Messenger and Visitor.

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Messenger and Visitor.

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 13th, 1895.

BRITAIN AND ASHANTEE.

It appears that Great Britain has determined to extend her rule over the African kingdom of Ashantee. This country lies on the west coast of the continent embracing the region between the fifth and tenth degrees of North latitude. It is rich in agricultural and mining resources and has a population of some millions, who are said to possess considerable skill in manufacture and the arts. More than twenty years ago General Wolsley—now Viscount Wolsley—who has just been made Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's forces, won distinction in a successful war against Ashantee, and the King came under treaty obligations to the British Government, one of the conditions being that human sacrifices in Ashantee should be abolished. The King, it appears, had failed to carry out his engagements in this particular. By his consent or without it, human sacrifices were still being offered and a demand was accordingly made that to insure their abolition the King should receive a permanent British Agent at Coomassie, his capital, and consider himself under a British Protectorate. To this demand the King of Ashantee quite emphatically declined to accede. And now the British Government will send a military expedition against Ashantee to enforce its demands. No doubt the conquest of the country will involve some fighting, for the King is said to have some 300,000 fighting men at his command, and some of them are armed with modern rifles. But it is not likely that the savage monarch will be able to offer any effective opposition to the British forces with their superior arms and discipline. A few Gatling or Maxim guns well-handled make short work of the resistance of a horde of half-armed and undisciplined savages. Whether or not this treatment of the King of Ashantee is wholly justifiable is a question which we have not sufficient acquaintance with all the circumstances of the case to answer. It would appear, however, that the country will be an important acquisition and that the establishment of a British protectorate in Ashantee will be greatly in the best interests of its people. It is not to be supposed their feelings of patriotism will be deeply outraged by the overthrow of the present government or that, having had experience of the rights and liberties which the change will secure to them, they will be desirous of restoring the tyrannous and savage rule of the monarch who now reigns at Coomassie.

THE USELESSNESS OF UNCIRCUMCISION.

That circumcision is useless we have long ago learned. We admit that salvation is not by deeds of the law. We constantly preach that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. The powerlessness of obedience to the ceremonies of law, whether they be ritual observances, stateliness of worship, penance, or circumcision itself, we have been taught from our youth. And the teaching is sound and necessary. We have no desire to go back to a yoke of bondage when we have the freedom of sons.

But we need to teach also that there is no use in *Uncircumcision*. If the Jew gets nothing from the boast that he has been circumcised, neither does the Gentile obtain salvation by the claim that he has not been circumcised. Let not the Jew despise the Gentile; but let not the Gentile despise the Jew. We are, perhaps, now in as much danger of the latter as of the former.

The evangelical christian, as he is called, may be so opposed to ritual in worship that he counts somewhat on the absence of ritual. When he reaches that stage he is in the same condemnation as the believer in ritual. Uncircumcision is as useless as circumcision. It is not enough to abhor rites and ceremonies; we must worship the Lord in spirit and in truth. The positive side must be brought into prominence.

There are some men who boast that they have never made a profession of religion; *they* are not hypocrites they say. Well no one defends hypocrites. Their profession will not save them. But neither will the omission to make a profession give one a title to heaven. The critic of the hypocrite is as truly condemned by Paul as is the man who thinks to make an outward obedience to a rite do the work that nothing but regeneration and faith can effect.

THE CASKET AND CHURCH LOTTERIES.

The vigor with which the *Casket* returns to the attack, after our remarks on "Church Lotteries" in our issue of Oct. 16, and the bravery with which its dialectical weapons are brandished would seem to argue some consciousness of weakness in the ecclesiastical defences at that point. Our esteemed contemporary is still anxious to discuss the theoretical question of the intrinsic moral character of the lottery. This is a question introduced into the discussion by the *Casket* itself, and though we have no objection in the world to considering it, we do not propose just now to indulge the *Casket* in its desire to lead us into the mazes of such a discussion and thus lose sight of the main point at issue. We hold that in the practice of gambling there is an immoral principle involved just as there is a similar principle involved in theft and falsehood. If it can be shown that the taking of what belongs to another without his consent is not always and necessarily immoral, or that to deceive another may, under certain circumstances, be justifiable, that does not overthrow the general principle in regard to theft and lying, that they are immoral. The same is true of gambling. If the editor of the *Casket* should wish to wager the proverbial "big red apple" on the issue of some uncertain event, perhaps none of "the Parisees" even would wish to call him to account on the score of immorality, but this again would not invalidate the general principle that gambling is immoral.

Our legislators have done well, as we believe, to make gambling under the laws of Canada a criminal offence as being corrupting to the public morals and opposed to the material interests of the people. But it strikes us as a most astonishing thing that a religious body claiming, as its *raison d'etre*, to promote the glory of God and the highest well-being of mankind, should seek to be excepted from the application of a criminal statute and to use that exception for the promotion of its own pecuniary advantage. We must still hold that a transaction which is admittedly evil and morally corrupting when it takes place under secular auspices, does not become right and wholesome when it is taken under ecclesiastical protection. The sanction of the church cannot sanctify the lottery.

In its apology for church lotteries the *Casket* has said some things which are true and many things which are more or less plausible, but, if we may be permitted an opinion in the matter, it has failed to present any satisfactory defence of that cherished institution of its church. "In vain shall you search the Scriptures for a divine prohibition against the holding of lotteries," says our contemporary. Such an appeal to Scripture is open to every keeper of a gambling hell or a liquor saloon as well as to the Roman Catholic priest who organises a lottery to draw money from the people. It may be replied that the Scriptures may be searched in vain also for any explicit prohibition of slavery. But is it possible for enlightened Christians in this age not to believe that both slavery and gambling are in practice immoral and that in principle they are condemned by the whole tenor of the Word of God? It is a very slight defence of the church lottery to show that it is not explicitly condemned by the Scriptures. The *Casket* writer desires to make a distinction between what is legitimate and what is praiseworthy. The church lottery he declares to be a legitimate method of raising money for the purpose of religion or charity." He declines, however, to say that it is praiseworthy. But is it not a remarkable thing that it should be necessary to make such a distinction in regard to a method of raising money so extensively used by the Roman Catholic church and is not such a distinction a virtual confession that the morality of the church lottery is not above suspicion? Again we are told that "between the transactions of life or fire insurance and of the lottery there is "no essential difference," "the principle is the same in both." This is so far from true that it is entirely absurd. All legitimate insurance is virtually an agreement among a number of persons, larger or smaller, to come to the assistance of each other or their families in the event of being overtaken by misfortune or death. If the misfortune comes to any one included in the compact, he or his family receives help from the others, if he escapes the dreaded misfortune he does not receive help but has had the satisfaction of feeling secure and knowing that he has helped others in a time of need. Such a transaction is of the character of honorable and prudent business and is so obviously different from those of the lottery that the matter requires no further consideration.

Coming to the comparison of the lottery and the saloon the *Casket* contends that the church may lawfully employ either as a method of raising funds but holds that it is inexpedient so to employ the latter, because "liquor selling is a traffic requiring daily and hourly attention and it is not expedient for the church to engage in worldly traffic," and, as a stronger reason, that the saloon cannot be lifted out of the surroundings and conditions that invest it with so malignant a character, and the saloon would not be less and might be more harmful in its effects "if run in the interests of a religious body." These are good reasons certainly why the church should not employ the saloon as an adjunct in its work, but we have to differ with the *Casket* when it contends that these objections do not in any way apply to the lottery. For if it be granted that the object for which money is raised by the church lottery is, or is believed to be, a good one and that the conditions under which it is operated are as good as the character of such an institution will admit, the church lottery to our mind is still far enough from being a minister of virtue. We are told that "the man who invests money in a church lottery must be led to do so by some higher motive than cupidity and the interest which attaches to a game of chance." No doubt in many cases there is also the desire to help on the object which the church has in view. But if this were the general and ruling motive why employ the lottery? Is it not entirely plain that the church lottery owes its existence and perpetuation to the fact that it affords the means of an appeal, in the interest of the church's treasury, to cupidity and that passion for gambling which is one of the strongest and most demoralising to which humanity is subject? It is absurd to argue that ecclesiastical sanction and surroundings can redeem the lottery from all evil influences. Can a church which employs the lottery for its own supposed advantage offer any strong and really effective protest against gambling in general, and can young people who have been encouraged and urged by their spiritual advisors to invest their money in church lotteries be supposed to have any conscientious scruples against investing money in lotteries which "the church" has not essayed "to lift out of the surroundings and conditions which invest them with so malignant a character"? Despite the opinions and arguments of their able apologist, there seems to us good reason to believe that church lotteries, so far as their influence extends, are corruptors of the public morals. In a previous article we intimated that the skillful dialectician of the *Casket* would have need to employ all his ability if he was to succeed in convincing Christian people who do any thinking on their own account of the justice of his contention. We regret that the said able dialectician feels it necessary to interpret this as an insinuation that Roman Catholics do not think for themselves. We said nothing of the kind, but if the *Casket* thinks the cap better fits the average Roman Catholic head than any other, we will not quarrel about the application. At the same time, until shown the contrary, we shall wish to believe, as we remarked at the close of our previous article, that in the religious body which the *Casket* represents, there is a growing sentiment against such a method of raising money, that a great many Roman Catholics believe that the church lottery is not to be defended on ethical grounds but that in practice it is opposed to the real interests of religion.

Literary Notice.

God's Eternal Purpose. By Rev. W. McGregor, Barton, N. S. Digby; Courier Office.

The substance of this pamphlet of 119 pages was, as we gather from the preface, first presented in the form of sermons. It may be characterized as a brief system of theology and represents the author's endeavor "to take a comprehensive view of God's works of creation and redemption, together with His superintending Providence in bringing about His eternal purpose." After an introduction on the Divine Purpose and Performance, fourteen chapters are devoted to the discussion of the following subjects: The Creation of Angels; The Creation of Heaven and Earth; The Creation of Man; The Salvation of Abel; The Translation of Enoch; The Preservation of Noah; The Establishment of the Worship of God; The Incarnation of God, Dwelling in man and with man in the person of Christ; The Coming of the Holy Spirit; The Composition and Preservation of the Inspired Writings; The Purse; Institution of the Sabbath, Organisation of the Church, Revivals; The Lord's Second Coming, Raising the Dead, Changing the Living and Judging the World; The Creation of the New Heavens and Earth, Predestination; The Eternal Result; Appendix. The prices of the book is 40 cents per single copy, by the dozen 35 cents each, by the hundred 30 cents each.

The Master of Deeplawn. By Mrs. Hattie E. Coulter. Philadelphia; American Baptist Publication Society.

This volume of some 350 pages is evidently written with a good purpose and can scarcely fail to exert a wholesome influence upon the young people who may read it. The reader is introduced to Alan Rivers, the hero of the book, as a boy of fourteen years, an American boy, whose parents have both died, leaving him in affluent surroundings and heir to a large amount of property. The youth is remarkably—we might say impossibly—good, with none of the weaknesses or follies that pertain to ordinary humanity. He is strong, studious, wise, brave and high souled, born to leadership and withal full of sympathy for those whose condition in life is in outward fortune the reverse of his own. Over against this shining example is set that of an older brother, who, with equal advantages, has made shipwreck of all and has gone to end his miserable career in an insane asylum. The Master of Deeplawn goes to college, and, while taking a leading position as a student, becomes interested in the people, and especially the boys, of the slums of the city. With a purpose to benefit a number of these waifs, he, with other students whom he easily persuades to accompany him, takes them on a summer expedition to the wilds of Newfoundland. A love of nature is thus begotten in the boys which makes them long for country life and leads to their being transplanted—and the families of some of them—to the neighborhood of Deeplawn, where, with better opportunities and the inspiration of their benefactor they enter upon a new life. With his growing interest in those who have need of social and spiritual redemption comes to Alan Rivers the conviction that he is called to be a minister of Christ, and his course at Brown being completed, he goes to England and to Oxford, there further to prepare himself for his work. There his active interest in the welfare of the people of the slums is continued. Through a college friend he comes to know a family of rank whose tastes and purposes are congenial to his own. The heart and hand of a daughter of the house are won and together they prepare to give their lives to the service of humanity. Such are the salient points of the story, which, despite some faults of style, is told in an interesting manner. The evident purpose of the book to teach that to devote talent and wealth in God's name to the help of those who are in greatest need is infinitely nobler than to use them for more selfish ends, is in the highest degree commendable and its influence cannot but be for good.

Temperance.

The 48th annual session of the Grand Division of Nova Scotia closed at Halifax, at 4 p. m. Friday, 1st inst. Eight hours last session shows the deep interest in this "Banner Grand Division" of the world, with 16,000 members, senior and junior. The presence of F. M. Bradley, P. M. W. P., Mr. Roberts, P. M. W. P., and Charles Everett, P. M. W. P., of St. John, and their inspiring addresses, added much interest to the occasion. The 5,000 added to the Division during the year, with a net gain of over 1,200, shows the good work being done in our Province. The religious element pervading our order is commending itself more and more to our people. The writer regrets that so few of our Baptist ministers find the time to help on this good work, whilst the Methodist and Presbyterians are taking hold manfully. Surely intemperance is clogging the religious wheels enough, especially among the young men and boys of our people, to induce our ministers to lend a helping hand in such an order as the Sons and their Band of Hope work! One speaker at Grand Division suggested that an appeal for funds be made to parents and others interested, and that a general superintendent or agent of young people's temperance work, man or woman, be employed for the special purpose of organizing Bands of Hope all over the land. This would be one of the surest ways to secure future voters for prohibition candidates, local and Dominion, as well as municipal.

Fraternally, W. J. G.

P. S.—Sir Leonard Tilley, P. M. W. P., planned to be present, but was prevented by official duties. G.

Convention Fund for 1896.

The lack of a general system of subscriptions and monthly or quarterly collections of the same, is one chief cause why, in my judgment, no money is raised for Convention Fund.

Suggestion—Let each church not already in line at once appoint a committee of brothers and sisters from the most active and liberal—such committee to collect on each member and also members of the congregation favorable—secure an annual subscription payable monthly or quarterly, from date of "Convention year."

Surely each church member can and will pay something. Let this work be faithfully attended to in all our churches and our Boards will no longer complain of want of funds. The North Baptist church is pursuing this course and as a result, I believe at least four hundred dollars will be realized the ensuing year for "Convention Scheme." W. J. G.

Halifax, Nov. 5.

At the eleventh annual Convention of the Nova Scotia Sunday School Association held at Windsor, 18-20th inst., all the large evangelical denominations were well represented, and the meetings were most enthusiastic and successful. The full reports of the Executive Committee and the Field Secretary were very gratifying, and it was decided to press forward the work with renewed energy. To this end some very generous individual contributions were pledged and representatives from the various counties guaranteed the balance of the funds required. The presence of Mr. Reynolds, the representative of the International S. S. Convention, and Mrs. W. F. Crafts, the well known primary class worker, added much to the interest and profit of the convention. The good people of Windsor vied with each other in the tendering of hospitalities and attended all the meetings in large numbers. The outlook for the new year is very promising. The newly elected executive is already at work. Its first regular meeting has been called for the 7th inst., at Truro, when the work of the next three months will be mapped out, and a public meeting will be held in the interest of advanced S. S. work.

Minard's Liniment—Once tried always used.

Here Year Book Considerations.

The report on the state of the denomination calls attention to three very important matters which merit special solicitude, viz.: the possibility of improving our methods of obtaining and collecting statistics, the ordination of candidates to the ministry and the best disposal of time and talents at our associations

1. As regards the first point a resolution was passed urgently requesting district organizations to do their best to secure correct statistics for associations, and a committee was appointed to report at next convention on the whole subject. Our statistics will be of the very greatest value if they are reliable and cover the case of each church. The state of the denomination and the state of religion in each church will be pretty accurately told by full and correct statistics. An examination of the year books for a number of years past will, I am confident, show an improvement in reporting statistics, but there is yet room. The committee will do good service if they report a better plan than that now employed. In the meantime let us make the best out of present methods.

2. Another subject of still greater moment is that of ordination to the gospel ministry, and a large and excellent committee was named to report thereon. See p. 18. This matter engaged the attention of the convention in 1877, when a report was submitted on licensure and ordination by the late Dr. Cramp. In 1881 also the subject was pressed to the front and a very full and elaborate deliverance was rendered by Revs. Dr. Armstrong, Dr. Sawyer and Dr. Bill. It is still a live subject and always will be. As to the general principles which should govern, there probably is not much difference of opinion. What we seem to need is some practical method of securing the best possible choice of councillors for each occasion, so that the action of our ordaining council shall at once be a safeguard against unwise admission and a reliable credential when ordination is advised. A report of a committee of the Southern Association of New York published in the *Examiner*, Oct. 17th, proposes the formation of a body very similar to our district committees to be named however a "Permanent Council" to be composed of every pastor and one delegate from each church in the association. To this body it is proposed to submit all matters usually referred to special councils, such as the advisability of ordaining candidates, the organisation and location of churches, and other matters usually given to a council. Its deliverances are to be "merely advisory, not legislative; moral not judicial." It is contended that in such plan there is nothing that interferes with the self government of the local church. If the committee of our convention can propose a plan that will not trench on the freedom of each church and yet will secure the widest obtainable council and counsel in each case they will do an eminent service.

3. Our associations, what are they for and how can we make the most of them? Shall they be continued or discontinued or how otherwise? Three of them go begging this year for an invitation for places in which to hold their next meetings. Is that accidental or does it mean that the churches are tired of associations or think they have outlived their usefulness? For my own part I do not see how we can afford to give up these annual meetings, but it is certain that unless they are better attended and more systematically and vigorously conducted, our people will tire of them. So far as human plans go, the success of an association will depend very largely upon the committee of arrangements. There must be much preparation if the best results are to be secured. At present it frequently happens that there has been a total lack of preparation. An evening is given to education, another to missions and another to temperance and so on, and speakers are picked up at the moment as chance may enable. There are so many vital subjects affecting the welfare of the churches demanding repeated consideration that a committee of arrangements can have little difficulty if they take up their work in good time in arranging for the discussion of live and throbbing topics. This very matter of ordination; why should not each association take it up next summer and give the convention committee the opinions of the churches met in their associational capacity. Then there is the other subject above referred to, how shall we best obtain reliable and full statistics? Then there is the ever pressing and present theme the unrest among our pastors, the instability of the pastorate. What is the cause, and is there any and what cure, and is any cure desirable, is the fault, if there be any, that of the flock or the shepherd. It would not be amiss to consider again what constitutes a call to the ministry. Then there is the pressing question how best to develop and ensure greater benevolence towards our denominational enterprises. Also the matter of pastor's salaries, how can they be worked up to a respectable standard. Then there is the important matter of church trusteeship. What should be the functions of trustees, simply to hold and pass title or to take the management of the church property. Is church incorporation desirable or necessary and if so is the general act for incorporation, passed some years since, equal to the occasion or is it only a delusion and a snare? Which is better, free seats or the hiring and sale of pews? Can a convenient form of deed for church property be framed to meet the case of all our churches? What is the state of religion in the several churches of the association? A whole day given to church self examination would likely be very profitable. Let the churches examine their own lives and see why they are not making greater progress. Then there is the preparation of histories of churches. For a number of years past the N. S. Central has secured the preparation and reading and publication of the histories of two of its oldest churches. This is most valuable work. Other associations would do well to imitate. In short there are so many live topics that press for discussion that it only requires timely preparation on the part of the proper committee to secure and ensure with the presence of the Holy Spirit a season of the greatest interest and profit and Divine blessing. Let us renew our old time interest in the associations. B. H. Eaton.

Minister's Annuity Fund.

In this annual appeal to the churches, the Board of the Minister's Annuity Fund regrets to state, that, on account of the failure of so many churches to respond to last year's appeal, the Board was unable to appropriate the full amounts to the annuitants, provided by the constitution. Only 43 of the 400 churches in the Convention responded to the appeal. These gave $284.75. If all the churches had given, and given in proportion to the 43, the amount would have been about $2,500. More than enough, small as it is, to pay all the annuitants their full dues.

For the last of the year the funds permitted the Board to appropriate only a third of the maximum amount. Instead of $75 to each minister, he got only $25, and $12.50 to each widow instead of $37.50.

This caused bitter disappointment and not a little hardship. The annuitants had always got their full allowance and had reckoned on its continuance. It is for the churches to say whether they shall be subjected to the same bitter disappointment in the coming year!

Pastors of large and well-to do churches, what do you say? Will you remain content to receive your salaries, and raise money for all the benevolent schemes of the denomination, except a small amount to secure the necessaries of life to your brethren who, because of old age or sickness, have been obliged to give up work and salary too? Every church whether rich or poor can be induced by its pastor to take a collection for the needy ministers, widows and children. The Board appeals to every pastor, every deacon, every church member, every benevolent person in our churches and congregations to come to the rescue. Let not the disappointment of last year fall upon the annuitants this year. As a denomination we failed to fulfil our obligations to the disabled ministers, widows and fatherless little ones.

The Board most earnestly entreats every church to at least, take a collection for this object. The 43 churches who kindly contributed last year, are not poorer, but richer for their gifts. Thanking them for what they have done, they are urgently requested to repeat their benevolences of last year for the current year.

A number of benevolent brethren and sisters have contributed in the past, and it is fondly hoped that many will follow their example.

Especially let the 350 churches which gave nothing last year, take a good collection this year.

The last Sunday in November is named by the Board as the day for the collection.

Send all contributions to the Sec. Treasurer, Halifax, N. S.

On behalf of the Board.

E. M. Saunders,
Sec. Treas.

Just before mailing the circular from the Board of Minister's Annuity Fund for publication in the Messenger and Visitor, I received $40 from Mrs. Mary J. Shipley, of River Hebert, for this object. The circular speaks for itself. We feel assured that many hearts will be touched and that the donations will at once begin to come in. We are prepared for them. They will be promptly acknowledged. The start is a good one. Many no doubt will follow the example of Mrs. Shipley. We do not expect large sums from all. Please give what you can cheerfully. The Lord loves the cheerful giver. All that is given beyond what is necessary to pay the fixed amounts to the annuitants, will be put at interest. E. M. S.

Owing to the county election that is to take place on the 19th we are compelled to alter the time for the Ministerial Conference. The Annapolis Co. Ministerial Conference will be held on the 19th and 20th of this month. Our new church edifice will be dedicated on Wednesday morning. Tuesday evening and Wednesday afternoon and evening will be devoted to the regular conference work. J. Wann.