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Contributors and Correspondents.

DIARY IN THE EAST.

LAST WEEK IN JERUSALEM—JEWISH PASSOVER—JOURNEY TO NAZARETH.

April 2nd I shall never forget. It was the day before Good Friday, the day when thus we remembered our Lord's partaking of the Passover with his disciples, and instituting the Lord's Supper. In the little English Church on Zion Hill a company of Christians, of various nations, gathered on that evening to commemorate the Lord's dying love. It was a very solemn season, when one seemed brought very near to the cross on which the Lord of glory was content to hang, a willing sufferer for His people's sins. Not that even such a celebration, on such a night, and in such a place, could give any real spiritual appreciation of the Lord's love, and application of his merits to the soul. No, such circumstances might move the natural feelings, but could not really touch the soul. On Zion Hill, as in Scotland, it is the Spirit's work, and only His to convince of sin, and to testify of the dying love of a Saviour.

After this solemn service, B. Mr. W., and I walked out to the slope of the Mount of Olives, above Gethsemane. Two friends were with us, one of them an English clergyman.

We had to pass all round the city outside the walls, for at sunset all the gates are shut except the Jafa one. The solemn stillness of the night was unbroken by any human sound, and the time and scene forbade much conversation. The full moon at times was covered by thick clouds, but as we stood on the slope of Olivet it broke forth from its cloudy covering, sending a perfect flood of brilliant light over the valley, in the depth of which that awful scene was witnessed by angels if not by men—when their God and ours, veiled in flesh, bowed down in agony under the load of our sins, and cried out, "O, my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me!" I think that hour came up before me that night with a reality that nothing could surpass as we knelt down there, and one of our number lifted up his voice in prayer to the Father who gave His dear Son that bitter cup to drink, that we might go free. Before us we saw the slope of the hill down which the betrayer and the servants of the High Priest came with swords and staves to take the unresisting victim. Perhaps it was just such a cloudy night as the one on which we looked on the scene, for they bore "lanterns and torches," which, on a night of full moon, would otherwise have seemed needless. The clouds closed again over the moon, so we gave up our intention of climbing to the top of Olivet, and returned to Jerusalem up the steep path that leads to St. Stephen's Gate, the path which our Lord must have trode as they led him away to Caiaphas, while his disciples all forsook him and fled. How apt we are to brand them as the worst of cowards, and to imagine that we never could have deserted our Lord in his hour of deep trial. Yet, what are we doing about confessing him before men? He is now on his throne of glory, and it would seem an easier thing to confess him there than in his humiliation, but how often we are very Peters, frightened before the face of even a maid servant, to confess that we belong to Jesus of Nazareth.

April 3rd, Good Friday. Great crowd of travellers were in Jerusalem, very many of whom spend much of their time in seeing the ceremonies on that day, and on Easter Sunday in the Church of the Sepulchero. Had it been any where but Jerusalem, I think I might have gone from curiosity on Good Friday evening to see the goings on there, but after having my mind so filled by the solemn remembrance of the Lord's death, as Bishop Gobat preached from his words on the cross, I did not feel I could bear to go and see a sort of theatrical representation of it in the church. Still less could I employ the day on which we commemorated the Lord's resurrection in such a way. It was very precious to me, as the last Sabbath I was to spend in Jerusalem.

April 7th was a splendid day. On it my dear friends, B. and Mr. W., were united for life, and on the same afternoon I started with them on our way to Nazareth.

A numerous company rode out with us for about an hour. On the top of the rising ground north of Olivet, which the road crosses, I took my last farewell look of the Holy City. Even in its dissolution how beautiful it looked. It was at its best. Olivet was as green as it ever is; soon the hot sun would burn it up, and bring it back to their brown and grey desolation in which I first found it. I need not weary my readers by going over the same ground which I had already passed in going to and from Nablous. We met with no remarkable adventures, the road was only

much hotter than when I passed it before, and our company a little larger, for we had, besides Mustapha on horseback, two mules for baggage, and their owners with them. After spending a night with the F's at Nablous, we started on for Nazareth, Mr. F. riding with us for a considerable distance. We took a road over Ebal, nearly due north, thus avoiding the detour by Samaria, which most travellers make. The day was splendid, in fact this time forward the only thing we had to fear in the matter of weather was the great heat which now began quite suddenly. The winter rains had been much more copious and continuous than any one in the country could remember seeing them, but the land soon dried up in all parts but regular swamps, and soon much of the grain got stunted for want of "latter rain," which are as necessary as the "former rain." The heat of April and May in Palestine is sometimes more oppressive than even the midsummer heat, because it is more frequently accompanied by the dreaded sirocco, the lowering effect of which on the nervous system can only be conceived by nervous people who have felt it.

This 7th of April, however, though hot, was not oppressive, and we had a pleasant ride over hill and vale. The ground was just a mass of flowers, and the hills were more rounded and green than those about Jerusalem. They reminded me a little of the border hills about Moffat, but they were more capable of cultivation than our Scotch hills. There were here and there patches of thriving grain far up on the hillsides. Our track, at first though rough, was not at all difficult, and very superior to that between Jerusalem and Nazareth, the real difficulties came in the after part of the day. We rode nearly three hours without passing a single village, though we saw some at a distance. Our rest was taken by a little stream not far from the large village of Jaba. It is prettily situated on a sloping hill, and has an ancient, yet massive, look, not nearly so tumble-down in appearance as most of the villages I saw. There were groves of fine olive trees under which we rested and refreshed ourselves with lemonade, at the manufacture of which Mustapha was an adept. We carried the materials with us, except the water which the little brook supplied. While sitting under the trees a few Mukharries passed with their mules, to whom Mustapha applied for information about the road, for we were now close to the worst bit of the whole way. They pointed out one of their party, a man on horseback, who they said would guide us if we liked. It was too good an offer to lose, so we mounted at once, and set off with our guide in front of us. We were much the better of him. He knew every step of the way, and following close on his steps we got through a very swampy bit which there was no way of avoiding. He also showed us how to proceed when we came near what Murray describes as a "beautiful plain three or four miles in diameter," surrounded by low hills covered with dark copses of Hawthorn, oak, and arbutus which rise abruptly from the greenward. This little plain was now a complete lake. Even in ordinary years it is apt to be pretty wet, as the waters which come from the hills around it have no outlet, and in consequence it gets the name of "Merjel-Ghuruk," or the "Drowning Meadow."

On the west side of it the little fortress and village of Sanur crown a conical hill. Across this Drowning Meadow, now a lake, the regular road goes, but our guide took us a long detour over the hill beside Sanur, and through fields beyond it, so that we only in one place had to ride through the water, and then it was not unpleasant to do so, for the ground was firm and rocky under it, being in fact the spur of one of the little hills that bound the plain.

I was glad that the regular track was still completely impassable. Had it been a little dried up so that we could have gone by it, we should have had a very unpleasant hour or more of crawling through swamps, in which the horses would have sunk till we felt as if they could never get up again. I preferred a long round very much to that, and the scenery was very beautiful. The little lake was quite a pretty object, surrounded by the wooded hills, all gay with flowers and flowering shrubs.

We were rather amused to find out that our guide was the Nazareth postman who goes to and fro between Jerusalem and Nazareth once a week; so though he was by this time in Nazareth. The letters which we had written to our friends there, announcing that we were really coming now that the weather was settled, were still in his saddle-bags, and he did not reach Nazareth till after ourselves.

From the little lake we wound up over a wooded height, from the top of which we had a glorious view. Just beneath us the little village of Kubstiyel, nestled in one of the romantic valleys that intersect these hills of Samaria. Further to our left, though not within sight, we knew Dohban lay hid in another fertile vale, the rich pasture of which had tempted Jacob's sons to bring their flocks on from Shechem on that day when Joseph was hailed by them as "the dreamer," and made the victim of the jealous spite and hatred of his unnatural brothers. Beyond all this we could see (over a low ridge) the vast plains of Esdrafaon, and beyond it again the hills of Galilee, and which Nazareth lies. A little tower on one of the hills above Nazareth might already be discerned with a glass. On the horizon Haroun stands out boldly against the sky, and dressed in spots white and looking beautiful. The inhabitant of Kubstiyel bore a bad character for turbulence, but let us pass peacefully, with the exception of a mischievous woman throwing a stone at us as we rode down the steep hill above the

village. From there we crossed a long open slope, and then dived down into such a pretty glen with a rapid stream running down it. There were many cattle grazing about, and I could have imagined myself in one of the quiet highland glens of my native land, had not a couple of jackals, which we roused from their lair, undeceived me. And soon after rounding one of the windings of the glen, we came in view of the few palm-trees which mark the village of Jenin, where we were to pass the night—I cannot say where we were to sleep.

(To be Continued.)

Infant Baptism of Older Date than the Thirteenth Century.

At the opening of the new Baptist Church, St. Catherine St., Montreal, the Rev. Dr. Lorimer of Boston, preached from Rev. xxi. 16—"The city lieth four square," etc. According to the Montreal Witness, the following is a part of the sermon: "The length of the city showed the great length of the Church. Roman Catholics boast of the great antiquity of their church, but we can fix the date of every one of their doctrines. The preacher here gave the dates of the first introduction of a number of Popish doctrines and practices. Infant baptism he stated, had its beginning in the thirteenth century." On the above I would make the following remarks:

(1) The Dr. knows that, of the different evangelical bodies, the far greater number practice infant baptism. He knows, also, that the Baptists unite readily with them in different efforts to extend the kingdom of Christ in the world. It was in the highest degree reasonable to suppose that a large number of the latter would be present, some, no doubt, from curiosity—others, no doubt, from brotherly feeling. It was, therefore, in extremely bad taste to class them with Papists in the matter of infant baptism, as the Dr. did. If he believes the thread-bare statement that infant baptism is one of the institutions of Popery, he has a perfect right to express his belief on suitable occasions. The occasion referred to, was, however, anything but a suitable one. Solomon says that there is a time to be silent, as well as a time to speak. The Dr. would have shown wisdom if he had kept silent on that subject, at that time. Some may say, "O, but this is a free country." That is quite true, but are we under no law except that of the land?

(2) The Dr.'s knowledge of Church History must be very limited when he says that infant baptism is an institution of Popery, and that it was not introduced till the thirteenth century. There is, to say the least, very strong reason to believe that it was practised by the apostles. If it was, then both statements of the Dr. are untrue. But I shall pass by that, and come to other arguments against them. The Greek, the Armenian, the Nestorian, the Syrian, and the Abyssinian Churches have always practised infant baptism. These were in being long before the thirteenth century, and were never subject to the Papacy. The Waldensian Church has been a witness for the truth from apostolic times. One of its characteristics has always been infant baptism. We learn from Irenaeus, who wrote about sixty-seven years after the apostle's time, that infant baptism was practised in his day. Tertullian, who was born fifty years after the apostolic age, Augustine, Pelagius, and Celestius who lived in the fourth century, respectively testify that infant baptism was common in their days. The Council of Carthage, whose president was Cyprian, and which met one hundred and fifty years after the apostles passed a law regarding the time when an infant should be baptized. It is unnecessary to multiply proofs of the same kind. So much for Dr. Lorimer's assertions that infant baptism is a Popish institution, and that it was unknown before the thirteenth century. T. F. Motis, Que.

Sabbath Observance.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.
DEAR SIR,—Will you kindly give insertion in your columns to the unhoped-for form of Petition to the Dominion Parliament, for the passing of an Act for the more effectual suppression of unnecessary Sabbath labour and traffic on public works and lines of railway throughout the Dominion. It is more suggested as a form that Presbyteries may use or modify according to their own judgment.

There should be three copies prepared, one to be addressed to His Excellency the Governor-General, one to the Senate, and one to the Commons; and they should be forwarded to Ottawa very early in the session of Parliament, if not previously sent to the member of the House who is to take charge of having them presented. Yours, very truly, W. T. McMULLEN.
Woodstock, Nov. 15th, 1875.

To the Honourable the House of Commons of Canada, in Parliament assembled.

THE PETITION OF THE PRESBYTERY OF —, OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA.

HUMBLY SHEWETH

That the Lord's day or Christian Sabbath as a day of rest devoted to the public worship of God is a Divine institution, the observance of which is intimately connected with the social and moral well-being of the people of this Dominion; and that every citizen should be protected in his right to enjoy the rest and the religious privileges of that holy day.

That in connection with public works and lines of railway throughout the Do-

minion there is, as your petitioners believe, a very large amount of unnecessary labour and traffic carried on on the Sabbath; and the employees of railway corporations especially are subjected to the grievous hardship of having either to engage in such Sabbath labour and traffic or resign their situations; and that the public worship of God in cities, towns, and villages along such lines of railway is seriously disturbed.

That the law, as it now stands, makes no adequate provision for arresting this evil, railway corporations not being held responsible for the violations of the civil law of the Sabbath committed in their service, but only the men who are found at work, and who in many cases are obeying the orders of the company, contrary to their own consciences, and in opposition to a deep sense of duty.

That such a state of things is highly injurious, both physically and morally, to the individuals and families more immediately implicated, is fitted to deaden the moral sensibility of the public mind on the claims and sanctity of the Sabbath, and thereby weaken all religious conviction and lower the standard of public morals.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that Your Honourable House may be pleased to pass an Act for the more effectual suppression of all unnecessary Sabbath labour and traffic on railroads and public works.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

Conversion.

(Continued.)

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

Human Effort.—We may further make it a distinct question whether God is moved by the religious exercises of the unregenerate to grant that grace which leads to conversion, or whether he is influenced solely by his own purpose previously formed. Arminius expresses his view as follows: "Such is the benignity and liberality of God, that, though these works are unworthy, yet he rewards them with a larger blessing." Watson in his institutes takes a similar position and says: "There is sometimes found a man not yet regenerated in the scriptural sense—not even decided in his choice—something of moral excellence, such as compunction for sin; a fear of God which preserves from evil, charity, kindness, a lofty sense of honour and justice, a power of consideration, praying, turning to God; such as to commence that course would lead to forgiveness and regeneration."

The first view seems to represent conversion as the benevolent reward of human diligence; the second, that an honest and faithful cultivation of virtuous feelings will lead to conversion. Of such views we cannot say less than that they tend the mind to undervalue the work of the Spirit, and to over-estimate human frames and feelings;—that they attribute at least as much to human diligence as to grace;—and that they share the glory of the work between the creature and the Creator. There seems to be no small divergence between such views and that of Paul,—"By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast, for we are his workmanship." Cole in his old Puritan style says: "What rises from the Divine nature directs its course towards God, and ceases not till it arrives at him; but what rises in self terminates there; as a circle, whosoever it begins there it ends." Paul was once a moralist of no ordinary size, but "where it pleased God to reveal his son in him," he counts it all but duty, which he would not have done, had the new-creature sprung out of the old. Think not, therefore, to find in yourselves the materials of Gospel holiness, or to raise them out of your natural endowments, which, though of good use in their place, will not bear of the right kind till headed by the ingrafted word. To think to obtain special grace upon you, improvement of that which is common is to build upon a wrong foundation, to remain under a covenant of works, under which no man was ever saved or shall be; this was the case until those who "followed after the law of righteousness," and did not attain to it, because "they sought it," as it were, "by the works of the law."

Another phase of the question meets us here, viz.: does not the unregenerate in some sense desire salvation?

Probably all the unregenerate acquainted with the Gospel have a wish to be saved and can say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." This desire may, even to some extent, influence their conduct, yet such a wish is not inconsistent with their remaining in a state of sin, and discovering no love for the Saviour.

Means.—Conversion, being the actual and personal availing of the soul to God, of one that is spiritually moved by the Holy Spirit, may be viewed as the work of God and as the work of man. In Scripture there are three classes of texts which bear upon the subject. The first refers to the Divine, the second to the human element, in the third both elements are co-joined, as in John vi. 27, God is the Supreme Cause, man is the subordinate, and moves, man acts by Him.

Inasmuch as the work of grace is carried on in the soul, in conformity with the natural constitution of the mind, it is evident that means are necessary for effecting

the ends designed. The Church is a grand organized system for the conversion of the world.

It is therefore the privilege, and is no less the duty of man, to use the means which the Spirit ordinarily blesses to the desired end. Amongst other duties we mention the following, viz.: To inform ourselves aright concerning our natural state and condition.—To endeavour to understand God's will and the way of salvation.—"Search the Scriptures."—To pray and seek the influence of the Holy Spirit. We might as well say that the Syro-Chaldee woman did wrong in beseeching Christ in her importunities as to say that the unregenerate should not pray. The Holy Spirit's promise to them that ask for Him "It is in the exercise of means that God usually reveals himself by his blessings. While the lepers were on their way to the priest they were cleansed. While the blind man washed in the pool of Shiloah he received sight. While we are the means, their Divine Author makes them effectual. Elisha wrote the waters with Elijah's mantle, but it was the God of Elijah that parted them hither and thither. Men rolled the stone from the grave, but it was Christ who brought Lazarus forth.

To such a view of the whole subject two objections may be raised.

First, If God has not bestowed grace how can he ask men to report? We answer (1) As our Sovereign Lord and Righteous Ruler God acts consistently with his government in "commanding all men everywhere to report." (2) Because sin is not the state in which God created us, but one to which man has reduced himself, and in which he too willingly lives, it is consistent in God to command from us the honour due to Him. "If thou be a father where is mine honour? and if I be a master where is my fear?" (3) God appeals to the moral nature, so that the enlightened conscience may give its judgment against sin; and this state of conviction He uses as a means of leading men to true repentance. (4) He commands repentance, that we may know our duty, and so be enabled to do his will as expressed in the economy of grace.

Second objection. If man has no ability to repent how can he be blamed for not repenting? This, though seemingly the strongest is the shallowest objection that can be offered; for he who urges it against the offering of grace would allow no weight to attach to it, if urged against the judicial economy that obtains with man. We believe that no man will urge that the evil disposition of the criminal should absolve him from blame, or shield him from punishment; but rather, that it aggravates his offence. In like manner the greater the indisposition of the sinner to godliness, the deeper his guilt. There is in fact no doctrine to which an objection may not be raised. There are mysteries connected with godliness, and mysteries connected with sin. There is for all sufficient encouragement and comfort in the Gospel truths, viz.: That in the eternal and unchangeable love of God, He gave His Son to die for us, His Word to instruct us, and His Spirit to influence us. That Jesus came "to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance." That the Gospel invitations are addressed to sinners—that the means by which God accomplishes his purpose in man's salvation are placed in our possession—and that while we are commanded to make to ourselves a new heart, we at the same time have the promise, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." C.

Scriptural Exposition.

Scripture exposition from the pulpit has fallen into disuse. One of the Andover professors remarks that "the Christian teacher is merged and forgotten in the pulpit orator." The leadership in biblical instruction has silently passed into the hands of laymen. The man whom of all men we should naturally expect to see, not "lord it over," but morally leading his fellow Christian workers, is not there. He is taking needed rest for an hour, or he may be hard at work preparing to go again into his pulpit to conduct a service whose impression differs just enough from that of the morning to somewhat blur the latter, and not enough to prevent the inevitable impression of monotony. Thus the preacher loses what naturally belongs to him, (not as a matter of supremacy, but of service,) and what the intelligent, thinking people in our churches want him to have, and what he, as a workman, cannot afford to lose, namely, the spiritual leading of all his people, old and young, in the study of the Scriptures.—Rev. George N. Marden.

A society for the propagation of Buddhism throughout the world is reported as having been established in China.

The whole Bible is now printed in the Maudsarian dialect, which is the official language of China.

If you labor to be seen of men, the spirit of your work will have little rallying power. If you do all things heartily as to the Lord; the outpouring of your patience and enthusiasm may spread in many hearts, even though the Master wisely keeps you ignorant of it.

The London Rock says it is confidently asserted in certain well-informed circles that the Pope has a batch of five or six medals to give, all of whom are pledged to vote for Dr. Manning when another wearer is wanted for the triple crown.

The workmen in Rome, while purring their researches in the house where the wooden writing-tables were lately discovered, came on two inkstands and the pen which had been used in inscribing. The pen is of metal, and something of the form of a goosequill.