

## THE DEACON.

Writing of the deacon, the editor of the *Baptist Argus* describes him as "one of the afterthoughts of the New Testament." His appointment grew out of a situation; he is the child of an emergency. The writer goes on to describe and discuss the deacon in an interesting way:

"When we say the deacon was an afterthought we do not degrade him. After thoughts are oft times the embodiment of wisdom. The deacon was made because he was needed. It was found that in the organization of the Christian church, other officers were needed, and they were accordingly provided for and they have a distinct and important place in the life of the church.

"The deacon was created as a relief to the pastor. In point of rank he is inferior to the pastor and in the matter of authority is largely subordinate to him. He is chosen to attend to certain common things which have to be done, and which would be left undone unless some special arrangement for doing them had been made. His work is lower than that of the minister, and yet closely connected with it, and essential to the good order and peace of the church. It is a wonderfully fine thing for a deacon to know his place, and to magnify his office. Officially his business is not to elect the pastor, nor to direct him, nor to eject him, but simply to help him.

"The New Testament has far more to say of the character of a deacon than of his work. At the first blush this may be surprising, and yet it is just as it ought to be. If the deacon's task was fully articulated and little was said about his character, the likelihood would be that he would take a narrow view of what he had to do, and do as little as possible. But if the churches can find men who measure up to the inspired picture of the deacon as found in the New Testament, they will have men of such fine spiritual tones, such practical judgment and rich sanctified energies as will adjust them to every phase of their duty. The deacon needs to acquaint himself with his work—find what is expected of him, and to acquire skill in every detail of the performance. He ought to be thoroughly practiced. If he hands the bread and wine around he ought to know how to handle himself—how to hand the plate or the cup, and how to deal with every incident that may occur as he passes around. That is skill and that is what every deacon needs. An awkward, sloven, ungainly tactless man is not fit for a deacon. But far more does he need to look after his character. It does not take long to become an expert deacon in the mere details of his office, but it requires steady, ceaseless, indefatigable watchfulness in order to be good enough to be a deacon. He must shed off everything that is unlovely in his manners and bearing, and must take an air that is graceful, dignified and faithful.

"An unworthy deacon is a crushing misfortune to a church. He stands as a monument of the church's blunder in his selection. He holds a place which ought to be opened to a better man.

He is standing reproach and mortification to the church. He is an expert in mischief. His example is a wound to the church and an offence and temptation to the community.

"Ah! our eyes have looked upon the good deacon, and the sight was most charming. He was neat in dress, in person clean, erect and agreeable to look upon. He was always present, there in time, and while free from bluster and officiousness, had his eye everywhere. If a window needed to be shut, or a notice had to be given, or a stranger came in, our deacon was ever at the right point at the right moment. Toward the pastor, he bore himself with gracious and delightful courtesy, watched after his comfort, kept him from forgetting things, and saw that everything was in place that would put the pastor at ease.

"While rather disposed to put his brother deacons forward, he never grumbled about having things to do, and was cheery and breezy all the time. The pastor leaned upon him. The people loved to see him moving about, and even the children clung to his hand and loved to talk to him. He was mighty in prayer, always ready to speak a word for his Lord, and ever fresh in his ardor for the honor of the church.

"Blessed man! He served with matchless fidelity, grew while trained at his task, always came to the last though tremulous and leaning on his staff. He wished to get out of the office and let a stronger serve in his stead, but his brethren would not have it so. He died at his post, and his last thoughts were about his church. His funeral suspended business in the whole neighborhood and scores of children brought roses for his bier, the church put a tablet on the wall and his memory will be slow to die."



## WHERE THE BIBLE IS SOLD.

The hundreds of colporteurs of the British and Foreign Bible Society go far and wide in quest of success. The record of their wanderings would make a picturesque and variegated romance. During this past year we hear of them in the marble quarries of Carrara and in the cafes of Andalusia; among the factories of the German black country and at the zavods, or iron smelting works of Siberia; in the "Alfama," which means the Whitechapel of Lisbon, and at Buddhist festivals in Japan. In the jungle of Upper Burma and in the opium dens of Selangor; in Peruvian market-places, in Cossack barrack-rooms, and in Alpine custom-houses. Glimpses of the romance of their work and of the work of the headquarters' staff are given in the annual report. As the result of one colporteur's work, there is now a Christian church in Pung-lok, Corea. He left a few gospels, to be sold or returned, at "a heathen Corea's house," and although the "heathen" did not change his ways, the purchasers changed theirs and became evangelizing forces. The report reminds us that when the Bible Society was founded the cheapest English Bible cost 4s. 6d. Today the price is only 6d. The Dutch Bible, printed by the Society at the same price, is "the cheapest book in South Africa."



## LOOK OUT.

Whenever a man introduces an impromptu speech with an apology, and promises to be brief, then look out. — *The Telescope*.

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## THE PROFESSIONAL POLITICIAN.

It is becoming more and more evident that Canadian business men must lay aside their partizanship and study politics from the business standpoint only. The present long session at Ottawa was designed by professional politicians and grafters to scare business men out of parliament. These wily individuals desire to keep the business men and independents at home so that the professionals will have entire control of the country's revenues. They know that there are few business men who can afford to spend eight months of the year in Ottawa and that a few eight-month sessions will drive the business men out of parliament. The attempt should be frustrated. This can only be done by business men using their influences with the newspapers and the electors to frown down this contemptible trickery. The majority of the next house should be business men pledged to shorter sessions—business men of both conservative and liberal leanings. The battle must begin in the conventions. These will soon be held all over Canada, and now is the time to plan the reform. The professional politicians, men with no special calling, no visible means of support, should be beaten in the conventions. Only thus can the house of commons be kept wholesome and efficient. It is a duty which lies upon every merchant and manufacturer in the country. — *November Canadian Magazine*.

## Notes and Gleanings.

Aluminum is being extensively used in place of copper for conducting electricity. It is so much lighter than copper that it is said to be as cheap for the purpose at thirty cents a pound as copper at fifteen cents. That is, an electric plant can afford to pay twice as much for it. Any increase in the price of copper is likely to bring more aluminum into use since the latter is manufactured by electric power from clay. There are other advantages in favor of aluminum: because of its lightness poles can be placed further apart, and where once used, a change back to copper is seldom made.

The banishment of playing cards and liquors from the Pennsylvania passenger another indorsement, from the pl: it busi-

trains, says the *Chicago Interior*, is less side of things, of the objections of moralists to these symbols of agencies of evil. The prohibition, it may be assumed, is based wholly upon the propensity of men who love gambling and men who love drinking to make nuisances of themselves in such a varied company as a railroad coach gathers together.

Our Lady of the Sunshine is the appropriate name for Canada. Henry F. Thurston, of *The Farmers' Review*, Chicago, says: "The great factor here in the rapid growing of vegetables is the long day. We watched the sun go down at 9.15 p. m. The boys played ball near our car till 9.45. At 10.15 it was still light enough to permit one to read and write without artificial illumination. Last year a fair held at this place, one heat of the race was run at 11.15 p. m. The sun is up at 2.45 in the morning, and it is broad day long before that time. This gives the plants more than eighteen hours of sun at this time of the year. The more heat, the more evaporation, the more growth. It is no wonder, then, that all things here grow with exceeding rapidity. The long days makes up for the northern latitude, and this condition intensifies as one travels north."

The listener who takes the sermon to himself, instead of noting down how well its warnings and exhortations apply to his neighbor across the aisle, is the one who gets the most spiritual benefit from it. There are sermons, to be sure, and some that are accounted eloquent and learned discourses, from which it is as difficult to draw instruction as to extract sunbeams from cucumbers, but even then—there is the text. — *The Examiner*.



Mormon missionaries are now active in Australia. It appears, according to one of our exchanges, that they keep the doctrine of polygamy "severely in the background."

The Disciples of Christ, in session in Detroit a few days ago, announce that their membership is now 1,300,000, and \$210,000 for foreign missions.

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