MESSENGER and VISITOR.

$2.00 per annum:
When paid within thirty days, $1.50.

S. McC. Black, - - - Editor.
J. H. Saunders, - Business Manager.

All correspondence intended for the paper to be addressed to the Editor. All communications in reference to advertising, business or subscriptions to be addressed to the Business Manager.

Messenger and Visitor

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 1891.

IN REGARD TO DEACONS.

The New York *Examiner* in a recent issue puts forth a vigorous protest against the phrase, "Board of Deacons," which, it says, is coming to be employed with increasing frequency. Nor is it the designation merely to which the *Examiner* takes exception, but also, and especially, to the thing designated. The objection does not lie of course against deacons, as such, since deacons there must be in every Baptist church; it is a "Board of Deacons" against which the protest is directed. This rather innocent looking phrase is held to imply a sinister tendency in Baptist churches, and in fact to describe "a changed condition of things." The contention of the *Examiner* in brief, is this: that the Board of Deacons tends to become—and instances are adduced in proof thereof—a ruling body usurping authority which properly belongs only to the church as a whole.

It certainly appears to us that, admitting the facts, the protest of the *Examiner* must be regarded as just and timely. For the deacons of a Baptist church to assume the functions of a ruling eldership or consistory is altogether out of harmony with the congregational system on which Baptist churches are organized. It is much more in the line of Presbyterian than of Baptist polity, and, moreover, it would appear to us to be an adoption of one of the weaker points of the Presbyterial system, without gaining any of its compensating advantages. A board of deacons as a body acting by itself, to consider and decide upon important matters, without consultation with, and without authority from, the church is something wholly foreign to the congregational polity, and should not expect toleration in a Baptist church.

But on the other hand, if we are not mistaken, there is, in this country at least, in connection with the diaconate, an evil quite the opposite in character of that to which attention has been called. Quite too generally as it seems to us, the deacons of the church regard themselves and are regarded by the church as so many separate and isolated units, having no particular relations to each other, and possessing little power or authority to do anything as a body. They have certain well understood duties to perform in connection with the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and they are supposed to exercise some undefined sort of leadership, and this in many cases seems to describe the actual relation of the deacons to the church.

Now there may be perfectly valid objections against calling the deacons a "Board of Deacons," and there certainly are against their becoming a ruling body in the church. Their functions are not legislative or governmental. They have no authority to impose laws and regulations upon the church. At the same time, we think, that the deacons of a church are not merely isolated units, but should be recognized as a body having its proper sphere of action and corresponding duties. The deacons, not merely in their individual capacity, but as a body, should guard the church's interests, debate fate together and with the pastor in regard to all matters that affect the church's welfare, and present to the church the results of their matured thought and counsels. Thus uniting with each other and co-operating with the pastor, they will accomplish for the church a ministry of the greatest value. To attempt less than this would seem to us to indicate a failure to grasp the highest conception of the deaconship.

What relationship the deacons shall sustain in any particular instance to each other and to the church is likely to depend in a large measure upon the pastor, and perhaps in a still larger measure upon themselves. If on the part of the pastor there is any jealousy or mistrust of the deacons, or if among the deacons themselves there are dissensions, the result will be, of course, to prevent cordial relations and co-operation between the pastor and the deacons as a body. When such a condition of things exists, it need not be said that it is exceedingly unfortunate for the church. The ideal condition of things, at which, as it seems to us, every pastor should aim, is one in which not only the piety but the talents of the church for counsel, for business and for active Christian effort are well represented in the body of deacons. Let the deacons be in a religious sense the real bone and sinew of the church. Then let the pastor seek to give this body cohesion—encouraging a unity of spirit and aim and drawing it into fullest sympathy with himself in every endeavor to build up the church and to extend its work. Let all the interests of the church—its work, its needs, its difficulties, be frankly and prayerfully discussed by the pastors and the deacons, meeting together for that purpose. This should result in each deacon coming into intelligent and sympathetic relation with the various aims and enterprises of the church and with the pastor in his labors and difficulties. It should result in greater unity of purpose on the part of the leaders of the church in reference to its interests. It should result in securing for every subject of importance the careful and prayerful consideration of the pastor and deacons before being submitted to the church, so preventing misunderstandings and inharmonious purposes, and the introduction of many an unwise or ill considered measure to make trouble for the church.

The space now at command will not admit of our presenting the subject with as much fulness as we could desire. From what has been written, however, we think it may appear that though a "Board of Deacons," imposing its views and measures on the church in an arbitrary manner, and transacting business for the church without the church's sanction, must be considered as an intolerable usurpation, yet a deliberative and advisory body, consulting together and with the pastor in reference to the interests of the church, and presenting for its information and guidance the results of their mature and prayerful deliberations, is wholly in harmony with Baptist polity and essential to the best interests of the church.

General Booth's Scheme.

All the world knows by this time, either from having read his book or newspaper criticisms of it, what are the evils to which General Booth has directed so much attention, and also what is the nature of the remedy by which he proposes to cure them. Much of what he says about the "submerged tenth" of England is equally true of every country of Europe and of every large city in America. The picture he draws of what may be witnessed at night upon the Thames Embankment and in Trafalgar Square, are the "midsummer's night" scenes of the City Hall Park, and Cherry Hill Alleys, of New York. It is unwise to throw the blame of all this upon immigration. It is true, that both London and New York have been made the dumping ground of all Europe for its human refuse. But in these and all other cases, if immigration has added to the resident population some of its worst elements, it has also given to it many of its best ingredients. Eliminate from the front ranks of industry, invention, art, science and literature, all of foreign birth or parentage in either England or the United States, and many unfilled places would be left. It is probable that if every country had only its own native born population to deal with, things would not be on the whole much better or worse than they now are. This is not the way that the subject should be considered: "The lapsed classes," or "submerged tenths," or whatever we may please to call them, are here, are every where, and the question for Christian men and women to ponder is, what shall we do with them and for them?

There is much that commends Gen. Booth's scheme to our sympathy. We like its boldness. It is full of the daring, fearless, hopeful spirit of the aggressive, conquering Christianity which has already accomplished so many things that the world laughed at and declared to be impossible. It is large, comprehensive and capable of indefinite expansion. There is nothing of a piece-meal character about it; it covers the whole ground. It possesses two admirable qualities. It is thoroughly good in its tendencies from first to last; there is nothing in it adapted to destroy self respect or self dependence, but at every point its influence is favorable to these; and better still, from beginning to end it is thoroughly Christian in both its spirit and measures.

But it is not free from objections. To some it is condemnation enough of the scheme that it is in alliance with the Salvation Army, which by many religious as well as irreligious people is simply detested. Weightier objections are its dependence for success upon the abilities and faithfulness not only of Gen. Booth, but of those who succeed him, whoever they may be. In this case the rule may not be that "Amurath to Amurath succeeds," but when Gen. Booth dies a very different sort of man may succeed him and exhibit qualities that would ruin this or any other scheme. Further, it is said with truth that the adoption of the scheme as proposed would be the virtual endowment for all time to come of a new and powerful religious body, favored with special privileges and under the absolute control of a single individual.

But these objections may be all admitted and the scheme itself in all its essential features be adopted and defended. None of them touch anything that necessarily belongs to any of the remedies proposed by Gen. Booth for prevailing social evils. The remedies are one thing, who shall apply them is quite another thing. Yet in his criticisms of Gen. Booth's proposals, Prof. Huxley has persisted in regarding these as inseparable. If the remedies Gen. Booth advocates are practicable and efficient, they can be put into operation without either him or the Salvation Army having anything to do with them, however valuable their help may be as an auxiliary force. Should the things proposed be done, and can they be done? Ought it not to be the case in every civilized community that every one willing to work should have work given to him with wages sufficient to maintain him until he is able to obtain more remunerative employment? Ought it not to be the case that every boy or girl, or any one who has grown up without learning a trade, should have the opportunity to acquire a knowledge of some means of obtaining an honest living? Ought it not to be the case that those who through infirmity of mind or body are not able to take care of themselves should be properly and kindly cared for by others? Ought not all the waste material of daily life be carefully collected, and put to the best possible uses? And ought not and cannot all this and much more be done on sound principles and under Christian influences? And if one religious body declares itself capable of doing this, and challenges the whole world to deny it, ought not all the rest of the Christian world combined be able to accomplish the same work? If these questions can be and must be answered in the affirmative, there is no escape from the conclusion that the churches of Christ have been guilty of a great neglect of duty in relation to the poor whom they have always with them. Much has been done to reclaim the lost, to restore the fallen, to help the weak, to aid the poor, but there has not been any adequate, united, comprehensive effort to deal with the whole subject on plans that were harmonious, mutually helpful, sufficiently elastic, thoroughly remedial, beautiful and Christian. Denominational isolation, sectarian jealousies and a sad lack of the active spirit of true Christian benevolence, have caused churches to limit their philanthropic enterprises too much to those who already belonged to their numbers or might possibly increase them. Another spirit is needed—that of a Christian charity sufficiently broad and deep, real and unselfish, to cause Christians of all denominations to unite in organizations wisely planned and generously maintained for the cure of the social evils that darken not only England, but the whole civilized world.

What should be the precise nature of such an organization in any given place must be determined largely by the special local peculiarities and the condition of the lower portion of human life as it there exists. In some cases more prominence would have to be given to certain remedial measures than would be necessary in others. But, in every instance it should be made absolutely certain that every one needing help could procure it without being made a pauper or treated as a beast; that every one willing to work should be provided with honest and useful labor; that all needing training to acquire the power of self maintenance should be able to obtain it; and that all this should be associated with the personal influence of Christian ladies and gentlemen, consecrating their gifts and advantages to elevate and sweeten the lives of those less favored than themselves.

M.

Did His Wife Go?

Mrs. Carey "regarded the mission as worse than a fool's errand," and "declared she would never go with her own consent." Mr. Carey took passage on board the Earl of Oxford, Indiaman. The ship waited nearly two months for a convoy. All that time Mrs. Carey was at home, and intended to remain there. At last the captain refused to take any of the missionaries. So they all left the ship. After that more money was raised, and Mrs. Carey was induced to go. She did go. I wrote of the heroes who led in missionary work. Judson had his wife's sympathies and moral support. Carey had not. From the day that he resolved to go till the day he disembarked from the Earl of Oxford, he expected to go without his wife. I should have stated Mrs. Carey at the last hour unwillingly went with her husband.

E. M. Saunders.

Correction for Year Book.

The Year Book omits some important items in connection with the churches. For example, the church at Westport, N. S., contributed from April 1890 until August, over $80 towards the benevolent work of the denomination, besides the contributions made before that in the same year, and yet the church is represented as having raised no money for our general work. I do not know where the blame rests, but it is unjust to the church, to say the least. Such omissions are too common, and tend, I think, to hinder the benevolence of the people.

C. C. Burgess.

Allow me to endorse all the good words that were applied in the last number of the Messenger and Visitor to Evangelist Whittier. I know him personally. There are evangelists and evangelists. He is of the best sort—sterling, trustworthy, gracious; not noisy or extreme, but sound, judicious and genuine. His record is good, and he is regarded by pastors and peoples with whom he has labored as a brother beloved.

Antigonish, N. S., Feb. 27. J. Clark.

The Collection for Manitoba and North-west Missions.

As before intimated we have decided to ask the churches of our convention to take a collection for the Manitoba and North-west missions on the 2nd Sunday in March. For this purpose we are sending envelopes in which are enclosed circulars giving information concerning the work to all the churches. In most cases we are sending them to the pastors, but where there are no pastors, to the clerks. Pastors serving more than one church will please see that the envelopes sent to him are divided among the different churches, according to the ability to contribute. Where it is not convenient to have the collection on the day named let it be taken on some convenient day. We hope all that receive the envelopes will see that they are distributed and that all pastors or leaders will name a day when they can be handed in, if the day named is not found suitable.

Remember that we have promised our brethren in the West that we will assist them this year to the amount of $1,500. Over half of the convention year has gone by and only a little upwards of $100 has been received. Our dependence is on this collection. Do not disappoint us, brethren. At the convention of 1889, some were inclined to blame the Board for not collecting the $1,000 promised the year before. We are going to some expense and much labor and trouble to secure the amount promised this year. But without the co operation of the pastors and members we shall fail again. We need to collect the $1,500 this year in order to make good the promises of former years. In giving the $1,500 this year, we shall only give at the rate of $1,000 per year for the last three years. Consider the territory and needs as described in the circular prepared by Rev. A. Grant, pastor at Winnipeg and you will, I am sure, wish that we could do much more. He says:

"The territory we have to cover cannot be fully grasped even by those of ourselves who have been longest on the ground. Population is scattered over a country a thousand miles long by four hundred wide. In this expanse there are many well settled districts, where communities are beginning to feel at home and be somewhat prosperous, and along the lines of our numerous railroads there is a large number of villages and towns which year by year keep creeping into importance right under our eyes, and yet the sad, *sad* fact haunts us, that we are so entirely behind in our work that we have not even considered many of these. Our brethren in such places—most of whom indeed come from your churches in the East—keep reproaching us that while services are provided by other religious bodies, which in some localities, in respect to adherents, are less numerous than those of our own, they have to suffer deprivations of loved gospel ordinances themselves, and see their children drifting away into the world or other denominations. Were it known in the East how such people are prepared to sacrifice, and do sacrifice, while as yet their families and stock are poorly housed, that they may have even a student to preach for them a month or two of the year, it would, we think, melt your hearts and open your purses.

Our needs are very great. We need fifty men and fifty thousand dollars to begin our work and get square with the past. This is no exaggeration. Unless we are prepared to see pass away one of the fairest, grandest opportunities for this people of the last days whom men call Baptists, we have to face right around to this need of the hour. We have now three pastors of self supporting churches; also eleven English and two German missionaries, *i. e.*, pastors under the Board, in the country; besides these we have this winter twelve young men studying in Winnipeg, who supply pastorless churches as occasion requires; in all twenty-eight laborers. Of these twenty five receive aid because of the condition of the fields where they labor. At our half yearly meeting in January, grants to the amount of over $2,000 were made to needy fields for the current six months, and yet this is the lightest end of our mission year, as the students are at present nearly all at school. Our treasury is absolutely empty, and some missionaries for the last quarter yet unpaid."

Now if we cannot do all that needs to be done, we can, at least, do what the Convention has promised, and do it without lessening our contributions to other departments of our work. If we do not do our part in planting the truths of the gospel in the great North-west, our sin will surely find us out.

I received a few days ago a contribution for this work with the accompanying statement: "It is the offering of an aged sister over 70 years old. The gift represents a number of yards of cloth woven, or many hours at the loom, besides some sacrifice." She said in giving it, "I feel as if it belongs to the Lord." Would that many others might feel that they have money in their possession that belongs to the Lord, and that a portion of it at least might find its way to the North-west.

Send all collections when taken, or all contributions for this work, direct to me as arranged by the Convention. Send by registered letter or money order on Hebron post-office. If your postmaster tells you that Hebron is not a money-order office, as we hear some do, tell him you know better.

Now for a pull all together, and such a pull that will soon put the $1,500 into the treasury of the Manitoba and North-west Mission Board.

A. Cohoon, Trea. H. M. B.

Hebron, N. S., Feb. 24.

Manitoba Correspondence.

Last week I visited a country church situated on the Souris branch of the C. P. R., forty miles South-west from Brandon, to baptize for our student missionary at that place. He has two principal preaching stations, with several others occupied as often as he is able. The trails are as even as a pavement—no hills to climb, no stones to rattle over. The country is well settled, although some land is still held by speculators. The homes are comfortable and good houses numerous. Young men who came here without a dime have farms and implements clear. Appearances of thrift and prosperity are on every hand. The Baptists last fall put a good sized parsonage sufficiently under way to be in occupation this winter, and built a hall for present use. There is a grand opportunity through this West generally for proselytizing, as they of the Romish traditions call it, that is of bringing the people to the light of the Word. For example, one of the converts whom I baptized had been a Roman Catholic, another so filled with Episcopal notions as to be unable until recently to attend the meetings of dissenters, and who scarce knew how to express himself when a few months ago his daughter asked if he objected to her joining the Baptists; another had been sprinkled into the Presbyterian faith. There is a restless, enquiring spirit prevalent in religious faith as in everything else, which is most favorable for the cause of truth.

1. This important church will next September be calling a pastor, as Bro. Collinge, who is doing an excellent work, will then resume his studies. A good, earnest man is needed who is willing to do a great deal of visiting. In fact there is no room out here for pastors who cannot spend the most of their time in the homes of the people. In answer to my query, "How much time shall I spend in visiting," Elder Cohoon of the Home Missions, once replied, "Every afternoon," and to the extent I have followed his counsel has God hitherto blessed me. No smaller measure of pastoral work, be sure, will suffice our churches here. The only preachers to suit the pioneer churches of this country are they who like Paul, preach the gospel from house to house, as well as in the pulpits. Nor must their sermons be too slim either, for the settlers, many of them, have in their old homes sat at the feet of the ablest preachers.

2. I hope a view of this country church will undeceive the minds of those who have not a true estimate of this great country. All over the province and in many parts of the territories there are similar opportunities of building up churches. The first few years might be years of greater sacrifices than in the Maritime Provinces—and sacrifice is the way of blessing—but within a very short time a cause can be established in these fertile districts which financially (taking that low ground) will far surpass the labors of a life-time in the east. I do not mention this consideration to entice men who otherwise would not come, but it is an undisputed fact that preachers have to pay for their bread and butter the same as anybody else.

3. And it may encourage the brethren in the east to put more money into Manitoba and N. W. Missions to know that a good and quick return will surely be made.

I hope that the Lord of the harvest will direct the hearts of many of the young pastors of the east to the work in this great west. Anent this matter address, Elder A. Grant, 375 Jemima st., Winnipeg. W. H. Jenkins.

Brandon, Feb. 14.

Readjustment.

NO III.

(3) The request embodied in the resolution is a *reasonable* one.

I wish I could state the average income of our church members; but there are no statistics available that would enable one to do this. However, if we place it at fifty cents a day—certainly below the actual amount—each member could give the cent a day the scheme asks, and two cents additional for local church expenses, and yet be giving little more than *one half of his tenth*.

Among the Karens, in Burmah, the average earnings of a man, out of which he must support his family, are eighteen cents a day. Out of this, he gives at least one tenth for the support of the local church; and the total offerings of these people amount to at least one fifth of their income. "The abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abound unto the riches of their liberality." (See *Baptist Missionary Magazine*, Dec. 1888.) There are fifty-six native churches on the Sandwich Islands, having a membership of 5,747. Besides their contributions towards pastoral support, they give $20,000 annually for home and foreign missions—$3.50 per member, virtually what we ask. Look, brethren! The 5,747 members in the Sandwich Islands give for the work of the Lord outside of their local churches just what our 40,000 members give. (See *Baptist Missionary Magazine*, Dec. 1889.)

The present is a time of no ordinary responsibilities. Peculiar opportunities await us. Peculiar obligations press upon us.

Specific and feasible plans are, by our various boards, presented to us. If self-sacrifice is necessary that we may prove true in this crisis, should we not undergo it? The members of the Salvation Army are generally poor; but when they wanted $25,000 for a special purpose, they raised it, without calling on others, by self-denial for one week. Recently a church in London tried self-denial for a week, and raised more than their whole annual contribution for missions. But the lamentable part of the matter, as pertaining to us, is that we could enter upon a great advance movement with scarcely anything of real self-sacrifice and yet we do not. We could greatly increase our gifts without infringing much even upon the comforts of life. It is just possible that some of us are *wasting* money that should be the Lord's. In a certain fishing settlement in Nova Scotia, where the people complained that they were too poor to pay a minister, by a very careful estimate based upon reliable information, it was found that those who were looked to for contributions towards such an object, spent at least $600 a year for tobacco. It was subsequently ascertained that the same amount was spent upon this indulgence by our adherents in a certain farming community where salary has been small and beneficence very limited.

Mr. Gladstone says, "I believe that the diffusion of the principles and practice of systematic beneficence will prove the moral specific in our age." And who will not approve Dr. Bushnell's words: "The great problem we have now on hand is the consecration of the money power of the world. We need a revival, of *Macedonian giving*. Such a revival would be the forerunner of spiritual triumphs beyond anything the church has ever known. The tide-wave in the money power can as little be resisted, when God brings it to us, as the tides of the sea, and like those also it will flow across the world in a day." The carrying out of the great commission is delayed through lack of God's money. All doors are open. Men and women are asking our Boards to send them. "Who has the Lord's money? The Lord's people. It is they who withhold it. He has given them in abundance. He has supplied their every want. He has bestowed so liberally that the limits of necessity are passed, and comfort is insured. Where is the Lord's portion? Withheld through ignorance or avarice. Wot ye not, O Christian people, that the Lord hath need of His money? Look around you! The harvests are ripe, the reapers are ready; all waits for you. The Lord of the harvest waits for the reapers; the reapers wait for you."

C. W. Williams.

Dartmouth, Feb. 20.

Errata.—In my last, "one educational institution," should have read "our educational institutions"; and "theirs all," should have been "their all."

C. W. W.

Proposed Amendment.

If I am permitted to be at the Convention in August, I would like to move the following amendment to the motion of Rev. C. W. Williams, found on pages 26–7 of Year Book, in regard to the readjustment of our Convention plan:

That whereas, The time has fully come for enlargement in every department of our denominational work, and

Whereas, We already recognize the North-west and Grande Ligne as having claims on a portion of our mission funds; therefore

Resolved, That instead of the one dollar as at present, or the three dollars and sixty-five cents, as proposed, the churches be asked to contribute at the rate of at least two dollars per member per year, and that the distribution of funds be according to the following scale:

Home Missions,	$ 70
Foreign Missions,	45
North-west and Grande Ligne,	20
Acadia College,	45
Ministerial Education,	10
Ministerial Aid and Relief	10
	$2 00

Chegoggin. I. E. Bill.

Petitions for Prohibition.

It is to be feared that the prohibition petitions are not receiving as much attention among us as they should.

The time is now drawing near when they must be forwarded to Ottawa, and yet I have not received them from one fourth of the churches in the Eastern and Southern associations. I have received more from the Western association than from either of the others.

Unless the canvass is made thorough, it would be much better had it not been undertaken at all. Surely no pastor of a Baptist church will withhold his hand from such a movement? Let the next two weeks show our strength and earnestness in this matter. E. J. Grant.

How many have for their sole object the accumulation of money, and are bartering their soul's best interests for that which, if not wisely used, will prove a snare! Of what little value will this world's riches seem to them when they come to stand on the brink of the river of death and feel the icy touch of its cold waters! Then will they awake to the truth of those solemn words, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul." F.