

The "Visitor" Free TO THE END OF THE YEAR

for all new subscribers. \$2.00 will pay to January 1886. Every Baptist minister is an agent. Any one who will send us five new names with the cash shall receive the VISITOR free for one year, or two dollars worth of books such as he may order. Brethren, put forth a little effort and in so doing you will put a good religious paper in homes where one does not go, and you will receive either the VISITOR free to yourself, or else valuable books for your libraries, as you may choose. We want to put 500 new names on our list inside the next three months, and a little effort by the reader will do it. If any one wishes to do agency work for the VISITOR, RECORD, YOUTH'S VISITOR or GEM in their localities, write us for terms, which they will find liberal.

The Christian Visitor,

Religious Family Newspaper. Published every WEDNESDAY, at 99 Germain Street, St. John, N. B.

Price \$2.00 per Year, in Advance.

REV. J. E. HOPPER, EDITOR.

NOTICE.

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 be published should reach the office not later than Monday noon. When you desire to discontinue taking the VISITOR it is necessary to pay all arrears, and if any, and notify us by letter or post card. It is not enough to send back the paper marked refused, as in most instances we have no means of finding out the address without much searching.

The VISITOR is unsurpassed as an advertising medium in the Maritime Provinces.

TERMS FOR ADVERTISERS:

Per line, first insertion, 12cts.
"each subsequent insertion, 8
Advertising card per year, \$12.00
Two inches space " 20.00
On matters pertaining to the advertising patronage of the VISITOR, address, WEEKS & POWERS, 99 Germain Street, St. John, N. B., with whom special contracts for large advertisements will be made. On all other matters, subscriptions, correspondence, &c., address, J. E. HOPPER, Proprietor.

The Christian Visitor.

Established 1848.

Wednesday, November 19, 1884

PERFECTION.

As this doctrine is now attracting considerable attention, we propose to give it some consideration in a few articles. The doctrine is known by several names among which are Entire Sanctification, Holiness, Rest of Faith, Higher Life, &c. The first one to weave the doctrine into a consistent system and propagate it was Pelagius who lived in the fifth century. Others may have held the dogma before him, but his name stands connected with it with all the propriety that Calvin's is with the system of belief bearing his name.

Pelagius held that men are born *sine virtute sine vitio*—without virtue or vice—and that no taint of sin is transmitted in the race, that sin is the deliberate choice of evil, that what a man ought to do he can do without the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit. The Pelagian theory of Perfection is consistent with itself, and at the same time perfectly inconsistent with Scripture teaching. It denies original sin, the work of the Holy Spirit, the true guilt and turpitude of sin, the unchangeableness of God's law, and in short affirms that man is able to save himself.

Perfectionism started in this bad society. Augustine, the great champion of Pauline theology, struck down the system, and with it fell Perfectionism till it was revived in the Romish church. This church not only holds the doctrine but teaches works of supererogatory merit. In her baptism Rome washes away everything of the nature of sin. Her followers after this may commit venial sin, such sin as does not bring the soul into condemnation as opposed to mortal sin, but the church provides for its forgiveness.

Drs. Mahan and Finney, the chief teachers of what is called the Oberlinian Theology, assert that man has full ability to fulfil all his obligations and that the law as a matter of sheer

justice is adjusted to the sinner's ability to obey. They say there is no sin but in voluntary transgression of known law. This being the case they affirm that many have become perfect as the inhabitants of heaven.

The disciples of Arminius, especially the Methodists, hold that perfection is the result of obedience to what they term "the law of Christ" or "the gospel," not the original law under which man was at first placed. This perfection excludes all inward disposition to sin and all outward commission of it, but does not exclude "mistakes and infirmities" of which John Wesley says, they are "deviations from the perfect law and consequently need atonement. You may call them sins if you please; I do not."

All these schools of theology hold that some men reach a state where they fully and without fault discharge all their duties to God and their fellow men. All these different theories represent God's law as bent from its original strictness, either as a result of grace or justice. They palliate sin, the Romish church speaking of venial sins the Oberlinians talking of there being no sin but in voluntary transgression of known law, and the Methodist apologizing for mistakes and infirmities that require atonement, but are less than sins.

What is the law to which man is answerable? The law of the ten commandments has never been revoked. Jesus Christ in his sermon on the mount took not aught from its rigid demands, but rather set it in a new and stronger light. As an illustration of this, note His teaching as to murder and adultery, in Matt. 5:22, 28. He taught that God is to be loved with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the mind, with all the strength, and thy neighbor as thyself. This complied with, man would be perfect. Anything short of this needs improvement and consequently is imperfect. The law in the entirety of its demand was met by Christ, and those trusting in His salvation must not thereby be satisfied with a low morality and a thin shade of holiness. Be ye holy for I am holy. No lower standard can an infinitely holy God put before us. The law that remains as the rule of our life, the law that Christ obeyed, is nothing short of that original moral law which finds its base in the character of God himself. The scriptures are silent about the law being graduated by "simple justice" or "grace" to suit man in his fallen state.

What is sin as set forth in God's word? The Romish Church teaches that concupiscence, or the remains of original sin which is not removed by baptism, is not of the nature of sin and does not bring one into condemnation. The Oberlinian says, sin is only transgression of known law. The Methodists say mistakes and infirmities are not sins. In all these theories, there is this in common that much which the great mass of Evangelical Christians call sin, is by them denied or excused. The scriptures do not teach such palliating of sin, the abominable thing which God hates. Sin is a state as well as an act. The Psalmist mourned that he was born in sin and shapen in iniquity. In 1 John 3:4, we have a definition of sin. "Sin is transgression of the law," or literally "sin is lawlessness." The terms are co-extensive. Any violation of the law is sin. Anything that comes not up to the divine standard of right is sin.

There is considerable difficulty in ascertaining just what different advocates of perfection believe. There are almost as many views, and methods of substantiating them, maintained as are put forth for infant baptism by its advocates, and many of these conflict with each other as much as do the different reasons assigned for pedobaptism. It would form an interesting page in polemics to set these opposing statements in array against each other. If any one holding perfection views says, none of the views mentioned correctly represents his view of perfection, we have to reply that the seed germs of all views we have seen enunciated are contained in one or the other of these views. Wesley, Finney, Pearsall Smith, and others, not to mention lesser living exponents of the

doctrine, all agree in lessening the restraints of God's law and winking at sins.

All evangelical Christians admit that we ought to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect, that the provisions of the Gospel are adequate for the realization of it, and that the promises of God include it even conformity to the likeness of His Son. The question with us is, is this state reached and enjoyed in this life? If it is, then the most of God's best servants whose lives are recorded in the Bible, as well as those who have lived since, have been and are in great error. If perfection is not reached in this life, then some are deceived in the assertion of its possession. They are swayed by fancy rather than faith, they are following a "will with a wish," rather than the sure word of prophecy and like Paul, modern Christians must not follow cunningly devised fables, but exhort all to go on unto perfection, and not imagine themselves perfect simply because they possess some happy feelings.

MISS HAMILTON AND THE F. M. BOARD.

To the Editor of the Visitor:—

WOODSTOCK, Nov. 15th, '84.
A paragraph appeared in your columns some weeks ago in which you charged me with believing in Sinless Perfection. I wish to state that I do not believe in Sinless Perfection; that I said nothing to the Foreign Mission Board from which such a thing could be fairly inferred; that I did not say as you have reported that I had lived without sin for six months.

LENORE HAMILTON.

I demand the publication of the above in the VISITOR.

Our sister in her presentation of her grievance in the above letter is very unfortunate in the statements she makes. The paragraph to which she takes exception appeared in the VISITOR Sept. 3, 1884, and is as follows:

The Foreign Mission Board withdrew a clause which had been before the Convention. It related to the going out to India of two young ladies. After their report had been given to the Convention the Board learned that one of the young ladies had embraced the doctrine of sinless perfection, and was so engrossed with this belief that her usefulness as a missionary would be neutralized.

It will be seen from this extract that the VISITOR did not charge Miss Hamilton with a belief in sinless perfection, but that the VISITOR simply reported a piece of news, viz.: that "the Board learned that one of the young ladies had embraced the doctrine of sinless perfection." If this is not true the Board can correct the statement, but that it is essentially true may be inferred from the fact that for certain perfection notions the Board not only refused to send the young lady out, but when she insisted that the Board be called together a second time in St. John to hear her complaint the board recorded this minute on their books:

Miss Hamilton stated her views at some length, answering questions put to her by the members present, but without materially changing the opinion of the Board in regard to the special form of her belief.

Whatever complaint our sister has to make, ought to be made against the Board, and not against the VISITOR, as the VISITOR simply performed the part of a reporter. At the second meeting of the Board, (and by the way, the editors of the VISITOR were at neither of the meetings) a pastor, after listening to Miss Hamilton's statement said in her presence, "I did not hear your views before but I judge from your present statement that the report in the VISITOR is correct."

As to the second charge that the VISITOR ever reported that Miss H. had lived without sin for six months, her memory must be at fault, as the VISITOR has made no such statement. That several brethren and sisters at Convention and since have commented privately on the following conversation had between Miss H. and the Ladies' Board at Moncton is not denied. A lady of the Board asked Miss H.:

"How long since you have sinned?"

To this Miss H. said:

"I don't like it put that way."

The lady of the Board then said:

"I would like a plain answer to a plain question."

To which Miss H. replied: "Since last March."

Miss H. will not probably deny this. If Miss H. does not believe perfection doctrines she owes it to herself and the Foreign Mission

Board to set herself right, and then there will be no reason why, at the first opportunity she should not be sent as a missionary to the Telugus. Against Miss H.'s moral character we have never heard a whisper. The objection to her being sent to India, arose entirely from her theological unsoundness on the doctrine of Perfection.

We think Miss H. has made a mistake in demanding the publication of her letter, and it will be taken that she, like all the rest of us, and Paul, is not yet perfect.

INDIVIDUAL EFFORT.

We take it that the public preaching of the gospel will continue so long as good is to be commended, and sin and error combated. The Son of God himself employed this method of reaching men's understandings and hearts, and ordained that it should be the means by which His disciples should carry forward the work to which He called them. This is sufficient proof of its importance; sufficient guarantee of its continuance.

Here, reason, as in all cases within its reach, approves and commends the Master's choice of means. There is more in a congregation of one thousand than in an audience of one to rouse the interest and stimulate the faculties of the speaker. With hundreds of eyes upon him, hundreds of ears open to his words, he seems to have more adequate conception of the grandeur of his subject. He rises to passages of beauty and power, he deals in metaphor and imagery, he apostrophizes and pleads, he encourages or rebukes as he would not do in mere conversation. If he has the elements of a public speaker, he is at his best, with all his powers alert, and in a mental and spiritual condition in which he would seem best fitted to be a medium for the conveying and enforcing of truth. So much with reference to preaching, as we generally understand the term, merely to show that we do not under-estimate its importance, but recognize it as God appointed, and therefore not doomed to lose aught of its prestige as the leading means in winning men to Christ and guiding and strengthening them in His service.

It is, perhaps, too common an error to over-look the less in contemplation of the greater. The successful minister does not make this mistake; the easy-going, more or less indifferent layman often does. The former knows that personal contact is necessary to prepare for effectual public ministrations, and to supplement and enforce it; the latter is apt to think that a sermon or two on Sunday is all that is needed to carry forward the cause, and that his whole duty to the world is discharged when he has helped out of his means to provide for this preaching. This is an error, injurious to the Church and unjust to the world.

Many a graduate has gained from a few years of earnest, conscientious teaching, a firmer grasp of facts and a broader conception of principles than he acquired through an industrious course at college. So the Christian, by coming into contact with those who know not the way or have not accepted the truth, by endeavouring to arouse, to convince, to encourage, strengthens his own faith and tightens his own hold upon the truth. As he becomes anxious to guide others, he trims his own light and comes nearer to the standard which the Saviour has set up.

By such a course on the part of church members, the man outside the church or outside the kingdom, (I do not mean to use the expressions as always synonymous), has the influence not only of example, but of personal interest and sympathy. Probably most of those who habitually listen to the gospel, are Christians in theory. They give intellectual assent to the truth. Their understanding takes hold of the way and plan of salvation. Yet they hear as part of the mass. They acquiesce, as a matter of form and habit, and fail to make personal and practical application. Here, then, is the opportunity for individual argument and appeal. "A word fitly spoken" may open up that aspect of the case which they

have failed to consider. If we are sinners and a man in whom we have confidence comes to us, not perfunctorily or obtrusively, but with careful and wise discrimination, we are assured of his personal interest; we are likely to be drawn by his sympathy to open our hearts, and to receive help at just the point where is our own peculiar difficulty. Here is field enough for the laity. Preaching, in its widest sense is not confined to sermonizing. There is full scope for zeal and talent outside the pulpit; and their full exercise gives promise of grandest results.

UNION.

We find the *Intelligencer* making the following quotations and comments:—

"The Baptists of Yarmouth County have a Sabbath School Convention. It held its Semi-Annual Session at Chebogue on the 28th ult. The following resolution—moved by Rev. J. A. Gordon and seconded by Rev. J. A. Stubbart—was unanimously passed.

In view of the present discussion of the question of organic union between ourselves and the Free Baptists.

Therefore Resolved, That we request our Executive cordially to invite representatives from their schools to participate in the work of our Convention in the future. In its Prospectus for 1885 the VISITOR says:—

"The VISITOR is committed to the seeking of a union of the Baptists, Free Christian Baptists and Free Baptists upon a fair and honorable basis, as well as the Union of all Baptists in Canada in extra-provincial Home Missions, Foreign Missions, Theological Education, Book and Publication Society work, and such other interests as are common to all concerned and can be more effectively promoted by union."

The *Intelligencer* is committed to the same thing in the same way.

In the *Wesleyan* we find the following:—

The *Morning Star*, the organ of the Freewill Baptists in the United States, recently intimated that if the Baptists of that country should publicly assert the fullest liberty of opinion on the points involved in the old Calvinistic-Arminian controversy, the separate existence of the Freewill Baptist body would not be long continued. In reference to this intimation the *Zion's Advocate*, of Portland, a Baptist paper, remarks: "So far as 'the old Calvinistic-Arminian controversy' is concerned, every one knows, or ought to know, that it ended long ago. We do not apprehend that at the present time there is any difference between Baptists and Freewill Baptists on the point of freedom of the will." The question of close or open communion will then be the principal question in reference to union.

To which we say, now brethren let us settle down to an earnest search for the finding of a fair and honorable Scripture basis upon which to unite our forces to carry on the Lord's work.

BAPTIST INCREASE IN ENGLAND.

Through the kindness of Dr. Angus, President of Regent's Park College, London, England, we are possessed of a copy in pamphlet form of the address he gave before the Autumnal session of the Baptist Union at Bradford. The subject was, "Now and Then, Twenty years work for Christ."

The Baptist churches of England and Wales, in 1863, had a membership of 200,000 in a population of 20,000,000, making every 100th man a Baptist. In 1883 every 86th man could claim this privilege, as the membership of the churches had risen to 300,000. This is an increase of 50 per cent. in twenty years. Of the 100,000 members gained in 20 years it is noted that 60,000 of them were added in the first ten years of the period and 40,000 in the last.

Dr. Angus in speaking of the great number of small churches in England as compared with Wales remarks:—"The Welsh plan of keeping smaller churches as parts of a central church till they are large enough to stand alone and become themselves centres of influence, is sanctioned alike by New Testament example, and by natural law, and may I not add, by common sense."

As to Sunday school advance the returns of 1886 reported 190,000 scholars, those of 1883 reported 427,000, a satisfactory increase.

As to accommodation provided in places of worship the increase of late years has been gratifying. In 20 years £1,438,000 have been spent on church edifices, or £72,000 a year.

The Doctor draws some lessons from these facts. £60,000 a year are raised for Foreign Missions, and it is said by some that too much is being done for the heathen. Twenty years ago £40,000 were raised for Foreign Missions, and the membership of the

churches was 200,000. Now £60,000 are raised and the membership is 300,000. The increase is only proportional, and can't be deemed exorbitant when £72,000 a year are spent alone on places of worship.

Again he says that nothing more is being done to-day for the education of a suitable ministry than 20 years ago. Why should everything else advance and the means to provide thoroughly furnished pastors and teachers stand still. The church and the world needs men able to rightly divide the word of God and lead in to all truth.

A closing appeal is made for consecration to the work of God that larger results may be seen, and that the graces of the Spirit may shine in all the membership.

From the above figures it will be seen that English Baptists raise about a dollar *per capita*. This is far in advance of what either American or Canadian Baptists raise, but it is certainly not more than the demands of the Master requires to spread abroad the gospel.

"HOLINESS CONVENTION."

Our secular papers have been giving more or less extended notices of a series of meetings in Berryman's hall, to which the conductors give the title above quoted. As nearly as we gather the meaning of their terms, their object is to bring Christians into "a state of perfection" or "Entire Sanctification" or "complete purity of heart." It is understood that the leaders claim, that they have been living, for greater or less periods, in this condition. Preaching and social meetings alternate. In the latter, strong excitement is manifested. One reporter speaks of "sobs," and calls of "Amen," "Glory to Jesus," "Hallelujah," besides "stentorian groans" etc., etc. It is sometimes evident to passers by that some of the participants in the services have good lungs, and use them to their full capacity. At times, those in the audience who will, are invited forward to receive instantaneous Sanctification, etc.

On Sunday the Institute was secured and large audiences assembled. It was asked that \$400 should be contributed for travelling expenses &c. At former collections in the hall complaint had been made that "too many coppers" were put on the plate, that they "had suffered from the coppersmith," etc. It is understood that the receipts on Sunday were very good.

Several are in attendance from the United States. Different denominations are represented. The meetings still continue.

SOME ITEMS OF THE WEEK.

There is considerable complaint of hard times in the City, and the prospects for the winter are not considered very re-assuring.

The failure of D. R. & C. F. Eaton, of N. S., will entail, it is said, a good deal of loss on several firms of this city.

A few burglars have been plying their trade, with no very great success but, so far, without capture.

In London, Sir John Macdonald has been suggesting a federation of England and her Colonies, and arousing the Briton's pride at the prospect of formidable strength and unquestioned supremacy assured to the mother country through such an arrangement.

Although some reports insist upon having Gordon dead, yet it appears that the old hero is still holding his own and making the enemy feel his power. Some reports assert considerable defection from the Mahdi, and, unless possibly General Gordon has met his death through the ordinary casualty of war, it does not seem likely that the enemy have yet the chance to rejoice at his removal.

France has some trouble at home as well as in the East. Paris itself has paled a little at the outbreak of cholera, while Toulon has shown decided symptoms of panic. Energetic means are being taken to prevent the spread of the disease, and these the colder weather is expected to assist.

As the official count in the Presidential election goes on, Republicans seem to be losing the confidence