

## The Christian Visitor.

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BAPTIST UNION OF CANADA.

This organization includes the Baptists of the Upper Provinces, numbering some 27,000. As yet the Baptists of the Lower, or Maritime Provinces, numbering some 37,000, are not included in it. The Union held its second Annual meeting in the Olivet church, Montreal, on the 26th, 27th, and 28th, of October. The services began at 9:30 a. m., with a devotional meeting, presided over by Rev. Dr. Clarke, pastor of the Olivet church. At its conclusion, the President, Hon. Senator McMaster, not having arrived, the Vice-President, A. A. Ayer, Esq., of Montreal, presided. Committees on Credentials, Nomination of Officers, Special Business, Arrangements for Session of 1882, Resolutions, &c., were appointed. The annual reports of the Secretary and Treasurer, were then read by the Secretary, Rev. A. H. Munro. A communication from Principal Dawson was read, offering the use of McGill University Library and Museum, to the members of the Union.

The President, Hon. Senator McMaster, having arrived for the afternoon session, took the chair and delivered an address, of which the following is a synopsis:

BRETHREN OF THE BAPTIST UNION OF CANADA.—I am happy to be present at this the second annual meeting of our body assembled in the metropolis of our Dominion. Much anxiety has been felt for the success of this meeting, not only among brethren of this city, but throughout our wide constituency, and our friends here have exerted themselves to the utmost to make our visit pleasant, and our gathering successful. When we consider the great distance from Montreal at which the majority of the Baptists of Ontario and Quebec live, the number in attendance ought to be gratifying to our hosts. When the Constitution of this Union was adopted at St. Catharines two years ago, some of the practical difficulties in the way of merging all our benevolent organizations in a single body were not foreseen. A careful examination has demonstrated that some of the old chartered Societies which we attempted to fuse into the Union, could not make over their property to it without special legislation. Our brethren of this city and vicinity feared to dissolve the Eastern Convention, least their home mission work should suffer. Their feeling has spread to the Western Convention, and during the past year the conviction has deepened that the work of Home Missions can be done intelligently and effectively, only by maintaining these two Conventions as separate organizations. Should this view prove to be the correct one, there is still a most important sphere for the Baptist Union to fill, the work of foreign missions, the entire work of higher education, both for our ministry and for our young people of both sexes; the maintenance of our ministers who have worn themselves out in serving the church, and the support of the widows and orphans of those who have gone to their rest and their reward, the assistance so much needed in our great North-West. All these are subjects which do not belong especially to either Convention, but require to be discussed and handled in an assembly like this, composed as it is of representatives from the churches both East and West, to discuss the bearings of these great interests, and to plan wisely for them, our brethren from all sections need to come together. Only in this way can we hope for harmonious and efficient action. The Baptists of the two Provinces which this Union aims to bind together, require to know each other better than we have in the past. Among Christians with the same aspirations, whose hearts throb in unison, and who hold the same views of doctrine and church ordinances, mutual acquaintance and co-operation add greatly to their power when used for a common object. If the Baptist Union should accomplish nothing more than to promote the knowledge of each other in our individual life it will render invaluable service, for it will surely strengthen the bonds of fellowship among the leading men of our widely scattered churches, our work is easier when we know our fellow-workers. I trust, brethren, that the warmest fraternal feeling and courtesy may prevail throughout the Sessions, and that we may engage in the work of the Union under a deep sense of responsibility. We are not our own. We are here to attend to the business of the Master. Let us not fail either through

listlessness, sectionalism or partizanship. A grand and inspiring work is before the Baptists of Canada; our opportunities were never so great as now. Let us quit ourselves like men. The Master says, "Occupy till I come." Let everyone discharge his duty to the utmost of his ability. The toil will not be long. The rest and the reward will be eternal. Death is thinning our ranks. Some of our foremost traders and workmen have fallen at their post since our last meeting. This very church is still wet with tears for one of its most loved workers, suddenly summoned from the deaconship and superintendent's desk to hear from the Master's lips, "Well done good and faithful servant." When another year has passed and the Union meets again, some of Christ's soldiers now present will not answer to the roll call, but it matters not whether we be here or up yonder, for if we are faithful He who died to redeem us shall be glorified alike by our life and by our death. Thanking you now, my much esteemed brethren, for the honor conferred on me last year in electing me the First President of the Union, I will endeavor to discharge the duties of my position to the best of my ability until the time for election of officers, when you will be good enough to put another in this Chair. I am unwilling to occupy any position of responsibility only in name, and my circumstances are such that it is quite impossible for me to be your President in fact. Let the name and the honor go to some one who can do the work of President, which, under the existing circumstances, I cannot do. The work and the honor should always be inseparable. As I cannot do the former I cannot consent to retain the latter. You will, therefore, save me pain and yourselves inconvenience by regarding this intimation as final. But as an humble member of the Union I shall in all your efforts to promote the cause and the Kingdom of Christ give you my cordial support, my co-operation and my prayers.

The Rev. Thos. Gales read a communication from the promoters of the Canada Temperance Act, seeking the endorsement and co-operation of the Union.

The following gentlemen were elected officers of the Union: President, J. A. Boyd, M. A., Q. C.; Vice Presidents, A. A. Ayer and John Harris, Esq's; Secretary, Rev. A. H. Munro; Treasurer, H. E. Buchan, M. D. In the absence of Mr. Boyd, Mr. Ayer took the chair.

The Report of the Board of Trustees of the Canadian Literary Institute, was read by Rev. J. Dempsey, which showed that the Institute financially, as well as in the number of students, was in a most satisfactory condition. Rev. S. A. Dyke had succeeded in raising \$32,528 in pledges and cash, \$67,500 of which were to be placed to the endowment fund, and the balance to current expenses. Already \$12,370.25 of the above amount has been paid. The relations between the Institute and the Theological College in Toronto, were reported to be most friendly, and the outlook for both was encouraging.

Rev. Mr. McLaurin read the report on the Theological Department at Woodstock. It deplored the death of Professor Torrance, and showed that this department was now merged in the Toronto College. It stated that during the 20 years of its existence some \$30,000 had been expended on it, that 74 graduates had gone forth to labor in fields as widely extended as British Columbia and India.

Dr. Castle made a statement concerning Toronto College, setting forth its splendid equipment, and urged additional gifts for the Library, Reading Room, and Gymnasium. Mrs. McMaster has given \$2000 and Mr. Lailey \$500 for the Library, and Woodstock Institute has sent them 1000 volumes.

In the evening a public meeting in the interests of Denominational Education was held, T. H. Hodgson, Esq., of Montreal, presiding. Addresses were delivered by Rev. A. P. McDiarmid, Rev. S. A. Dyke and Prof. Wolverson, which breathed with love for Christian schools, and affirmed that Woodstock and Toronto were doing a grand work and worthy of the largest patronage and benevolence.

A telegram from the Baptist Convention of New York State was received and suitably responded to by the Union. The greeting of New York was found in 1 Cor. 15: last verse, the response of the Union in Eph. 4:4-6.

On Thursday morning the report of the Home Missionary Convention West, was read by Rev. Dr. Stewart, and discussed by Rev. Messrs Dyke, Coutts, Stewart and J. T. Claxton, Esq. This discussion showed the need of more systematic work on part of the churches in securing funds for benevolent objects.

The Rev. T. Lafleur read the report of the Grand Ligne Mission. The number of baptisms during the year was 34. In Montreal they had obtained a plot of ground for a new church, the cost of which, including the ground, they estimated at \$12,000. Of this sum they had received subscriptions or promises of them to the amount of \$9,500. As soon as they had got \$10,000 they intended to commence operations. The report also spoke of the peculiar difficulties with which the work was beset.

The Rev. A. L. Therrin a young man of good address, and the product of the mission work, spoke effectively and mentioned the fact that now there were 15 churches connected with the mission.

The Rev. A. H. Munro read the report of the Home Missionary Convention East which was spoken to by Rev. J. Alexander. The following gentleman were then introduced to the Convention and made addresses, viz., Dr. Stephenson, Rev. Principal Grant, of Kingston, Rev. Dr. McArthur New York, Dr. McKenzie, Rev. Mr. Pratt, of Vermont State Convention and Rev. J. E. Hopper of the Visitor.

Rev. Dr. Stephenson represented himself as a Baptist if not fallen away from grace, at least fallen away from the faith and practice of Baptists, but as one who still entertained for them a warm and generous love. Principal Grant congratulated the Denomination on the consolidation of their educational work at the important centres of Woodstock and Toronto.

Dr. McArthur spoke of his love for Canadian Baptists, and weak churches and promised help toward the erection of a Baptist church edifice at Lachute. Dr. McKenzie said he was a Scotch Canadian Yankee. He was born an Episcopalian but was submerged in a great torrent and had remained so ever since. He commended the Canadian Baptists for their zeal, and thought the Union ought to include the Maritime Provinces. Rev. J. E. Hopper spoke of the necessity for some kind of union of the Baptists of the Upper and Lower Provinces in order to justify the name "Baptist Union of Canada." He referred to the necessity for united effort to give assistance to the feeble beginnings made by our brethren in Manitoba and the North West, to the hope that Toronto Theological College might become the school to which those of our graduates should go who do not remain at Acadia, and to the question of some united work in India in a theological school when such a demand shall become imperative. He hinted at the appointment of committees on correspondence and also for the necessity of sending delegates from the Union to the Maritime Convention and vice versa. This could do no injury and might lead to some organic Union if it were found desirable.

The suggestion of Mr. Hopper at once met a response and a committee composed of Dr. Clarke, Rev. J. Dempsey and C. A. Cook was appointed to draft an address and nominate delegates to the Maritime Convention to be held at St. John next year.

After the report of the Superannuated Ministers Fund was read, the Union adjourned.

A letter received from Rev. A. V. Timpany, by Rev. John McLaurin, which is published in the columns of the *Canadian Baptist* tells of the alarmingly sudden death of Josiah Burder, a native preacher. In the morning he had officiated at a marriage, and at 10 p.m. passed triumphantly through the valley of the shadow of death to his eternal reward. The cause of his death was apoplexy. Mr. Timpany speaks of him as one of his most faithful helpers.

Mr. E. N. Blake has promised to give \$30,000 towards endowing the Baptist Theological Seminary at Morgan Park, near Chicago, provided that \$45,000 more be raised before a certain time.

## WHAT IS TRUTH?

The laconic question of the Roman governor has awakened a spirit of inquiry among thoughtful persons. Much of what is popularly called knowledge is simply a medley of fact and fiction, of truth and error, the last named element having by far the greater preponderance. From the incipient ideas of childhood to the mature thoughts of riper years, truth and error seem to combine so closely and inseparably as to make it almost impossible to draw the line of distinction between them. We are not surprised at the sentiment of Carneades, who maintained that "error is" so blended with truth that the reception of truth is impossible, and that the essence of philosophy consists in a suspension of opinion."

The process through which the mind reaches the knowledge of truth is of a peculiar and interesting character. Infancy is the period of unsuspecting credulity. It implicitly believes all it hears, and confides in the genuineness of all it sees. Innocent itself, and untaught to dissemble, it cherishes no suspicion as to the veracity of senior years. Advancing age, however, gradually produces a marked change. The lessons of experience awaken growing distrust in men and things. Discerning youth soon discovers with disappointment and regret that many of its supposed verities are but specious fictions or simply pretences. The glittering letters of gold which decorates the merchant's sign-board are found to consist of cheap paint; and the glowing tales, which had furnished so much delightful entertainment during the unsuspecting hours of childhood, are found to be idle fabrications or glowing untruths. Distrust, once awakened, leads the juvenile mind to lose confidence in everything. If life's early faith has been so basely betrayed, what wonder if the mind recoils distrustingly from reposing confidence in anybody or anything? Hence the tendency of adult age to scepticism and infidelity. It requires all the wisdom of mature age to restore mental equipoise, and to convince deceived and faithless minds that amid all that is false and specious in the world there is much in which we may believe with implicit credence.

It has always been the ostensible object of thinking minds to discover truth and to make that truth known to the world. Two formidable obstacles have rendered the accomplishment of this object difficult, if not impossible. The finiteness and weakness of the human intellect is the first and, by far the most serious. Limited in the range and power of his mental endowments, the most profound thinker finds himself continually touching the bounds of the known and the knowable. His conception of things is thus necessarily imperfect and often incorrect, and the truth is but partially apprehended and not clearly understood. The second obstacle, though of smaller magnitude, is scarcely less fatal to human certainty. It is our lamentable tendency to utter expressions and to make statements which do not represent the real convictions of our intellects. What is merely problematical in the minds of many a scientist is set forth before the world in the language of undoubted certainty. Opinions are thus transformed into facts, conjectures into sound theories, and the wildest fancies are dignified with the name of hypotheses. In this way tenets and dogmas, as varied and conflicting as can well be imagined, have been promulgated in all ages and in almost all countries. Thus philosophy, like the chameleon, is ever changing its hues and forms to adapt itself to the varying phases of human thought. To-day some fine-spun theory gains general popular belief; to-morrow it is discarded as baseless and absurd. Modern intelligence smiles complacently at the doctrines of some of the old moon-struck sages. Succeeding ages take their turns in laughing at the foolish credulity of their predecessors. Shall this unseemly charlatanism continue forever? Is there nothing in human knowledge upon which we can confidently rely? We leave the question to be answered by those who consider themselves competent to the task. Meanwhile

we find a new meaning and sweet comfort in the inspired statement that "whether there be knowledge it shall be done away." Scientific theories, infidel notions, philosophic guesses and all the nonsensical follies of the would-be wise seem to receive a prophetic sentence in these apostolic words. Who would be willing to imperil the interests of his immortal soul by founding his hopes for the future upon the shifting sands of human wisdom?

What then is truth? The question which has puzzled the wise and great in all ages may now be answered by the most youthful reader of the Bible.

The great Founder of the Christian system has furnished a full and satisfactory reply in the simple statement—"Thy Word is truth," and the embodiment of this truth is indicated in the precious assurance—"I am the way, the truth and the life." Amid the incessant mutations of human creeds and theories and the short-lived systems of philosophy which earthly wisdom has established, the sacred Bible remains unchanged and untarnished, containing the inspired truth of God, and teaching man not only the best lessons relating to the present life but also the way by which we may secure an inheritance among the saints in glory. Who would not found his hopes for the future upon the imperishable rock of eternal Truth?

Just as we go to press, we learn with much sorrow that Willie Churchill, the eldest child of Brother and Sister Churchill, our missionaries at Bobbilly, died in the early part of September, of fever, after a few days illness. Brother and Sister Churchill were also very ill, although Brother Churchill, when the mail left, was somewhat better. May the good Lord sustain and comfort them in the dark hour of trial that has come upon them.

## THE ROAD TO TELUGU-LAND.

## THE STAFF.

Never did the sun rise brighter than on the morning of Sept. 16th. His cheering beams were radiant with promise of a glorious day; and unconsciously the mind sweeps into the future and find it as bright as the present. But years will elapse ere our eyes will again behold the morning light, slanting through the old elms, and glinting on the ripples of that never-to-be-forgotten brook just below the house. Friends come in and help beguile the waiting hours (for all packing is long since done) with pleasant chat. Then the coach rolls up to the door, a last look is taken at the old familiar rooms, good-bye's are said, and we rumble away over the shady bridge, through the straggling village, past the little white church, through fields as cleanly shaven as the face of any celibate of Rome, fields of green, and fields of gold, past hummocks, looking for all the world, like graves with stumps for monuments.

The railway station with its hurry and bustle, and last farewells of friends is soon left behind. Now we have fairly turned our backs upon Home, and go forth into the world of unknown futurity, of unending, yet pleasing toil. Nine long hours on the rushing train; more dear friends, and tearful farewells; scenes as varied as the faces about us; early autumn tints, telling of crisp frosty nights on the mountains; traces of summer still lingering in sheltered woods, hill and dale; meadow and forest; lake and river; trembling waterfalls glinting in the slanting sunbeams; the placid pool lying deep in the shade; country towns, and straggling villages; sunset purpling; all these and thousands of other unenumerated items, that go to make up a delightful world; dusk with fading shadows, and fleeting fancies; dark—still on and on through the now dim landscape, until with a scream of delight the engine whirls us into the numberless lights of the city, and the warm welcomes of waiting friends.

A few pleasant days are spent in St. John—days of hurried preparation for our long journey. Here comes the news of the President's death, with the accompanying manifestations of grief. The blow, though not unexpected is overwhelming. Everywhere, even in our own Canada, the half-masted flags, and tolling bells, tell of the universal sorrow. "The land mourneth." So when on Wednesday morning, we leave St. John by rail and cross the border into Maine, we are not unprepared for a nation's grief. Public buildings, private residences, whole streets festooned with the drapery of death. Bunting boarded with black drooping limbs and motionless (for the very day is lifeless) utters with mute tongue, "Dead!" Newspapers in mourning; a newsboy crying in subdued tones, portraits of the dead; dead faces in oils, in photographs, in ordinary prints, draped in black, staring at you

from dozens of windows and conspicuous places. Monday, Garfield is to be buried; the same day will find us on the deep. Tuesday, our thoughts shall have left America, and reached forward in eager expectancy to Old England; the same day Garfield will be forgotten by all save a few, while the vulgar mind, true to its instinct, will turn to the dawning future. But this gigantic funeral procession, with its slow-moving national hearse, its world-wide death-chant, its weeping millions, and its rivers of tears will never be obliterated by the rude hand of Time, from the mind of those whose mournful privilege it is to gaze upon it for the first time.

The run to Boston and New York is so rapid, the impressions so imperfect, the scenes so familiar to many that I shall not attempt to depict them here.

In New York one day is too short a time for sightseeing. A hasty run down town to the company's office in quaint little Bowling Green; and the purchase of a number of books and necessary articles, bare only time to get ourselves and luggage aboard the steamer *Utopia*. Arrived at Pier 46, where the Anchor Line Steamers for London lie, everything is in the greatest possible confusion, apparently. Huge bales of merchandise, pyramids of canned meats and cheeses—enough to load an ordinary size vessel—yet await shipment. The din of the steam winch and the heavy thud of boxes as they come abroad, mingled with the shouts of men and the lowing of a number of fat cattle in an adjacent shed, all give us premonitory warning that "Nature's soft nurse" will not abide with us tonight.

Shortly after dark we go on deck to watch the lights of the city and harbor. Beautiful they are in the gathering gloom. But our attention is soon diverted and held by another light glimmering on the horizon. We think with dread of a storm, but hope that it may come before we leave our moorings. A faint flickering, only is seen at first, from the dark pile of clouds. A few drops of rain fall; then the lightning comes in sheets, glowing from cloudpeak to cloudpeak. Gradually it becomes more vivid, until from the ordinary jagged flash, the fluid descends in a constant stream of fire, like molten iron pouring from a gigantic furnace. But slowly it fades; the clouds let the stars peep through, and we retire to our staterooms with high hopes of the morrow. J. R. H.

## A FREE AND EASY.—No. 2.

My Dear James:—

You say you are only too glad to reciprocate my good intentions, and that you will be happy to enter into a "vigorous correspondence." All right, that is exactly what I desire. It is to be hoped that these letters will be removed above the common-place "I take my pen in hand to let you know that I am well and hope you are the same." You speak of your "vacation." You had been "over to the Convention, and afterwards spent two Sundays at your old home at Spratt Bay." Of course you preached each Sunday twice; and if you had one of my neighbors to deal with you would have been fooled into a third service! A vacation forsooth! Gazing upon the too familiar scenes of a fishing settlement, drinking tea with half of the old wives of the place, listening to the complaints of a dozen or two of nervous sufferers, bored too, I warrant you, with some fanatic, an admirer of the Anglo-Israel idea, and the return of the Jews to Palestine, on the unfermented-wine theory, on the sleep of the dead—well, this may be dignified by the name of vacation, we may delude ourselves with the idea that we have had a rest; but don't you find nature crying out against the whole absurdity? Do you not long to be away from all this joy and monotony? Do you not long to see other faces beside those I have mentioned? Would you not like to mix with men as a man, forgetting your position, your dignity and your starch; talking to others freely and having them speak unreservedly to you? I have not seen a great deal of the world, but I have contrived to see some fresh bit of earth, some new faces every year, and I cannot enumerate the benefits. Like the other great mercies of the great Master, "they cannot be reckoned by number." I come back with new ideas, new methods of work, and new vigor. A few years ago I ran from one end of Canada to the other, turned down by the "Canada Southern" to Buffalo, looked at the Falls of Niagara, and listened to them, steered for New York, and down the Sound to Boston, thence home by Maine. I felt like a lion all winter. Now the trouble with you is, you are afraid to spend a little money. But you invest in wild-cat speculations, out of which the chances are, that you will never draw a *much*. I invest in a time of recreation on business principles. As a man ditches his farm, making it more productive, making it worth more, so do I go off on a trip. The money is not lost. I am a better man phys-