

Noblesse Oblige.

THE MESSENGER AND VISITOR presents to its readers various departments, all of great value to the intellectual and spiritual needs of its large and varied constituency. One more I should like to see added, and with a ministerial Chesterfield to edit it. I believe it would greatly enhance the usefulness of our valued paper. At the risk of calling about my ears a hornet's nest, I am going to suggest that a column be set apart entitled, "Department for the instruction of ministers in social observances." Such a department might also with great propriety be added to our Theological schools. A minister, himself possessing high culture and manners that a prince might envy, said in my hearing that provision should be made in our college, whereby prospective ministers might receive preparation for the hard and rough things that life had in store for them, in their contact with the "great unwashed," in the pursuit of their chosen vocation. Now with this suggestion and my own carried out, in addition to their theological training, surely our young men would be well equipped for the work of the ministry.

Let me premise, Mr. Editor, that there are in the ranks of the ministry, men—many of them—of liberal culture and fine breeding, men who are honorably and justly entitled to wear the "grand old name of Gentleman;" men whose presence in the home or social circle creates an atmosphere of nobility and high living. But, unquestionably, there are also many who may be classed as "diamonds in the rough," men of intrinsic worth, of high integrity and honest purpose, but whose usefulness and influence are impaired by their disregard of the small courtesies that go to make of the man a gentleman, of the woman, a lady. (I use these terms in their highest and legitimate sense.)

I venture to say that no matter what the lack of early training, no man who has advanced far enough in the intellectual and social scale to be admitted to the ministry, has any right to feel himself exempted from the attainment of the very highest standard of refinement of manners, and polished deportment. A rough diamond undoubtedly has its value, but how greatly is that value enhanced by proper cutting and setting.

I have heard it said that the greatest hindrance to the growth of the Baptist denomination is its illiterate ministry. That has doubtless been true to a large extent, but we may safely say that this reproach is passing; a higher standard of literary culture prevails. With this, will come, let it be hoped, a higher standard of ministerial deportment.

Why should so many ministers apparently consider themselves exempt from the observance of the little courtesies that mark the well-bred man in other professions? Why in a mixed company in which there are two or three ministers, should they monopolize the conversation, telling personal anecdotes, not always of the most refined character, or (I just whisper this in your ear, Mr. Editor) even sometimes bordering on the profane? Why should they "talk shop" *ad nauseum*? Why should they accept as their due services that gentlemen "of the world" expect to render rather than accept, and in many ways regard themselves as privileged to set aside the laws that govern well-bred people of the same social standing in other ranks of life, the yielding of opinion in company when the intrusion of it will cause embarrassment or annoyance, the chivalrous deference to women, and the general observance of "good form," even in such trifles as the courteous note of thanks to the friends whose hospitality has been enjoyed, the correct handling of the knife and fork, and the proper disposal of the dinner napkin!

Now I hear some good brother protest that ministers have more important matters to attend to than such trifles as forms of etiquette, if he is good and sincere, and faithful in his service to God and humanity, mere matters of external politeness may be left to those votaries of fashion who have nothing else to attend to. Another argues that if the minister cultivates nicety of manner and deportment, he will repel the common people; that the rough-and-ready, half-fellow-well-met, go-in-at-the-back-door style of man is the more useful in the country parsonages. This is all false and specious argument. A woman, poor and illiterate said to me once, "We like our minister to be a gentleman. If we do not know much ourselves we want to be proud of him. We do not expect him to be rough as we are," and a little observation will show that the man who wears well, who remains longest in our pastorate, who retains longest the respect and admiration of his people, is the man of gentle and refined manners and speech.

Is there known to history a more courteous gentleman than Christ? and of him it could be said, "The common people heard him gladly."

Paul is another example of a gentleman, "*sans peur, sans reproche*;" conciliatory where conciliation was needed, at Mars Hill prefacing his vigorous attack upon the idolatry of the Athenians and presentation of the true God, with a tactful and considerate reference to their devoutness.

If Christ and Paul in constant conflict with Oriental

degradation and superstition, could combine a high-bred courtly exterior with sincerity of life and honesty of purpose to serve well their fellowmen, surely God's servants of today should keep before them the same high ideal. All the attributes of a gentleman are found in one of Paul's trenchant sayings—"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

Tennyson says:

"Manners are not idle, but the fruit,
Of loyal nature and of noble mind."

With the attributes given by Paul in the heart, with the highest possible intellectual culture, and a faithful and conscientious observance of social courtesies, which is to Christian character what the flower is to the plant, the setting to the gem, the stars to the midnight sky, or the sunlight to the waves, our ministry may advance to a "sphere of influence" vastly higher and broader than has hitherto been attained.

CRITIC.

How Royalty Spends Sunday.

When King Edward and Queen Alexandra were the Prince and Princess of Wales, the following interesting account of how they were in the habit of spending Sunday appeared in "The Quiver." The writer says:—

"Sunday with Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales is passed in much the same quiet way as with Her Majesty, the Queen, inasmuch as religious ceremonies are faithfully observed, and the household and servants are spared all unnecessary duties. The guests wend their way, as the hour of eleven approaches, towards the little church of St. Mary Magdalene in the Park. There is a private footway direct from the house to the church gate; by this, the Royal Family and guests often proceed, driving round by the road only in case of unpropitious weather. Sunday afternoon is quietly spent in the house or park. Dinner is served at half-past seven. Occasionally, however, dinner is a little later, as the Prince and Princess may be attending evening service in one of the village churches near. The small station some two miles away, where the Royal Family have their own waiting rooms, is closed on Sunday as no train whatever is run on that day. By this means, the church is kept clear of an attendance prompted by curiosity, and also the men employed have the entire day's rest secured to them. In fact, no unnecessary work in any shape or way is performed on Sunday in any one part of the Prince's domains."

Sunday at Marlborough House differs slightly from Sunday at Sandringham, but the day is spent in comparative quietude. In the morning, Their Royal Highnesses attend divine service held in what is known as the German (Lutheran) Chapel. After luncheon, the Princess and her daughters may possibly attend one of the West End churches to hear some popular preacher, or to be present at a children's service. It is not only at Sandringham and Marlborough House that Sabbath observances are rigidly adhered to by the Prince and Princess of Wales, but also in any of the Continental places where they may be staying. There is an old saying that when you go to Rome do as the Romans do, but our Prince honors this rule in the breach, for although he has ever been a constant visitor to Paris, yet he has never seen the French Derby for the simple reason that it is run on the Sunday. In a matter where hundreds and thousands of Christians have followed the fashion of the gay capital they are visiting, and indulged their love of horses and of pleasure, the Prince has set a good example and absented himself. In every way, the Prince and Princess have always faithfully observed the Sabbath, and we, as a Christian people, may congratulate ourselves that our future King and Queen will steadfastly uphold the sanctity of the Day of God, and the doctrines of the Christian church."

A recent quotation from "The St. James Gazette" of London, England, saying that the King had refused to travel from Scotland to London on Sunday, and has "stunned society by putting all social functions and entertainments on Sunday under the Royal ban," would seem to indicate that His Majesty's accession to the throne of the "mightiest empire that has been" has not led to the relaxing of his scruples as to how Sunday should be spent.

If there is any truth in the rumors that are rife about Sunday Yachting Excursions, Mounted Paper Chases, and the like starting from Rideau Hall, it would seem that His Majesty's example has not much weight with his representative in Canada, nor indeed with society leaders generally at the Dominion capital, where only a few months ago the servant girls had to form themselves into a mutual protective association in order to get deliverance, among other things, from seven-day-in-the-week bondage through having to dance attendance on their mistresses and their guests at Sunday dinners, suppers, etc., as well as on all the other days of the week. And we fear that if this Servant's Mutual Protective Association does not extend to other cities, it will not be because there is not about as much occasion for it as there is at Ottawa. Society is fond of following the lead of Royalty in many things. Why not also in the observance of the Lord's Day?

The Secret of Rest.

When Noah's dove found no rest for her weary wing, what did she do? We read that she "returned into the ark." Here is the duty of every restless, sin-troubled soul. God says, "Return unto me;" listen to the invitation of the divine love. When the dove returned, she brought nothing but herself. So you can bring nothing to Jesus except one poor, guilty, unsatisfied sinner. Do not bring your sins; do not bring any claims of self-righteousness; they will not pay for the transportation. Jesus wants you, and you need Jesus. Then come to him just as you are, a weak, crippled soul, utterly powerless to help or to heal yourself. The prodigal son only brought one ragged, shoeless, half-starved wretch to his father's door, but that was all the good old father wanted to see.

Jesus wants you. Remember that there was only one ark for Noah's dove to fly to; on every side was the desolation of a drowned world. So God has provided only one ark for your weary, wandering soul. He has not provided a variety of religions, and left us to take our choice. He does not perplex you with several "historical religions," for there is none other name given under heaven whereby you can be saved than the name of Him whose blood cleanseth from all sin. Prince and peasant, philosopher and pauper-child, have the same disease, and can only be cured by the same physician. The core of all true creeds and confessions of faith is just this: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." And the sweet, winsome message he sends to your troubled heart is: "Come unto me and I will give you rest."

Observe too that the ark had only "one window." All the light and air came in through the single casement. Beautifully does that single open window typify unto you the illumination of the Holy Spirit. How strikingly it illustrates the fact that every soul which flies toward Jesus must come into the new life through the guiding and renewing influence of the divine Spirit. Regeneration brings the penitent sinner into vital union with Christ; the Spirit alone regenerates. Troubled friend, the window is open; the blessed Spirit is drawing you now. It is not a pastor, or an evangelist, or visit to an inquiry-meeting that you need, or can give you relief. Co-operate with the Holy Spirit. Go whither he leads; do what he bids you. Quilt the sins which hold you back, and yield your whole self up to Christ. In fact, the coming in through that open window of light and hope into the pardoning love and strength and fullness of the crucified Son of God, is saving faith. It is not the opinion about Christ, but the act of grasping yourself fast to Christ that alone can save your soul. When you do what the weary dove did—when you give over everything else, and just betake yourself to the only ark of refuge, and light down there—your immediate duty is done. Then the infinitely loving Jesus will do for you what the patriarch did for the returning dove—he will "draw you in." Into covenant union with himself. Into a new life, new light, new strength, new hope; everything is become new. Into a wondrous and satisfying peace. As your flattering soul yields itself to the all sufficient Saviour, you will hear him say: "My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you; let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." When you find Jesus you have found rest.—Dr. Cuyler, in Evangelist.

Have We a Constitution? Are We Adrift?

On looking over our Year Books for several years past I am not only surprised but alarmed at the persistent omission of our old standard, The Declaration of Faith and Practice. This comprehensive Scriptural summary, this indispensable test, which not only constitutes our defence from outward assault, but guards us against our own imaginary wisdom in the application of new aims and improved methods—Why should it be kept out of sight? Surely it cannot be abandoned! Let us recall its history—Set forth originally, by upwards of a hundred Baptist congregations of England in 1687. Brought over and adopted by the Philadelphia Association in 1742. Approved and adopted at the birth of the first Baptist Association of the Maritime Provinces at Granville, N. S., in June 1800. Carefully kept to the front by the princely fathers of the ministry. Those noble and indefatigable leaders. Mighty men of God, who devoted their whole lives and energies to the labors of the gospel. Can that established confession of Faith and Practice now be ignored? Impossible! Permit it to come forth unchanged from its hiding. Faithfully let it be used by every church, by every pastor. Entire in its articles of faith and practice, and its solemn covenant. These sacred altar stones—let no one dare to lift a tool upon them. G. A. HAMMOND.

Kingsclear.

Death to a good man is but passing through a dark entry, out of one little dusky room in his Father's house into another that is fair and large, lightsome and glorious.—Adam Clarke.