISTIAN MESSENGER are some of the best, most useful and devoted members of their congregations.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER is still all that it has been. The Proprietor now seeks to enlarge the sphere of its operations, and to extend its circulation among the thousands who, in many cases, are at present comparatively without religious reading, and in others where truth is but imperfectly presented, and where the Sacred Scriptures are not sufficiently made the test of church order and religious observances.

A choice and interesting

SERIAL

will be one of the attractive features for the young people.

Some of our excellent philanthropic brethren who are desirous of giving the CHRISTIAN MESSENGER a very much enlarged circulation have expressed the wish that we should provide a

Monthly Paper

for persons who have not hitherto been on our list of subscribers for the weekly issue, but who might be induced to take a Monthly Number at 50 cts. a year. In compliance with this request and suggestion we purpose making the first issue for each month a

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER MONTHLY,

commencing with January, 1882. We will therefore send this to any address for 50 cents a year, (3 copies to one address for one dollar.)

The Christian Messenger weekly \$2.00 paid in advance, or 3 copies to one address for \$5.00.

These offers are made with the hope that they will afford an opportunity for hundreds of good Christian people, who are ready for every good work, to cooperate with us in sending forth the words of light, life, and salvation into thousands of homes and families at present comparatively without such information. Will our friends favor us by kindly interesting themselves in getting additions to our list, under either of the above arrangements.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER OFFICE

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