

Messenger and Visitor

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—It is stated as "definitely understood" that there is no intention of appointing a successor to Tennyson at present; the frankly admitted reason being that there is no living English poet worthy to wear the laurel last worn by Wordsworth and Tennyson. It is even asserted that the present government has an understanding with the Conservatives to leave the vacancy unfilled until some more illustrious bard shall appear.

—A NOTE received during the week from Pastor Wright, of Penfield, says: "Another of our aged ministers has passed away from earth. Rev. James Trimble died on Saturday, Feb. 17, at the advanced age of 77 years. For some time Bro. Trimble has not been engaged in the active work of the ministry on account of failing health. A suitable sketch of the life and labors of our departed brother will be furnished for publication in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR."

—THE MOODY meetings in progress in Washington, D. C., are described as being the great event of the month in that city. The theatrical and concert performance, though employing first-class talent, feel the effects of the unwelcome competition. The absence of undue excitement and the deliberate character of the responses to the evangelist's appeals indicates, it is said, that the interest awakened will be of a stable and permanent character. One of the best signs of the revival is the noticeable improvement in the number in attendance on church services generally throughout the city.

—THE Chicago Advance states that Mr. Moody is suffering from some form of heart trouble which is of a serious nature that it is feared he will be prevented from doing much more preaching. This will be heard with surprise and pain by many thousands of people. Mr. Moody has of late appeared to be a man of so magnificent physique that no one has thought of him as likely to break down for many years yet. The past year has been one of great activity for Mr. Moody, and the heavy and continuous strain upon him, it appears, has overtaken even his remarkable powers of endurance. It is said that he has been compelled to cancel his engagements for meetings in London as well as in the United States. Many will hope and pray that rest may restore him and that the great evangelist may long be spared with strength to preach the gospel in which he so earnestly believes.

—ROBERT G. INGERSOLL still makes war upon Christianity and the churches. But spite of all the dialectic subtlety and burning eloquence of this silver-tongued orator, Christianity has not succumbed and the churches live and flourish. Mr. Ingersoll has of late been lecturing in Chicago upon his favorite theme, employing his well-worn arguments to prove the folly and futility of the Christian faith. The Chicago correspondent of the Congregationalist says that "the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, a secular paper, has been at pains to gather up the statistics as to the growth of the churches in several states while the great unbeliever has been leveling his shafts against them. The conventions this winter in Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Texas and Arkansas, only taking returns from comparatively a few counties aggregate 54,000, with over 49,000 actual additions to the churches. The editor pertinently remarks that in the presence of the facts Christianity exhibits few signs of dying out or of losing its hold upon the people."

—It is not considered polite, we suppose, to say much about one's personal apparel but the MESSENGER AND VISITOR hopes to be pardoned for calling attention to the fact that it appears in this issue in a new dress of type, which we hope our readers will pronounce both handsome and becoming. The MESSENGER AND VISITOR confesses that it enjoys getting into its new dress, partly because it likes to look well, and especially because the new type will enable its readers to read it with greater ease, and therefore to appreciate it the more highly. And it is certainly a very pleasant thing to be appreciated. It is of course a still better thing to receive appreciation, which the MESSENGER AND VISITOR at least always aims to do. To tell the truth, we have been just a little mortified of late about our dress. We were aware that it was beginning to look shabby, and though none of our readers have complained, we have felt that sometimes the print was not so legible as they could desire.

But now our enterprising printer, Mr. G. W. Day, having supplied himself with a completely new set of type, we have the satisfaction of knowing that our readers will not be under any necessity of endangering their eyesight in gathering the contents of our columns. And now if you enjoy your MESSENGER AND VISITOR, will you not encourage us by getting your neighbor who does not take the paper to become one of our subscribers?

—THE notice which appears in our obituary column of the death of Deacon William Thomas, of Canard, vividly recalls the scenes of other days and reminds us how time is flying. Often in our college days, with George, one of our best Acadia friends, we visited the hospitable Thomas farmhouse, nestling in a retired spot amid orchards and fertile fields—George, the eldest son and pride of the family, who became a minister of the gospel, a man of ability and promise, but in the midst of his early ministry, with many bright hopes unfulfilled, stricken down to die, a sad loss and bitter affliction to the family. Frequently in those old days, and sometimes since, we enjoyed the generous hospitality of that pleasant home. Those visits are recalled as grateful memories. And now the deacon who, when we knew him first, was full of the vigor of stalwart manhood, has accomplished his pilgrimage of four score years and has gone to his rest—gone to be with the son whom he loved so well and the Saviour whom he served. May the God of all grace and comfort sustain her who was for so many years the partner of his joys and sorrows and who now, lonely in widowhood, remains for a little yet on this side that river between which for the Christian—our life and light eternal.

—How a man can live the double life which some men seem to live, how a man can appear as a saint in his home and in the church and be a scoundrel in business or politics or other relations of his life, it is not easy for the ordinary mind to understand. And yet it is no more strange than true that some men, while steeped to the eyes in villainy, can appear so religious as quite to deceive others and in a measure, perhaps, to deceive themselves. McKane, "the Oar of Gravesend," of whose exploits and experiences some account is given in another paragraph seems to have been an example of this. In addition to his political villainies, it is said that he protected the race course and the prize ring, secured immunity for the saloons and helped to make Gravesend a resort of gamblers, prize-fighters and men of that character. Yet he seems to have thought there was nothing incongruous with all this in his being an active member of a church, using his money freely to promote its interests and superintending its Sunday-school. Of course it may be said that the man was a cool and calculating hypocrite, employing a religious profession as a cloak for his multimillioned iniquities. But from all that is said of the man and his history, it would rather appear that his was a case of a man living a double life, unconscious or wilfully blinded to the fact that his profession and his practice were in utter conflict with each other. What is perhaps a still more remarkable and melancholy thing is, that any Christian church could help such a man so to deceive himself by lending its endorsement to his life. But there is no reason to fear that that Methodist Episcopal church of Gravesend, of whose Sunday-school Boss McKane was superintendent, is by the only example of the kind? Is it not a fact that there are a great many churches, and some Baptist churches among them, in which men of evil life find endorsement for their iniquities, because of the wealth and worldly influence of which they are possessed?

—The Amer of Afghanistan is again thinking of paying a visit to England, and becoming an unwelcome guest of the queen. An effort will be made to induce his two sons, who are well educated lads, to take their father's place.

—The London Globe makes the unqualified statement that the government has become seriously divided on the question of the maintenance of the navy. Mr. Gladstone is said to be decidedly opposed to increased expenditures.

—Mr. Yates, in the London World, says that Mr. Gladstone may or may not resign office before the year is up; but it is certain that he will even more than heretofore absent himself from Parliament, as he is constantly showing the burdens of increasing years.

PASSING EVENTS

THE decision of the Supreme Court of the Dominion in the Manitoba Schools case has been announced. It is given in the form of answers to certain questions submitted to the court by the Dominion government, and covering all the points involved. The decision is to the effect that the government has no power to interfere in the matter on behalf of the Catholic minority in Manitoba and in answer to this appeal, to afford redress from injustice alleged to be suffered under the present Manitoba school law. This is not the unanimous judgment of the court, for the judges are divided in opinion, three to two. Chief Justice Strong with Judges Taché and Gwynne support this decision; while Judges Fournier and King take the opposite view and hold that the government possesses a constitutional right of interference. In order that our readers may be better understood the present situation in respect to this vexed question, we quote from the St. John Star a brief history of the matter which we believe states the case correctly:

The Manitoba school act was passed in 1890 with the strong opposition of the Roman Catholic population and of a considerable portion of the Anglican, including the Bishop of Rupert's Land. It was almost immediately put into operation. The minority appealed to Ottawa for disallowance and at the same time appealed to the courts against the measure. It was claimed that the act was invalid because it violated the terms of the Canadian constitution, which provides that while the Provincial legislatures have power to deal with education, they are forbidden to make laws "prejudicially affecting any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools which any class of persons have by law in the province at the union." The act constituting the province of Manitoba, which was passed some years later than the union act, repeats this prohibition, adding the words "or prejudice" to the words "by law." The courts were asked to declare that the Manitoba School act did affect these rights and privileges, and was, therefore, invalid. Judge Ritchie and Judge Strong, Patterson, the only French-Canadian in the court, but on the appeal to Ottawa this decision of the court was reversed and that of Judge Dubeau sustained. Chief Justice Ritchie and Judge Strong, Patterson, Fournier and Taché agreed in pronouncing the law *ultra vires* and consequently invalid. Then a new start was made. The first appeal had been taken by a Roman Catholic citizen. The second was made by a member of the Church of England, who moved the Manitoba court to quash another school by-law. The Manitoba judges on this hearing said that the case was the same as the previous one in which they had been overruled by the federal court. They now felt obliged to follow the decision of the higher bench and gave the order sought. Both cases, "the City of Winnipeg vs. Barrett" and "the City of Winnipeg vs. Logan," were now carried to the Privy Council, which reversed the decision given at Ottawa and confirmed the validity of the Manitoba school act.

The constitutionality of the Manitoba School Act of 1890 was thus beyond question established. But, admitting this, it was still held that, on the ground of certain clauses of the B. N. A. Act, by which the Dominion was constituted, and the Manitoba Act by which the province was constituted, the interference of the Dominion government might constitutionally be sought and exercised. These clauses provide for an appeal to the governor-general in council in cases in which the rights or privileges of a Roman Catholic minority are prejudicially affected by provincial legislation. On these grounds the appeal was made. The matter was submitted to the Supreme Court for a decision as to the powers of the government in the matter, and with the results which have been stated. It can scarcely be said, we suppose, that this decision has any binding effect upon the government or any other body. If, for other reasons, the government were strongly disposed to interfere by way of remedial legislation in the case, it is not probable that it would be deterred from doing so because three out of six of the judges had decided that it had no power to do so. (Judge Sedgwick, who, as deputy minister of justice, had been concerned in the preparation of the case, took no part in the decision.) The government is of course pleased to have an additional reason for declining to do what, no doubt, it still would have declined to do, had the decision of the Supreme Court Judges been the reverse of that which they have given, and if the questions should come before the

Imperial Privy Council and the opinions of Justices Fournier and King should be confirmed by the Supreme Court of Appeal, it is more than doubtful if the government would ask parliament to interfere, and there is probably still less reason to suppose that parliament, as at present constituted, would favorably consider such a request. The probability is not very strong, we judge, that the case will obtain the decision of the Privy Council, because, for one reason, it is doubtful if that body would consider it, since it is not regularly a case in law, and further because the Dominion government is probably well-contented to have the matter rest where it is.

THE commercial treaty between Germany and Russia, recently signed by the representatives of the two countries, has been much discussed and is considered a matter of very considerable significance in European affairs. This German-Russian commercial alliance may now be regarded as an accomplished fact, the German Bundestag, the supreme council of the nation, having approved it, and a majority for it in the Reichstag being practically assured. The treaty, it is believed, will confer important advantage on both countries. It will secure for Germany an improved market for her manufactures and cheaper bread-stuffs for her people, while corresponding benefits will be reaped by Russia. Naturally the agrarian or bread-producing interests in Germany are strongly opposed to the treaty, but the opposition from this source is not sufficiently powerful to prevent the treaty being carried into effect. This German-Russian alliance may seriously affect the rest of Europe as well as the two countries immediately concerned. It is certain that France is not elated at the spectacle of such an alliance between her direct enemy and the nation which she had fondly regarded as her dearest friend. It is more than suspected that the mood of the French people to-day toward Russia is quite in contrast with that rapturous joy with which, a few months ago, they received and feted the representatives of that country's naval powers. The treaty with Russia is ascribed largely to Emperor William. It is in accordance with the old Bismarckian policy, and not unlikely may have had something to do with the reconciliation between the Kaiser and the ex-chancellor. If the result of the commercial relations into which the two countries are entering prove mutually advantageous, it will of course tend to maintain friendly relations between them, and thereby strengthen the probabilities of continued peace in Europe. It is thought in some quarters that the commercial treaty may not unlikely lead to a political alliance between Russia and Germany, and to a triple alliance, including these two countries, with Austria.

THE conviction of John Y. McKane, "the Gravesend 'boss,'" and his sentence to six years in Sing-Sing, is a triumph of justice over the subtlety and villainy of the corrupt politician. The triumph is so rare and remarkable in New York or its vicinity that the news of it has been received with expressions of gratification by the better elements of the population all over the United States, and in Canada as well. The citizens of New York, and Brooklyn especially, have felt a profound interest in the trial, and the belief is confidently expressed that the result of it is a blow to bossism from which it will not be able to recover. By its wealth and the peculiar methods of the civic boss, of which he was a consummate master, McKane had succeeded in establishing for himself in the town of Gravesend, a suburb of Brooklyn, an autocracy, the absolute character of which the Oars of Russia might have envied. The course of action on the part of McKane which led to his prosecution and conviction consisted in the inflation last November, by unlawful means, of the Gravesend vote, which he almost completely controlled, and the prevention by fraud and force of any inspection of the lists, though the scrutineers were armed with an injunction from the Supreme Court of the state, inhibiting McKane and his men from interfering with them. Believing himself omnipotent in Gravesend, the audacious McKane defied the Supreme Court and had the scrutineers thrown into prison. The charge on which he was tried and convicted was that of procuring, aiding and abetting certain inspectors of Gravesend to refuse to obey the law requiring the lists of registered voters to be kept accessible to the public for examination or for

copying. If the forces represented in the prosecution in this case shall succeed in convincing the boss of Gravesend and others of his kind that bossism is not omnipotent in New York and cannot always defy justice and law, those who desire the well-being of society will have much reason to rejoice. But McKane has wealth. It is not easy to send a man to prison who can offer bail to the amount of millions. A judge of the Supreme Court has ordered a stay in the execution of the sentence and the case is to be argued before him. It is quite possible after all that the boss of Gravesend will not go to Sing-Sing.

THE Anarchists continue active in Europe, and Paris, since the execution of Vaillant, has been more or less in a state of terror. Bombs have been set in different hotels. In one case an explosion occurred, seriously injuring three persons, one of whom has since died. In another the bomb was discovered and an explosion prevented. In these cases the plots of the Anarchists have been directed against the lives of certain Commissioners of Police. Their scheme was to set a bomb in a room of an hotel and then send a message to the commissary which would cause him to visit the room, when, on his entrance, it was supposed the bomb would explode with fatal effect. In neither case, however, was the plot successful. The police have made a number of arrests, but it does not appear that anything very definite has been ascertained in regard to the perpetrators of the outrages. Sham bombs have been found by the police in certain quarters, whether placed by anarchists or by practical jokers does not appear. Paris is said to be panic-stricken. Everybody carrying a parcel is suspected, and watched by the police. If anyone is seen carrying a metal box he is presumed to be an anarchist armed with an infernal machine. A man, carrying a tin box under his arm and declining to open it at the command of a policeman, was arrested. The box was opened and found to contain paints. London, too, has had a mild excitement over the explosion of a bomb. This, however, seems to be a case of an anarchist being "hoi-t with his own petard." A man named Bourdin was found by the police in Greenwich Park terribly mangled by the explosion of a bomb which he had been carrying. He lived but a short time after being removed to a hospital. The man is known to have been an anarchist. Just what he intended to do with the infernal machine which caused his death, is not certain. It is supposed that he had designs upon the Observatory. The government and the London police continue to pursue the policy of taking little notice of the demonstrations of the anarchists, so long as they do not proceed to actual violence, believing that harsh measures would but win for them notoriety and sympathy. But the police keep a vigilant watch on all their movements.

IN connection with British politics there have been no very startling developments reported during the past week. There appears to be no prospect that the breach between the government and the house of lords will become less formidable. On the other hand there is evidently a firm determination on the part of the Liberals to join issue with the Lords on the questions now before parliament, unless they shall recede from the positions taken. On Tuesday of last week the House of Commons, on motion of Mr. Gladstone, voted to reject the Lord's amendment to the Employers' Liability Bill. In making this motion Mr. Gladstone delivered a fifteen-minute speech, which, while too moderate in tone to please the Radicals, appears to be regarded as a gauge of battle thrown to the hereditary chamber and a challenge to the Lords submit to the people of Great Britain the question whether the hereditary branch of parliament shall continue to antagonize and defeat the will of the people, expressed through their own representatives. Mr. Gladstone contended, in reference to the measure before the House, that the amendments of the Lords had practically robbed it of any value as a popular measure. The Government, he said, must confront the facts before them, acting in conformity with what they believed to be the best interests of the people and the dignity of the position of the House of Commons. The Daily News, commenting on the Premier's speech, says: Mr. Gladstone was studiously moderate, nevertheless, the meaning of his words is unmistakable, and will be appreciated by the country. They assert the sovereignty of the people and deny the right of hereditary legislators to answer for anybody except themselves.

W. B. M. U.

MOTTO FOR THE YEAR:

"Lord what wilt Thou have me to do."

Contributors to this column will please address Mrs. Baker, 311 Princess Street, St. John, N. B.

PRAYER TOPIC FOR FEBRUARY.

Thanksgiving for the good news from Calcutta and Keim-de; prayer for a steady increase of the blessing, and that we at home may be ready to receive it.

Mr. Kelly in Burma.

A former pastor of Leinster St., St. John, Rev. E. W. Kelly, is again settled at his loved work in Burma. Mr. and Mrs. Kelly arrived at Rangoon, Oct. 3, after a passage from Chicago of only 45 days, although the journey was made via China and Japan. Mr. Kelly has charge of the Burman Mission in Rangoon and the surrounding country. Rangoon is the principal port in Burma, and has a population of 181,200. There is, in the city, a flourishing Baptist college, which is soon to become affiliated to the University of Calcutta.

The Blind in Madras.

There are in Madras presidency 38,733 people whose eyes are closed to the light of day. God has put into the hearts of His people the determination to give to them the news of the Sun of Righteousness. Steps are being taken to translate portions of the Word of God into their language by means of a raised alphabet, that they who are now in darkness may see the Great Light. This movement will call forth gratitude from the hearts of all Christians.

"Gentiles shall come to Thy light, and kings to the brightness of Thy rise."

Notice.

How familiar the word sounds! Memory takes us back to the time when we first heard it. Back to the first dawn of recollection. Back ere we left the nursery; days when we knew of only three places outside of home—Heaven, England and India. We loved Heaven because our Saviour was there; we revered England because our Queen was there, and we pitied India because idolatry was there.

There is no deeper passion in the heart of a little child than pity. How our hearts did ache for those innocent babes whose mothers threw them into the river Ganges, where they were eaten by frightful alligators. And yet more agonizing the thought the cremating of their living widows. "From Greenland's icy mountains, from India's coral strand," was one of the first hymns we learned, and young as we were we emphasized the words, "Waft, waft ye winds His story." How eagerly in our youthful days we dropped our coppers into the missionary box, for our infantile pity had not abated, and zeal had increased with our years. We must help send the Word of Life and Light to those far-off benighted ones. Again, in after years, when the gospel was precious to our own soul, we prayed that India might know of its precious truths, and the dumb idols of her land be destroyed and the living and true God alone worshipped. And now, in these later years, as we compare the past condition of India with the present, what a change? Truly we can say, "What hath God wrought?" The morning light is breaking, the darkness disappears. No longer do crocodiles feast on human food or the fire consume the living victim. England's laws have made those cruel deeds things of the past. With joy we think of our own land uniting with England and other countries in not only alleviating India's sufferings but pointing her to the better way that leads to peace and happiness in this life, and to everlasting bliss in the world to come.

Another thought comes to us—quite a goodly number of our own missionaries are in India sowing the good seed, while we, with them, are watching and waiting for it to spring up and fill the whole land with its blessed fruit. Oh India, as the years roll on, thou art becoming dearer and nearer to us! No longer do we say that "far off heathen land." So many things tend to bring her nigh. By the aid of modern inventions she seems geographically nearer. Scarcely has the shrill whistle of the steamboat rolled from our shore when it is heard on Hindoo's shore, and making us more anxious to clasp the hands of our dusky sisters; also giving us greater faith that we shall clasp the hands of many of them in that land where darkness and superstition are not known, for the Lamb is the light thereof.

LOUISA BROWN.