

The Christian Visitor,

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To Correspondents, Subscribers and Others.

Items of Religious Intelligence are solicited from all parts of the world; also, communications upon other subjects of interest, especially educational, social, and industrial topics. Correspondents should write upon only one side of the paper, and make their letters as brief as the facts and circumstances will permit. As a rule, all matter, to ensure being published the week of issue, should reach us not later than Monday noon.

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The Christian Visitor.

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THE BAPTIST UNION QUESTION.

By this caption we mean not the subject of union of the different Baptist bodies in Canada, but the union of the Baptist and Free Christian Baptist bodies of the Maritime Provinces. Last year a union of these bodies in New Brunswick, and the Free Baptists of Nova Scotia, in educational work, was effected.

At the recent Baptist Convention in Moncton, a committee was appointed to visit the Free Christian Baptist Conference, convened in Fredericton, and ascertain what co-operation, if any, might be effected in the work of Foreign Missions. This committee, or a part of it, viz.:—Rev. J. E. Hopper, Rev. S. B. Kempton, Rev. D. G. McDonald, and Rev. J. F. Bartlett, with John March, Esq., and C. F. L. L. Esq., from the Baptist Foreign Mission Board, met with the F. C. B. Conference, and were most fraternally received. Rev. J. E. Hopper, on being called upon, represented the purpose of the Convention in sending this committee. He spoke of the cordial reception accorded the delegation sent last year to the Conference concerning educational interests, and the practical result in the union of the two bodies in sustaining an Educational Institution in St. John. He referred to the advantages of union in Foreign Mission work, and set forth the fact that the Baptist Board owned about \$25,000 worth of property in India and managed a bequest of \$20,000, made to it by Jacob Bradshaw, Esq.; that the receipts of the Board approximate \$10,000 annually; that four missionary families were employed and two young ladies were soon to leave to reinforce the mission. For himself he said he believed there were no greater difficulties in the way of a full union of the two denominations than in the union of their missionary interests; and he should be glad to see it effected. An outline of how it might be accomplished was presented.

The response to remarks concerning a full union indicated that the Conference viewed that with more favor than what one gentleman called a piecemeal union.

A resolution appointing a committee to meet the Baptist committee was named, and at a later hour in the day a full and frank discussion was had on a resolution presented by Prof. Foster, setting forth the conviction of the Free Baptist Convention that a union on "a fair and equitable basis" was desirable. This resolution passed unanimously, and, after the adjournment of the Convention, the joint committees met. It was decided that in view of the larger union contemplated it was not desirable to discuss farther a union in missions merely. Brethren were asked to present what appeared to them difficulties in the way of union, and answers on both

sides were given which showed a good degree of harmony on all essential points. The Baptist committee will report next year the result of their efforts to the Convention, and we suppose a committee to report on a basis of union will be appointed to meet with a similar committee of the Free Baptist body.

We believe that a great approach toward each other has been made by the two denominations during the last few years, and that the time draws near when some suitable organic expression will be given to the unity already existing and maturing. Christian union must precede ecclesiastical union. A union that is merely the expression of a compromise coming together is not worth the paper on which it is written. We are in favor of an organic union of the two branches of the Baptist family, because we believe the Holy Spirit has been leading us into unity and love.

The F. C. B. Conference is composed of some noble elements. There are old men who have borne the burdens in past years, and under God made the denomination what it is. Like a similar class among ourselves they have not had the advantages of higher education, but they now come to the front and say they are ready to make generous provision for their sons and daughters, that they may have all the advantages of a liberal education. In the conference, too, there are a fine class of young men who have had university training and who now take hold of the benevolent work of the denomination in a way that is worthy of the highest praise.

In the Conference educational meeting over \$2,000 worth of stock was subscribed toward the Seminary, and a grand impression in favor of the Institution was created.

At the F. C. B. Conference, Rev. Mr. Bachelor, a returned missionary from India, was present. He had spent 40 years in that land, and by his addresses, as well as those of Miss Hooper, a returned lady missionary, much interest was thrown into the missionary meetings of the Conference. Some \$800 was pledged for the support of the cause.

The doctrine of sinless perfection was pronounced by the Free Christian Baptist Conference as inharmonious with the belief of the denomination.

THE SCHOOL CHANGES.

The following resolution was moved at the recent Albert County Teacher's Institute by W. B. Jonah:

Resolved, That in the opinion of the teachers of Albert county, the recent changes in the educational system were detrimental to the best interests of the county.

This was seconded by J. H. Heustis, and received the unanimous assent of teachers.

This action together with expressions of disapproval pretty generally expressed all over the Province, indicates that the Government have not been very fortunate in tampering with our School Law and its administration. The tax-payers find no relief and the teachers have their small salaries reduced.

It is pretty clear that no half-way measures will satisfy the people. They want better common schools and they care little or nothing for Grammar Schools and a Provincial University merely to give a literary education. The people have demonstrated the fact that they are willing, under christian influences, to provide all the higher literary education they need. Each large denomination has its own Academy and College free to all who wish to patronize them. They scarcely value the opportunity the Government gives them of being taxed for Grammar Schools and a Provincial University.

With all deference to the opinions of others, we suggest that if the Provincial University were turned into an Agricultural and Mechanical College it would benefit a larger portion of our people, and the literary work it is now doing would be as well done by the denominational Colleges. There would be no loss in literary culture, and a great gain in instruction that bears directly on the work of the

great mass of our people would be secured without additional expense.

We further believe that if the Government of the day were to take into consideration such a change, they would find the people ready to sustain them, and the results would show the wisdom of the step.

THAT DEMON, BORN OF LANDLORDISM AND STATE CHURCHISM.

"The Baptist" has the following:—

"A correspondent of the *Durham County Advertiser* (September 19), referring to the inquiries of the *Mark Lane Express* relative to the operation of the Agricultural Holdings Act (1883), says, that in reply to the inquiry, 'Where tenants have been induced to contract out of the Act, have they done so of their own free will?' there were six replies from the county of Durham, the first of which was as follows:—'Free will is a thing unknown to the great majority of tenant farmers in the county of Durham. They must agree to any terms the land agent may dictate, or leave their farms. You ask the names of landlords who have adopted the Act. I can give the names of many who have not. One of them cancelled all his predecessor's agreements, and required the tenants to sign an old antiquated form of agreement to consume all the produce on the farm or quit! Although church rates were abolished by Act of Parliament, the tenants who refused to pay church rates were served with notice to quit—or pay!' From which it would appear that a local landlord has the power to override 'The Compulsory Church Rates Abolition Act.'"

The above agrees with representations made to us by the Rev. Mr. Waters, lately of Newport, England, and now of Lower Economy, Nova Scotia. Knowing as we did that "The Compulsory Church Rates Abolition Act" had been in operation for years we were astonished to learn from brother Waters, and now it is confirmed by *The Baptist*, that in some places it is a dead letter. The parson and the landlord, the representatives of the two systems, holding incestuous union, manage to override the law, and put their own sweet wills in force instead. Human nature, on hearing such accounts of oppression in the nineteenth century, instinctively gives off a gush of sympathy with the violent resistance meted out to this demon in the father-land. Mr. Waters states that the interference does not end in the abuses pointed out in the *Baptist*. He says, that in not a few cases Baptists can only hold their places on condition of taking their babies to the parson to be sprinkled. Where no oppression of this kind is known, it might be supposed that it would be an easy matter to resist it; but when one remembers, that there are parents in the rural districts of England, who have great difficulty in maintaining their families, even in the continued sunshine of lordly, priestly favour, it is not difficult to imagine that some parents would submit to a rite in which they did not believe, rather than be driven into the streets followed by children suffering for shelter and crying for bread. Although the brother, referred to, said that while some yielded to the temptation there were others who would and did risk everything rather than sacrifice their convictions of duty. They have in them the stuff of which martyrs are made. Indeed, according to the account given, they do live the lives of martyrs. It is no difficult matter to see how a bigot in a gown and a tyrant in a castle could send out, through the tenantry, influences that would make life a burden and a worrying warfare to any one who might choose to exercise his independence against the wishes of those who own the land and rule the church. This evil may live so long as lords hold the land and the State the church.

The Baptist further says:—

In other counties "Dissenters" would seem to be treated quite as bad, if not worse. Thus it is reported that a farm belonging to Mr. T. C. Daniel, Sterdleigh Court, Tiverton, was recently advertised to be let by tender. The highest bidder was Mr. Yendell. He gave as references Lords Poltimore and Portescue, and finally it was agreed he should have the farm; but before the lease was signed, in a final interview with Mr. Daniel, he was asked if he was a Churchman. To which he replied, "No, he was a Wesleyan, but supposed that times were past for that to make any difference." To his surprise, however, he subsequently received the following letter from Mr. W. Easton, Taunton, the agent:—"Dear Sir,—After due consideration, Mr. Daniel has come to the conclusion not to accept your proposals for Fildmore. All his other tenants are Churchmen, consequently he has decided not to make an exception in this case. Thanking you for your tender for the farm, I remain, etc." And yet Non-conformists are continually being told that their grievances are all fancy ones, mostly hatched by paid agents for agitation purposes!

There are, no doubt, many landlords

and Episcopal clergymen who treat their tenants and neighbors with every consideration irrespective of their religious belief and practice; but it seems a great evil that creatures, in the form of men, should own land, and that creatures, professing to represent Christ on earth as ministers of his word, should be recognized and supported by the State who act the tyrant and the priest as if they were living in the middle ages. Such denizens of the night of intolerance have but a short day. They help to make both infidels and christians. Both the kingdom of darkness and light derive help from them. The day is not far distant when infidelity, if not subdued by true religion, will unite with christianity at the ballot-box and in Parliament in wiping out both landlordism and the State church.

Japan teaches England in regard to religion. Not long since that Island stubbornly excluded all nations from intercourse with her. Now a law has been passed disendowing the national religion and disestablishing the national church. On the eleventh of last month it was decreed that the official priesthood of all sects should cease to exist; and that the power of appointing and discharging incumbents of religious temples, monasteries and shrines, as well as of promoting members of the various religious bodies, should reside in the superintendents of the sects. Japan threw down her wall of exclusion; then she reversed her policy of religious intolerance and persecution, and now she grants religious equality and guarantees soul liberty. Truth goes on conquering and to conquer.

MAKE HASTE SLOWLY.

Festina lente. The steeper the descent the greater the need of the "brakes." There is more oxygen than formerly in the air. The pulse is quicker. The nervous system, that half spiritual half material part of the man, is now more fervid, more ethereal than it was in the good old days before the telegraph clicked and the steam engine screamed. Youth has greater chance to be precocious. "Thanks" will pass now for good breeding; nothing less than "thank you" could get currency in the days that were and are not. There used to be time to make sentences, now a single word must do the same duty. A restless impatience irritates the juvenile element of society. Caution and advice, once successful in restraining and moderating the young, cannot be endured in this day. The world has gained the summit. The "up grade" has been passed over. It is descent now. The wheels of life hum with motion. There is quite a breeze after the typical young man of the times, just as there is after a swift going railway train. High pressure is on in the school. Not a place can be found where there is moderation. The children in primary departments are loaded with lessons in school, and harassed with tasks for home—lessons and tasks that first kindle the hectic flush on the cheek and ashy paleness afterwards. There is no remedy. The sentiment is in the air, has possession of nerve-centres. Teachers are worn down to bones, sinews and nerves. After the baby leaves the nursery there is no rest for the sole of its foot. Children's society is flushed and fast. Before the boy or girl has reached its "teens" language is piled upon language, study upon study. What would a resurrected Bacon or Newton think of all this? Mental and material food are both bolted voraciously. If they cannot be digested, they must be carried by un nourished strength. The stream of life was once of moderate swiftness, now, except babyhood, it is all cataracts.

Whose voice can be heard in Babel? By what means can life be lived reasonably? It is now either go to the bottom or with the current. It is not wonderful that the young man cannot now be persuaded that it is better to get money slowly, to live moderately and construct character and habits with care and caution. His previous training unfits him for this. The spirit with which he has been imbued is restive under moderation. The world begins the use of immaterial intoxicants in childhood. The habit is early contracted. It is

not to be expected it will suddenly leave the young as they are entering upon practical life. If learning is to be obtained, it must be obtained quickly. The exalted place sought must be reached at a few bounds. The thousands and tens of thousands of dollars must be obtained while the dew of youth moistens the locks. There is now no moderation to be made known to all men. If a christian young man should work moderately, he would be dismissed. A merchant that would trade with decent haste would be at war with his environment. His shutters would soon go up and dust would gather on his ledger. No teacher could hold his place were he to adopt the style of a half century ago. It is now a "down grade" from the beginning to the end of life. All must go. To stop now present momentum would bring destruction. If all must go fast so long as they do go, and they must, let them go straight forward. There is power left to guide. The position should be upright. Truth, righteousness, love and mercy can keep up with the swiftest, if they will have their company. The Bible can be carried in the pocket and in the heart. The over-stimulated and over-wrought generations should not forget that they cannot outrun God. He follows them.

ONLY SENTIMENT.

There has been no little discussion of late in the United States in regard to the use of leaflets in Sunday schools to the exclusion of the Bible in its old entirety and sacred form. While some argue that the use of the entire Bible will give more and better knowledge, others hold that much is lost by not having the whole book constantly in hand. In refuting this idea of mere sentiment, logic has a great advantage; and still, reasoning may conduct to erroneous conclusions. Sentiment is above syllogisms; and will not submit to the inductions of its data. Nevertheless sentiment still reigns and must be respected. For instance, the change of the name of a newspaper which could be shown to be an advantage, might result disastrously to its interests. A fine controlling sympathy gathers around the home of childhood, the country of the citizen, the school attended, the books used, and various objects, especially those with which persons come in contact in early life. A christian man of intelligence, now living in one of the finest localities of the Cornwallis Valley, told us that were he to consult his own feelings and not those of his family, he would live on the shore of the Bay of Fundy, near a great bleak, black Rock, skimming itself at low water repulsively barren. This place had its attraction for him because his early life had been spent in its neighborhood. Many a time his fishing boat had been sheltered in a nook on the land side of the rock, where he listened to the thundering of the waves against the opposite side. His sentiment had been captured by these objects and are still held by them. Even the house in which a person was born or the place of worship, familiar to childhood, have attractions too fine for language, and defiant, and superior to reasoning. This holds good in a high degree for the Bible. It may degenerate in some cases into superstition; but it is nevertheless a factor in life which cannot be ignored with impunity. The root of this sentiment was implanted in human nature by God. It is intended to serve his purposes in the government of the world. In dealing with God's Book, while care should be taken that the letter and form should not become an object of superstitious regard, yet equal care should be taken not to murder the sacred sentiment that goes out toward it. Whole Bibles, well bound and carefully preserved will certainly not be less effective as means of obtaining religious knowledge than mere leaflets and lesson helps; and the sacred sentiment, so common among christians will not be destroyed. Let boys and girls have their Bibles. Then, under wise supervision, and by the divine blessing, a healthy sentiment will be cultivated whose potency will be felt all through life.

SEMINARY SITE.

It has not yet been determined just where the new Seminary buildings shall be located. At the recent director's meeting, several propositions were submitted. Different properties are offered at large reductions from original cost, and it is expected that a decision will soon be reached. Meanwhile let every friend of the movement hold himself ready, and use what influence he can with others to provide for the permanent establishment and successful carrying on of the institution.

CURRENT EVENTS.

A National Conference now in session at Washington, for the purpose of settling on a prime Meridian for the world, is likely to fail of accomplishing its object. The French delegates will not surrender Paris as a fixed Meridian. All others are in favor of Greenwich.

The feeling in France toward the English has undergone a change. Now there is no talk of punishing Britain for her doings in Egypt. The French distinguish themselves in sudden changes of feeling. In this respect they are genuine Celts. The war with China does not go on vigorously. A desire prevails to get to the end as soon and as honorably as possible.

Lord Ripon, it is said, is to be transferred from India to Ireland. It is hot in both places; but not in the same sense. One thing is in the way of this change. By law the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland cannot be a Roman Catholic. If this is changed then the disabilities of Roman Catholicism will have all disappeared in England except that one which blocks the way to the throne. The rumor that a compromise had been effected on the Franchise bill has been contradicted. Negotiations for this end are in progress. A re-distribution bill, it is said, has been prepared by the Government. A draft of it has got into the newspapers. Whether genuine or not does not yet appear.

The news of General Gordon's success in the Soudan has been confirmed. Berber was taken, and the way between this city and Khartoum is open. Colonel Stewart and party were caught on the Nile Rapids. They went ashore; and it is reported that a number of them were killed, Colonel Stewart being one of them.

The Boers still give trouble in South Africa. The colonists are not willing to go to war with them, unless aided by imperial troops. The Government will likely send help.

Lord and Lady Landsdowne arrived in Halifax on Saturday last. To-day they expect to leave for St. John, via the Annapolis Valley.

PARENTAL GOVERNMENT.

The *N. Y. Examiner* returns again and again to the subject of parental government. Last week it uttered no uncertain sound. That journal has in its spirit a good degree of conservatism. On the whole it exhibits great impartiality in comparisons or contrasts instituted between various phases of life in the States and in Great Britain. On this matter of parental government much stress is laid; but all thoughtful readers will frankly admit that it would be difficult to over-estimate or over-emphasize its importance.

No discerning mind, holding in recollection a quarter of a century of the history of these provinces, has failed to see that a change has taken place in family government within our borders. The facetious remark, "That parents honor and obey their children," is not without application on the northern side of the boundary between the States and the Dominion, as well as on the southern side of that line.

Causes may be pointed out accounting for this change; but the most important part of the question is to arrest the tendency and restore a Bible sentiment. From a political point of view the serious consequences of destruction of government in the Home can be clearly seen. A stranger sees a lamentable absence of respect for superiors in the United States. If parents do not assert the authority delegated to them by God; if they fail to rule their household, they most assuredly will have a di-