

## Messenger and Visitor

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—When the Lord has been so good to a church as to provide it with a fairly good and faithful minister, it had better not be in any hurry to "send him in his resignation." There are not a large number of perfect ministers, and if one of this very small class should be sent to some churches, it is more than doubtful if they would recognize him as such. It may be found much easier to dismiss a faithful minister than to get another man as good to fill his place.

—The United States Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions has been able to close its year without debt. The contributions from the churches have been better by upwards of \$30,000 than they were the preceding year, and those from miscellaneous sources—largely individual in their character—show an increase of \$50,000. The legacy account is about the same as in the preceding year. But the total receipts for the year fall below those of 1897-8 by some \$27,000, and in order to avoid debt the Board has been obliged to curtail its expenditure, with the result that the work of the mission suffers considerably.

—As will be seen by reference to our News from the Churches, one of our ministers, who finds himself in a position to consider a call to a new field of labor, declares his preference for a country field where there is plenty of work and a small salary. These conditions should not be hard to meet, and we are not sure but that such a field offers as much, both for happiness and for usefulness, as a city church with its one pulpit and much larger salary. We may be permitted to mention that the brother alluded to above has the reputation of being a preacher of superior ability.

—Attention is called to the programme of the closing exercises at Acadia, June 4-7, which will be found on our ninth page. The College and its associated schools have enjoyed a prosperous year, and it may be expected that the interest attaching to the anniversary exercises will not fall behind those of previous years. There can scarcely be anything more delightful than a visit to Wolfville the first week in June, and especially if the trip be made through the Annapolis Valley, beautiful with bloom and verdure and redolent of apple blossoms.

—There is a branch of the Acadia Alumni Society in St. John, of which Rev. J. A. Gordon is President and Rev. Mockett C. Higgins, Secretary-Treasurer. Mr. Higgins is prepared to receive and transmit any subscriptions to the Alumni Professorship Fund or annual dues to the Society. Any person whose name is approved may become a member of the Alumni Society on the payment of a fee of one dollar annually. We hope that an earnest effort will be made to bring the aims and work of the Society more prominently before the Baptist public of St. John and the Province generally, and that many of our people may avail themselves of the privilege thus offered of coming more closely in touch with our educational work, and thus be led to feel a stronger interest in its advancement.

—Both the Home and the Foreign Mission Boards of our Baptist brethren in Ontario and Quebec report small deficits for the financial year just closed—the former \$800 and the latter \$1,400. The Baptist says, however, that these deficits added to those of last year amount to too large a sum, and intimates that if the giving of all had been according to the prosperity enjoyed, the balance would have been upon the other side of the account. We shall be glad if our Maritime Boards are able to present as favorable statements when the time comes

as have the Boards of the Upper Provinces, but probably there is just as little necessity here as there that there should be any deficit at all. Let each church set honestly about the work of gathering funds, and each individual member contribute according to the prosperity which Providence has bestowed, and we guarantee that the balance will be upon the right side of the account.

—The denomination known as The Disciples of Christ, and sometimes called the Christian Church has recently held at St. Louis its first National Congress for the United States. The Congress was purely deliberative in character, the object being the discussion of subjects which cannot well be considered at the ordinary gatherings of the body. Among the questions discussed at St. Louis were:—The Value of a Theology; The Value of Literature in the Training of Religious Teachers; Church Organization, and The Enrichment of Public Worship. The denomination has made very rapid growth, especially in the Central and South-Western States, in recent years. It is thought that the National Congress will probably become an established institution among the Disciples.

—Mr. Justin McCarthy, the well-known English writer and Parliamentarian, has, for some time past, been suffering with a malady of the eyes, which has at last, Mr. McCarthy says, pronounced itself to be cataract. He is under the care of one of the most skillful of living oculists, and has undergone a preliminary and successful operation for the removal of the trouble. The many thousands of readers who have enjoyed Mr. McCarthy's graceful style and his valuable contributions to the world's literature will be glad to learn that the prospect is that, after a final operation which will be performed in the course of a few weeks, his sight will probably be stronger than it has been for many years, and he will be able to go on reading and writing with a freedom and ease which he has not known for a long time.

—Recent despatches from Bombay represent that the plague which has caused so terrible ravages in that city is now happily on the decline. Along in the latter part of March, people were dying in Bombay at the rate of 350 daily, and 250 of these deaths were from the plague. Owing to the continued hot weather, before which it is said the disease generally retreats, the daily death rate had fallen by the first of May to a little less than 200 daily, of which 100 probably were due to the plague. Since the beginning of the outbreak it is estimated that in the presidency of Bombay, outside the city of Bombay, there have been 134,000 deaths from that cause, and the plague mortality in the whole of India is officially estimated to be not less than a quarter of a million. As to the value of inoculation in the disease, there appear to be different opinions. Statistics are given to show that in some instances the use of the Haffkine fluid has been attended with very favorable results, but the Bengal and Bombay Governments, while apparently not preventing inoculation, have not, it is said, given it any encouragement.

—The men and women who are laboring as teachers in the Seminaries established in the Southern States for the education and elevation of the negroes have much opportunity for the exercise of a meek and quiet Christian spirit. At the best of times they are subject to social ostracism because of their association with the negroes whom they seek to help, and at times when the race hatred is strongly moved, the teachers have to share in some degree in the intensified feeling against the negroes. A lady who has been engaged for some years in a Seminary for the education of negro girls in Georgia, writes to a friend in this city: "It is decidedly hot here just now in more ways than one, for white teachers in colored schools. The president of Gammon Theological Seminary was threatened by the mob element that burned the negro recently, and for some time his house had to be guarded by a hundred soldiers. A teacher from one of the schools had a rock thrown at him in the street the other day. We women folk keep as close within our own grounds as possible, and 'make our prayer unto our God, and set a watch day and night.' Tobiah the Ammonite may scowl and curse all he likes, we are doing a great work and therefore cannot come down for his threats."

—The conduct of Peter at the time of the arrest and trial of his Master has done much service as a text and an illustration for homilies and exhortations in reference to the sins of fickleness, unfaithfulness, cowardice, falsehood and profanity. And it must be confessed that Peter's conduct was by no means exemplary. His repeated denials of his Lord are without defence or palliation. And yet very likely Peter did quite as well as most of us who have sometimes severely criticised his conduct would have done under the circumstances in which Peter was placed, and with such light as he had. Peter gave proof of his courage in the garden and showed that he was ready to play a soldier's part in the defence of his Master. Peter has often been held up to reproach because, on the way to the palace of the Chief Priest, he followed his Lord not closely but afar off. But under the circumstances it required a brave and loving heart to follow at all. Other disciples forsook their Master and fled. If we feel inclined to speak reproachfully of Peter, because he did not keep close to his Lord, it may be well to ask ourselves whether we, under similar circumstances, would not have been more likely to be found among those disciples who were not brave enough to follow at all. It was a sad thing that Peter should deny his Lord. No one felt that more keenly than did Peter, and perhaps it will be becoming in us who are accustomed to take to our heels at the approach of danger not to boast ourselves over Peter because his faith and his courage failed him under circumstances in which we were never brave enough to be found. It is easy to sing "We'll go with him all the way," but really to go with him all the way is a very serious business.

—The Protestant Episcopal church has been described by Dr. Edward Abbott as "the roomiest church in America." However true this may be, it does not appear that the church's door is wide enough to afford a comfortable entrance to its communion to Dr. Charles A. Briggs. Bishop Potter of New York, it appears, is quite willing to ordain Professor Briggs, and it was arranged that the ordination should take place before Dr. Briggs' departure on the 18th inst. for England, where he will devote the summer to his forth-coming Hebrew Lexicon. But two prominent Episcopal clergymen, Dr. De Costa and Dr. Clendenin, have protested to Bishop Potter against Professor Briggs' ordination, basing their objection on his support of the higher criticism. The grounds of their protest appear, therefore, to be the same in substance as the charges upon which Dr. Briggs was suspended from the Presbyterian ministry. It appears that this protest will have the effect of preventing for the present, and perhaps will postpone indefinitely Dr. Briggs' admission to the Episcopal ministry. There would appear to be a good deal of elbow-room for an Episcopal minister when he is once inside the gates of the church. It is said, and probably quite truly, that there are not a few of its ministers whose views are not more nearly conformed to what is generally regarded as orthodox doctrine than are Dr. Briggs', but Messrs. De Costa and Clendenin probably think that their church has enough heresy within its borders without importing any from other churches.

[Since the above was put in type it is learned that Professor Briggs has been ordained by Bishop Potter. Whether or not the clergymen who opposed will take any further action in the matter remains to be seen.]

### The True High-Priest before his Caricature.\*

BY ALEXANDER MCLAREN, D. D.

The last verses of the preceding lesson belong properly to this one, for they tell us that Jesus was "first" brought before Annas, a fact which we owe to John only. Annas "himself and his five sons held the high-priesthood in succession." To the sons has to be added Caiaphas, who, as we learn from John only, was his son-in-law, and so one of the family party. That Jesus should have been taken to him, though he held no office at the time, shows who pulled the strings in the sanhedrin. The reference to Caiaphas in verse 14 seems intended to suggest what sort of a trial might be expected, presided over by such a man. But verse 15 tells us

\*From an article on John 18:15-27 in the "S. S. Times."