

Messenger and Visitor.

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Remember the "Messenger and Visitor" for \$1.50 a year to all new subscribers who pay within thirty days of the time of subscribing.

The New York State Convention reports the following work done and results accomplished during the last year: The district pastors of the Convention occupied 399 churches, and quotations, performed 2,981 weeks of la, or, preached 7,939 sermons, and baptized 304 converts. The district missionaries have abounded in fruitful labor. Thirty-two Associations report 128 small churches now being aided by the Convention, which give promise of soon becoming self-supporting. About forty of these weak churches are now without pastors. Four aided churches have become self-supporting during the year. On the whole, there has been a steady advance throughout the State during the year.

The Massachusetts State Convention reports \$15,000 total receipts for the year. This has been appropriated to 57 weak churches to aid in the support of pastors, evangelists, and to church building. The experiment of supporting state evangelists to assist pastors has not proved a success this year, but the outlook is hopeful. This body has now \$260,000 to invest, the amount realized by the sale of a property donated to the Convention some years since. It must be remembered that the state Convention has to do a substantial amount of work, and what is done through them is in addition to the general work of the State Convention.

On some last week, on the call of the Y. M. C. A. for a week of prayer, met with a sad fate. The first part of it was changed in the proof-reading that its real force was destroyed. Perhaps this is to enable us to have a keener sympathy for some of our correspondents sometimes.

A writer asks our opinion of a quite common practice at the basars, &c., of some churches. A quilt, for instance, is to be sold. A large number give a small amount, each with the understanding that the one who by chance obtains a certain ticket, of which each takes one, is to have the article. Our opinion is that much evil is thus often unwittingly done. The very central principle of gambling is the attempt to get more to give in hope of obtaining more than the worth of their money. Whether men put down stakes at a horse-race, on the turning of a card, in a gambling hall, or on a ticket at church fair, in the hope of getting all that is put down by themselves and others, or the worth of it, it is the same in principle. Children who see churches sanctioning the gambling principle to make money for religious purposes, will not be so apt to scruple over gambling where the associations are profane, and they will hide behind this church practice as a shield against all expectation. We do not believe many of our own churches countenance such a practice, but we wish the whole array of incident gambling in grain-bags, horse-races, and raffles, were expelled from everything lawfully in the interests of religion. Christian people only need stop and think to lead them to consign all these things to race courses and gambling halls where they belong. If this is not done we do our part to consign our children to these unwholesome places with their curse and blight.

Mr. W. D. Farwell, one of the philanthropic business men of New York, is dead. We clip from the W. Chr. Ad. the following account of his conversion: "Some ten years ago as Mr. Farwell was walking up Fifth Avenue he met a General Clinton B. Fisk. After the customary greetings, the latter said, 'You ought to be a Christian.' 'I know it,' was the reply. 'I wish I were a Christian.' 'Are you ready to become a Christian now?' was the solicited and prompt inquiry that followed. 'I am,' said the equally prompt and decided business man. Immediately Mr. Farwell accepted the invitation of his friend to unite with him in prayer for present salvation. They repaired to General Fisk's room, and in less than thirty minutes from the commencement of the interview Mr. Farwell was rejoicing in the light and liberty of the son of God. Such is substance in the story of his conversion. Are there not multitudes who only wait the invitation of loving disciples to prostitute themselves at his feet? Yes, and if the unconverted should be as prompt in decision as this gentleman, how few would be left unconverted. Indecision is one of the greatest barriers to salvation.

Some years ago a man who poses the simple truth has upon himself, unfettered by prejudice and erroneous teaching, a man who, a Cabot, dropped into the Baptist Church, and saw a baptism, was convinced that it was scriptural, because a Baptist—wrote out his reasons in Spanish for becoming a Baptist. This man, who is now in Cuba, he sent to Cuba, and a brother circulating Scriptures that several

bodies of believers who had organized as Baptist churches, having adopted our article of faith and awaiting some one to baptize them.

We are the following from an excellent article in the *Central Baptist*, of "What Some Christians are Perfect": "They are perfectly justified from the guilt of their sins, and the condemnation of God's law. There are two kinds of righteousness that all true believers have, very distinguishable in their nature, but inseparable in their experience. One is imparted to us, and the other is imparted to us. One is instantaneous, and the other is gradual and life-long. One is completed the moment we believe in Christ, the other is never completed, this side of heaven. The moment we believe in Christ we are at once free from all past guilt and from the law's penalty, as if we had never broken the law. In Christ, we are reckoned to have satisfied the law. In the spotless covering of Christ's righteousness God is well pleased with us. We are no longer a servant of works, but a son of God. In this sense all Christians are alike perfect."

The Baptist Year Book of the Maritime Provinces has been sent out to the churches. It is in good time. The publisher has done his work well. It makes a goodly volume of 225 pages, giving all necessary information about our denominational work during last year. In the examination given it has detected no errors. It will be a reliable part of our history for the future. We notice two new features. In the lists of churches the names of the pastors are given, and where there is no pastor, notice is taken of the fact. The statistics of the Sabbath-schools are also given, and are as full as could be expected in the time in which attention has been given to gathering them. It is to be hoped that more may be done to make our Sabbath-school statistics as complete as possible. The Year Book has the familiar imprint of S. Seiden. No one can peruse our annual record and not be more profoundly impressed with the greatness of our work and the greatness of his needs. Let all our people examine it, and much will be done to deepen and broaden their interest, by making it more intelligent.

A SPEAKER at a southern Baptist association declares that of 1,000,000 Baptists, all but 100,000 are dead-heads. Are we in the Maritime Provinces in a position to cry out shame? Are there more than one in ten that support missions? We hope so. Reader, are you one of the faithful ones?

THERE HAS BEEN an Inter-Seminary Missionary Alliance for a year or two. Its object is to arouse in theological students a deeper interest in missionary work. The annual meeting has just been held at Rochester. Thirty-two Seminaries were represented. The aggregate of delegates was 330. One Seminary—Princeton—sent thirty-two. It is said to have been one of the grandest of missionary meetings. The Sabbath evening meeting filled the largest place of worship in the city and crowded another with its overflow. The crowds presented were of a high order. The recitals of struggle to take the resolution to devote a life to mission work were touching. The influence exerted upon brethren to lead them to enter this work was very strong, while much was done to infuse a missionary spirit into those who remain at home. At the close of the meetings forty-three declared their intention to become missionaries. Such gatherings as these show that Christianity is not dead, and anger well for the future.

Dr. LOCKHART, of the Baptist Union of Scotland, said:

Baptists have a history. As to our distinctive principles, I confess I feel proud of the position we now occupy. Little over a hundred years ago the Baptist name and profession were unknown in Scotland. It was only in the year 1763 that Archibald McLean and Robert Carmichael became anxious on the question of Baptism, and were led, after two years of earnest searching and prayer, to adopt Baptist views, and as no one in Scotland could be found to administer the rite, Mr. Carmichael went to London, and was there baptized (October 9, 1765) by the learned Dr. Gill, a predecessor of Mr. Spurgeon, and on his return to Scotland, baptized his friend Mr. McLean. Thus did these two earnest men lay the foundation of the cause in Scotland. What a change in our position and prospects within the comparatively short space of 120 years; then, only two Baptists in all Scotland! Now, we have 89 churches, with a membership of upwards of 10,000; 148 preaching stations and cottage meetings, and 18 Sunday-schools, with upwards of 8,000 scholars and 969 teachers!

It is almost time to be thinking of Christmas-tide, with its pleasures of giving and receiving. If you could look over the beautiful Rock now in hand and not be displayed for buyers at the store of the Baptist Book and Tract Society, 94 Granville Street, Halifax, you would know that no better place could be found for making such purchases. The young and old, the rich and poor, can all be accommodated. These are creamy times for the young folks, when the best of everything is offered at prices marvellously low. Watch for advertisement next week.

The Rounders' Convention.

Our readers are aware that there is a growing class of people in most cities and towns called Rounders. They derive their name from their habit of going round to the different churches. They consider themselves with no particular church, and help to support none. They present occasionally in their only support. For this support many of them think the people who pay the money and do the work should be profoundly thankful. A convention of these excellent people was recently held in Toronto in somebody's mind. There was a good attendance and no collection. Rounders don't believe in collections.

The Hon. John E. B. of the convention, took the chair and opened the proceedings with an address—not with devotional exercises. He said he was glad to see so many present and hoped they would have an enjoyable meeting. He congratulated them on the return of the season which always brought meetings of various kinds that one could attend without paying any money. He was happy to know that several new ministers had lately come to the city. It was their duty to patronize all the new men as soon as possible. He had no doubt that there would be a number of distinguished strangers in some of the pulpits during the winter. He need not say that it would be the duty of the Rounders present to go and hear all the strangers. He hoped the pastors of the different congregations would exert themselves and secure the services of distinguished men who had a good record in the newspapers and were able to draw there was no use in bringing ordinary gospel preachers to the city. Such preachers could not meet the wants of Rounders. He could not say what the chances were for some heretical preaching this winter, but he did hope some of the city pastors would get up a reputation by preaching a little heresy. There was a splendid opening for that kind of work. The daily newspapers could always be relied on to advertise a preacher that did his duty in that way. He would pledge his word of honor that if any of the prominent pastors of the city would get up a heresy sensation he would have the support of every Rounder in the city. (This last remark brought out thunders of applause.)

Mr. Amos Loos-Tongue then spoke. He said he esteemed it a very high privilege to live in a city like Toronto. A church-going man like himself could attend a different church every Sabbath, besides taking in all the special meetings. There it was so nice to meet a few choice spirits in a corner grocery on Monday and talk about the preachers and choirs, and organs and congregations. He always did like spiritual conversation. He believed he knew every bit of gossip about every minister and congregation in the city. It was utterly impossible for a man to keep himself in that high spiritual condition if he attended one church only. He urged members of the convention to avoid the humdrum practices of these stupid people who go to the same church every Sabbath. They should improve their privileges and go around among the churches.

Brother Skiffins then addressed the convention. He said there was one subject of the question that had not been touched. He need scarcely say he meant the financial aspect. One could want to be a Rounder. If a man went to one church regularly the managers were sure to ask him for money sooner or later. Church managers were nearly all worldly-minded men. Some of them even went the length of asking people for a certain amount each Sabbath. He was opposed to all such practices. Let those old-fashioned people who attend one place of worship, build the churches, pay the minister, find the music and provide the light and fuel. The beauty of being a Rounder was that you got all these things for nothing and had the opportunity of finding fault with everybody and everything besides. Who would not be a Rounder and save money? It was all very well for Paul to say that the laborer was worthy of his hire, and that Christian people should give so much a week. He considered James Besty, Q. C., M. P., a higher authority than Paul, and he was happy to say Mr. Besty agreed with him. Brother Skiffins then closed by reading a long extract from Mr. Besty's book.

Mr. Empty-Head said there was another advantage in being a Rounder, which he would mention. If a man went to one church every Sabbath, few people took any notice of him. If he went to a different church every day, he was likely to be treated as a distinguished stranger. The ministers made a few over him, showed him to a good seat, and perhaps the minister would join us. If the church officers did not show considerable attention and put one in the best seats, they were sure to chance to write to the newspaper, and accuse the officers of want of courtesy to

Rounders. He was happy to say the daily papers were always willing to publish letters of that kind. It gave a flavor of piety to a kind of evangelical aim—to a newspaper to publish letters scolding church people for not giving their best seats to Rounders. He urged the members of the convention in writing to the press always to call themselves strangers—not Rounders. Strangers sounded better and reflected more on the churches. He had been a Rounder for a good many years and he believed he received far more attention than people who went to one church. Some of the church officers were beginning to look rather jealous at him at times, but when he covered he always struck out for a new church or a cessation of some kind.

Mr. Empty-Head, J. D., closed the discussion. He said the Toronto ministers were really behind the times; with two or three exceptions they never announced the subjects on which they intended to preach, as the advanced preachers in New York, Chicago and other American cities. As an illustration of what he meant he said that a preacher in San Francisco some years ago announced that he would preach on the words "How is that for high?" That was the kind of subject he liked to hear discussed. He doubted very much if there was more than one preacher in Toronto who would announce that topic; and yet a subject like that, if properly advertised, would draw every healthy Rounder in Toronto and bring in a large number from the country. He thought they should bring their influences to bear on the Toronto pulpits in regard to this matter. By united energetic action they might bring about a reform.

The following resolutions were then adopted and passed, and the convention adjourned.

Resolved, that the deacons, managers and other office bearers of the different churches in the city be informed, and are hereby informed, that they are expected to provide comfortable sitting accommodation for all the Rounders in the city, free of all expense.

Resolved, that the pastors of the city be instructed to secure the services, during the present winter, of as many preachers as the ordinary line is possible. The expenses incurred by such services to be paid by the people who attend one church only.

Resolved, that the pastors of the city be requested to announce in the daily papers the subjects on which they intend to preach, and to give special attention to such titles of sermons as are to be seen in some of the daily Journals of New York, Chicago and other American cities.

Resolved, that this convention desire to express its deep regret that the Christian people of the city do not see it to be their duty to provide several kinds of sensational entertainments every Sabbath for the Rounders of the city.—*Canada Presbyterian*.

Back at Dresden.

The cozy little home of Germany's great composer bore a festive aspect. The good old "Father Bach," as he was commonly called, sat in his accustomed place on the hearth. There was a happy smile on his face as he sat, stroking his gray beard and watching his family while they were gathered around the table, which had just been set for the evening meal. On one of the groups, however, his eyes seemed to rest more frequently than on any of the others. It was his son Philip, the subject of every one's admiration. Philip, who had been away from home so long, had returned that day from Frankfurt, where he had been to complete his musical education. He was his father's pride because of the musical talent he possessed; his mother's joy because he returned to the parental roof evidently as pure as he had left it. In contemplation of the present blessings Bach's grateful heart offered a prayer of thanksgiving up to him who is the source of all blessings.

We were waiting for you, Herr Cantor," says Mrs. Bach, after casting a glance of satisfaction over the well-laid table, upon which the happy father joined his happy family, and pretty soon they were enjoying the steaming meal and other good things prepared for this joyous occasion.

While the Bach family was thus feasting, the sound of a horse's hoofs broke the quietude of the street, and following it the shouting of a number of boys, all trying to speak at the same time.

"That is the house, comrade!" cried one.

"Here lives Herr Cantor!" sings out another.

"This is the place!" added a third one of the noisy group.

"And," suggested another, "while you enter, you can leave your horse out here."

Amidst the laughter which this last remark provoked among the youthful crowd,

the horseman left his steed, threw the reins to the nearest body to hold them, and knocked at Bach's door.

"Indeed, this is meant for us," said the Cantor, and arising, he opened the door and bade the stranger enter. Still more astonished, Bach beheld before him a messenger from the king.

With noble mien the courier entered, and, while handing over a sealed document, he said:

"His Majesty desires an immediate answer."

Bach broke the seal and read. It seemed very important. His benign countenance assumed that indescribable expression that was invariably his whenever he played the church-organ.

Having read the paper, he meditated a few moments, when the answer came:

"Tell his majesty, the king, that I shall comply with his wishes."

The courier made a stately bow, and took his leave. For a few moments the sound of the departing horse's hoofs was heard through the deserted streets of Leipzig and again all was silent.

As soon as the door was closed, the family was around Bach.

"What was it, father?" asked one.

"What does the king want?" came from another.

"What message brought the courier?" queried a third.

"I must go to Dresden," was the answer.

"And did you promise that?" said his wife, shaking her head. "You certainly ought not to make so far a trip in this season."

"As I live and my name is Bach—yes."

"But why?" sighed his spouse. "What drives you to the court? You have everything here that heart can wish. You are honored and beloved!"

"Ah, it is not for gold, nor praise that I accepted it, but duty calls me there. It is a call from God that I dare not refuse, and relying upon his help I shall go up to that city of Berlin, that wicked Dresden."

And while his face seemed to be beating with inspiration, he continued: "I shall make these people understand the voice of God. The king, I believe, as all his train of courtiers, will hear me—well! Happen what may, I shall fill their sinful souls with terror, as if the Judgment day had come!"

Dresden's great church could not contain the multitude that, hearkening after a new pleasure, came to hear Leipzig's Cantor, Bach. But so one thought about God in the house of prayer. It seemed more like a theatre, where all converse and laugh and speculate as to the reward the principal actor of the occasion will receive. It was said among them that Bach, in order to retain his power, had even refused to be received at the court. Meanwhile the king had entered, and all eyes were fixed on him, all but Father Bach, who was alone behind the great organ, praying—praying to the King of heaven for an outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon him. Praying for the Holy Ghost to inspire his playing so that he might be able to show the king and his light-hearted followers the error of their way.

This ruler who, blinded by ambition, had forsaken the religion of his youth, trampled under foot the teachings and precepts of Luther, and instead had joined himself to the Church of Rome. Already did his white locks betray the fact that he had entered upon the winter of his life, that his years could be but few more, yet was he trying to satisfy himself with the pleasure of a sinful world, giving full scope to the desires of his unregenerated heart and his unholly ambition.

While Saxony's ruler sat thus in the Lord's house, apparently devoid of any thoughts becoming to the holy place, but jesting with his courtiers about something handsome he had discovered, the waiting audience became impatient. Every eye was fixed upon the king, watching for his signal. At last he was ready. Turning to the pages at his side, he commanded them, "Go!" Two of the swiftest ran up the broad staircase leading to the organ to tell Bach that the king is ready to hear him.

In breathless anticipation the multitude were awaiting the first tones of the mighty organ. Softly the strain of a beautiful melody fell upon their eager ears and filled the sanctuary. How sweet were the accents! It seemed like the rustle of the foliage shaken by the evening zephyrs upon a moon-light night. No pen is adequate to describe the impressions conveyed to the heart by the Cantor's exquisite improvisations. All were lost in wonder and admiration. A glow of delight tinted every face. The tones rolled sweeter and sweeter, and all within the sacred walls were held as if by an enchanted sleep, out of which they could not awake themselves.

Spontaneously, however, there thundered through the edifice what counted to be the

crack of doom, followed by the trumpet sound of the archangel Gabriel. As if terror-stricken all were awakened out of their blissful trance, looking around with fears. Then came a voice, awful and majestic, sounding like the thunder re-echoing through the mountains, which seemed to say, "How long wilt thou defy thy God? Every face turned white. Now came a pause; but hardly recovered from their fright they heard the scornful laugh of demons, accompanied by the weeping of the lost and the gnashing of teeth; they knew not where to turn. The terrible noise increased. Wilder, wilder still, became the unearthly yell, as if all the powers of darkness were holding high carnival, as if the devil and his angels were hankering after more prey. Louder and louder still resounded the weeping of the lost, the wailing of the doomed; and shriels, and shriels still, the gnashing of teeth. Has the day of judgment come?

But, hark! There comes a sweet refrain, as if from heaven—angelic music. The audience revived again—but no, once more, and wilder than before, echo the fearful yellings, weeping, gnashing—...the angelic music continued through it all, fainter and fainter—the hellish choir are gaining, the heavenly sounds are growing indistinct. Shall Satan then be victorious? No! another power comes, and sagging war with new vigor and might, power, overcomes the wicked spirits, slays the demagogical soul, and gains the victory—in Luther's arm, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott."

While the multitude quietly and solemnly, yet filled with fear and trembling, vacated the church, Father Bach was on his knees to thank the Lord for another victory, giving honor to whom alone honor is due. When at last he arose he saw the king standing at his side, weeping. Taking the Cantor's hand, he said: "I could not leave without personally thanking you, and I come repentant; for, oh! it was the very voice of heaven, speaking through your music to-day."

Bach hastened back to his happy home.

A few weeks later Saxony's ruler was called to appear before his Maker. A priest came to his side to perform the last rites of the church of Rome to the dying monarch, but he refused. And when at last the dreaded moment came, he laid his head to rest, lifted but one word, "Bach," and his spirit went to God who gave it.—*The Standard*.

The World's Idea of Christianity.

The world's idea of Christianity is a high one. None are keener to detect or sever to criticize the failings and mistakes of Christians than are worldly men who know not God. They are often unrelenting critics, making no allowance whatever for the imperfections and limitations of fallen human nature.

The world has a right to expect much of a professed disciple of Christ. The fully of lowering the Christian standard, and of catering to the demands and prejudices of the world, as well as the disgust which every honest mind must feel at such recreancy, is well illustrated in the following anecdote.

A young man who was a professed Christian, was seeking to win the heart and hand of a young lady of wealth and fashion. His suit did not prosper; and one day she said to him: "You know that you are a church member, and I am a gay girl, very fond of what you call the pleasures of the world." This led him to suspect that his religion was the obstacle to his success in winning her consent to marry him. He accordingly applied to the officers of his church, which must have been very loose in its joints, for a release from his membership.

They granted it. "Now," said he to her, when he met her again, "the barrier is removed. I have withdrawn from my church, and I do not make any profession to be a Christian."

The honest-hearted girl turned on him with disgust and horror, and said to him: "Oh, you know that I have led a frivolous life and I feel too weak to resist temptation. I determined that I never would marry any man who was not strong enough to stand firm himself and to hold me up also. I said what I did just to try you; and if you have not principal enough to stick to your faith you have not principle enough to be my husband. Let me never see you again."

Surely the verdict of every candid, sensible person must be, "Served him right." The best way for every Christian, under all circumstances, is to hold fast the profession of his faith without wavering, and to let his light shine in the world.—*J. H. H. in The Christian*.

How many old subscribers will send us in a new name this week?