

The Provincial Wesleyan.

Published under the direction of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of Eastern British America.

Volume XXIII.

HALIFAX, N. S., WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 1871.

Number 15.

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PASTORAL VISITATION.

From discussions that recently and now and then for a considerable time past, have appeared in the *London Methodist Recorder*, we infer that there is a growing conviction in the British Methodist mind, that neither in London nor in the rural parts of England is Methodist pastoral visitation anything like as effective as it ought to be. This conviction is well founded. The Circuit system as worked in England, is not favorable to the performance of systematic and thoroughly effective pastoral visitation. Circuits with three, four or more ministers stationed on them, each following the other for two or three years in ceaseless succession, in every pulpit comprised within those circuits, cannot reasonably expect that regular house-to-house visitation from their pastors with which it is desirable they should be blessed.

Then, there is another custom prevalent in British Methodism, which renders it simply impossible for Methodist Ministers endowed with striking popular talents to excel in their purely pastoral work. It is the custom of British Methodism to keep such men very largely occupied in special services demanding frequent absence from their appointed sphere of labour. Net worked as England is with fast travelled railroads, it cannot be that a minister who week after week is flying over the country from Land's End to the Tweed, can do his own Circuit justice in a pastoral point of view, even though he may manage to be generally in that Circuit on Sabbath day. This last described custom, we fancy, is not likely to be changed; but the time cannot be far distant when the English Circuit system will have to undergo important modification to make it practicable for English Wesleyan Ministers to overtake their proper pastoral work.

Noting the discussions referred to, we have been led to think that a frank and judicious interchange of sentiment in the columns of the *Provincial Wesleyan*, on the important subject of pastoral visitation, might be found profitable. Hoping that older and wiser ministers may be induced to offer such sage counsels on this matter as a long and varied experience enables them to present, we venture this week to break ground upon it.

Much meditation on ministerial work indulged in during our silent supernumeraryship has compelled us to attach very great importance to pastoral visitation. Were it in our power, with renovated vocal strength and restored hearing, to re-enter the active ranks of the ministry, we should strive to prepare more carefully and skillfully for the pulpit than ever before, with an eye to the achievement of direct results by the Divine blessing; but we should hope to give vastly increased attention to the non-pulpit department of pastoral labour. We would not wish to indulge in exaggerated statements on any subject. But we cannot help concluding that the thorough performance of pastoral duty is of supreme importance to the abiding prosperity of the Church. The sphere of pastoral duty comprises several departments of ministerial activity. We speak now, however, only of what may be included under the general term, pastoral visitation. The energetic and faithful performance of this duty involves, as we suppose, the adoption of some such course as the following:—

1. The prompt and frequent visitation of the sick belonging to one's own congregation, and belonging to no congregation, in one's neighbourhood according to the urgency of each case respectively.
2. The regular visitation of each Church member placed under one's care at his or her residence, if practicable.
3. The systematic visitation of each family or portion of a family forming part of one's regular congregation, whether members of the Church or not.
4. The visitation of persons not known to be connected with other Denominations established in one's vicinity, who attend one's ministrations with some degree of frequency.
5. The searching out of persons who formerly were Church members or who once worshipped with the congregation of which one has now charge, but who are not now known to belong to any Church or to worship with any congregation.
6. The extra visitation of persons who have disappeared for the time from the class room, or the pew, or who may be suffering from the occurrence of some painful calamity.
7. The extra visitation from time to time of non-profrs belonging to one's congregation, whom one has reason to believe to be cherishing serious thoughts respecting things divine.
8. The house-to-house visitation, as other duties permit, of families known to be neglectors of public worship, and of whose welfare no one else seems to care. All this we should consider to pertain of right to ordinary pastoral visitation. Of course, in times of revival and in some other emergencies the visitation in certain cases would have to be more frequent.

How frequently, a purely general visitation ought to be made, we cannot undertake to say. Much must depend on the extent of the field of labour and the number of persons to be visited. But in ordinary circumstances, we consider that congregation well cared for, so far as general pastoral visitation is concerned, whose members find their ministers crossing their thresholds once each quarter.

It seems superfluous to remark that the visitation spoken of is to be completely pastoral in its character. Its proper object can be described in very few words. The proper object of pastoral visitation in every case is either to strengthen those who are within the fold, or to bring those in who are without.

There are some ministers who from their sympathetic disposition, their tenderness of manner, their readiness of speech in the social circle, are peculiarly well fitted to excel in the pastoral work we have been describing. There are others who find that work exceedingly difficult of performance. Yet we believe there are none, possessed of the requisite degree of health and vigor, but may by conscientious practice become proficient in this most profitable department of ministerial exertion. Happy the young minister who commences his course in reference to this matter, as he would wish to close it. His will be no starless crown. But we have filled our paper with many things left unsaid, pertinent to the subject. Will they who can say those things more wisely and with more authority take up the question where we, for the present, lay it down?

J. R. N.

(For the Provincial Wesleyan.)

DOCTRINAL SKETCHES, No. 7.

MAN—HIS PRESENT CONDITION.

From whatever point of observation we regard man, we are impressed with his many imperfections and his exposure to suffering. His infancy is characterized by pain and helplessness; his childhood and youth are spent in a protracted conflict with ignorance, and in acquiring the ability to provide the necessities of life; his mature years are absorbed in care and toil, and always checked more or less with disappointment, losses and bereavements; and his old age, even if it is attained, is a season of infirmity, not seldom of bitter regret, and of dismal forebodings. How short, too, is the period into which our aspirations and efforts are compressed! The sun, most gloriously down while it is yet day; and the fondly cherished purposes of their hearts are suddenly broken off. If the grace of God is not enjoyed, how paltry, and short lived are human joys, and how numerous and hard to bear are human sorrows! And if even the salvation of the gospel be realized, what self-denial, what sacrifices, what work must be done, what opposition encountered, what tribulation endured in order to overcome, and inherit eternal life! Where is this? Did God so make man when He created him in His own image? Must we account for the universal degradation and misery of our race on the ground of bad example and defective education? We might ask in reply, is all example bad? Is all training radically defective? If not, why does not the right as often develop a pure and perfect character, as the wrong produce a base and perverse one? But if every pattern is incomplete, if every system of instruction is faulty, how comes this universal corruption of men and manners? The facts are obvious, account for them as we may. Man is not only capable of sinning, but sinful. The evil does not insinuate itself into his heart from without, but lies latent in the human soul, and in a thousand forms reveals itself outwardly in the life. All men are depraved, and all men die. How, on the supposition of original innocence can the former of these facts be explained; or the latter of them reconciled with the just, not to say blessed, administration of the law of God? Fault is sometimes found with the rigour of the rule "the soul that sinneth it shall die," but on this theory far greater severity is gratuitously ascribed to the Father of Mercies. He is represented as appointing senseless agonies and often premature deaths to our race; while, on the other hand, those whose years are prolonged are, by His arrangement, placed in a world where, through the force of example and education, their purity is sure to be sullied and their virtue lost! Such are some of the absurdities—some of the merciless conclusions—to which that scheme would lead us, whose professed object is to rebuke evangelical cynicism, and to exalt man to his proper position of immaculate excellence.

The scriptural account of our condition is very different. We do not claim for it a perfect exposition of the subject. The clearest revelation of the word of God is made for the benefit of beings whose capacities are limited, and whose present condition is one of probation. They can know "but in part." The effulgence of saving truth is shaded off into the inscrutable mysteries of the Divine Government. Yet "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." What He has designed to show us is sufficient for all practical purposes; and for the rest, in due season, the heavens shall declare His righteousness; for God is judge Himself!

The first fact bearing directly upon our subject is that when Adam fell, all his posterity were involved in his ruin. That stood towards his posterity in a covenant relation, that he was their representative, that his acts entailed fearful consequences upon them as well as upon himself, are truths explicitly taught us in the Holy Scriptures, and truths which harmonize perfectly with the history and circumstances of our race. Hear St. Paul. "In Adam all died." "By the offence of one," or rather as the margin reads, "By one offence," judgment came upon all men to condemnation." "By one man sin entered the world, and

death by sin; and so death passed upon all men for that, or, as the margin again reads, in whom "all have sinned."

That one transgression, therefore, sufficed to place man under condemnation, and that condemnation is transmitted to every child of Adam's race. The guilt which he contracted is in a certain sense, inherent in every descendant; who consequently becomes a child of wrath "even as others." This truth is very humiliating, we admit, but it is also very salutary. It hides pride from man, and its cordial acceptance is the first step towards salvation by grace.

If the terms transmitted condemnation, and inherent guilt are objected to, we should willingly exchange them for others if the thing which they signify were as clearly set forth. But this thing is essential to the Christian scheme, and we do not know of words better suited to convey the proper idea. The condemnation of which we speak is not absolute—it never by itself occasioned eternal death. The interposition of the sacrificial death of Christ holds it in abeyance, and in the case of those who die in infancy reverses its spiritual and eternal consequences; and for one of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. Nevertheless that condemnation is real. No one, not even the virtuous and God fearing, can claim exemption from the penalty of the broken law, or participation in the privileges of the children of God, until pardon has been obtained for Christ's sake. Inherent guilt, from the very nature of the case, cannot be a liability to punishment for actual transgression. It is not a sense of such liability. But it is the subjecting of a person to disabilities and infirmities incurred by an ancestor. The reprobation of a criminal's estate does in fact impoverish his children; the reproach which he entails upon himself, and the neglect of their morals, certainly place them at a serious disadvantage in society. This may illustrate our meaning. We are under obligation to suffer punishment, and justly, for the sin of our first parent. We all do thus suffer. This explains, in good part, the mystery of human life. God did not make man as at present we find him. He did not design the wreck and ruin which lies around, or exists within us. Neither hath he left us hopelessly in this condition. He hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation. Dying in the first Adam, we may yet have life in the second; and have it more abundantly. "He that sinned not by his own sin, but delivered him up for us, all who shall live with Him as freely give us all things."

But it is proper also to remark that because of the original transgression, and through the transmission of the condemnation so procured, man's moral nature is thoroughly depraved. That depravity should be the accompaniment of guilt, in the case of the actual sinner, is according to the dictates of reason, and fits a necessary result. The essence and indwelling of the Holy Spirit is essential to the holiness of our nature. But the Holy Spirit is the seal of the divine favour. If that favour be forfeited, the Spirit withdraws Himself. Then, the source of holiness being gone, holiness itself is utterly destroyed. Suppose the sun, the source of light and heat, to be plucked from its orbit, would not darkness and cold sterility envelop the face of this fair earth and bring about a state of chaos and desolation? Or, suppose again, what is often witnessed, that the soul of man is sundered from the body, does not the senses fall? Is not the power of motion lost? does not life at once become extinct? So it is with the soul. If the principle of its life, the powers may be there, but its vitality is gone.

But when the agent of the divine life forsakes the soul of man, another agent will be found to have usurped His place. The temple of the human heart becomes the abode of the unclean Spirit. To borrow again our illustration from nature, the death of the body is not annihilated, but from the moment at which it is forsaken of the soul, it tends to corruption. It cannot be more dead at one time than another, but it can be further removed from the semblance of life, from the capability of re-organization and re-energization. So with the soul. Forsaken of God, it is dead in sin. Nevertheless, under the corrupting influence of Satan, it may become more and more unholy—more and more alienated from the life of God. This is the unhappy condition of Adam, and this is also the unhappy condition of all his offspring. He "begat a son in his own likeness." Spiritual death has gone down from generation to generation. "There is none righteous, not one." There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." And every actual offence not only increases our liability to punishment, but more fully corrupts and destroys our soul. Thankfully do we accept the assurance, that for the sake of the atonement of Christ all may be saved—that the life-giving Spirit "drives" with every human being in order to his recovery to God; yet must we no less accept of the Saviour's own statement, "Verily, verily, except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."

C. S.

THE LATE REV. A. W. TURNER.

In the Wesleyan Church on Sabbath evening last, the recent decease of the Rev. ALFRED W. TURNER was improved to a crowded congregation, by the Rev. J. DOVE, who preached a sermon from II. Cor. v, verse 1.

The following touching allusion to the late Rev. Mr. Turner's decease, which (having applied to the Rev. J. Dove for a copy of the manuscript) was kindly furnished to-day:—

"The late Rev. A. W. TURNER, over whose mortal body the grave has just closed, was no stranger to you. His character was such as to secure the general esteem of all who were acquainted with him. Being the son of a somewhat eminent and living minister in connection with the Wesleyan Conference, England, his advantages in early life were favorable both religious and mental culture. He had the privilege of attending the Woodhouse Grove School, one of the two institutions in the parent land for the education of the sons of Methodist Preachers. We believe that he may be said

of him, as of Obadiah, he "feared the Lord from his youth." This fear was filial in its character, for his heart was touched by the renewing power of the Holy Ghost, and as a subject of "the Kingdom of God," he could rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh."

"In his native land he had the esteem and confidence of the Church, and was regarded as one by whom the cause of common humanity would be advanced.

"We very well remembered the circumstances under which we first formed his acquaintance. It was in the fall of 1869, soon after his arrival in this country. Thrown into almost daily contact with him for more than a week we had an opportunity of observing his excellencies, and of glorifying God for the gifts and graces bestowed on him.

"In the Spring of 1860 he, with two other young men of about the same age, presented himself before the District Committee of Wesleyan Ministers as a candidate for the Holy Ministry. (Of the three only one now survives.) Our late brother, (with the others,) received by the Church, and sent forth to bear the message of salvation to the sons of men.

"As a Methodist preacher he was faithful in his declaration of the truth, clearly setting forth the doctrines and duties which Methodism believes to be the very soul of Christianity. When his tongue was employed in the high services of the sanctuary, he sought not to dazzle men's minds, but to save their souls. He preached the truth with all affectionate plainness and Godly sincerity, "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power." "He watched our souls as one that must give an account."

He longed to be the means of rescuing poor sinners from hell, and raising them to heaven. He aimed to reach the conscience with the power of truth. He belonged to Methodism, and was blessed by it; and Methodism belonged to him, and was served by him in return. He took a lively interest in its welfare and his fair to render it important services. But at the same time he knew nothing of that little work of soul which refuses to recognize the work of God outside his own peculiar denomination. His motto was "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." In the fulfilment of the duties of the sacred office he sought not a name for himself, he asked not for important position, but wished to be in that place which the Master appointed. He sought not for the honour of men, but for the honour which cometh from above. His study was to show himself approved unto God rightly "dividing the word of truth, giving unto each a portion of meat in due season." He shrank not from toil or from difficulty, not seeking his own ease, but working for the Church's welfare in all her departments, for the spiritual welfare of her individual members, and for the salvation of the souls of sinners.

"The poor generally, but especially the Lord's poor, were the object of his commiseration and sympathy. In the Sabbath School institution he took great delight, and studied to make more effective this most important part of the Church's activities.

With his general character you are familiar, for, for three years he went in and out among you as one that ardently longed to do you good. You remember the amiability of his disposition, the benignity of his smile, how some of your hearts were comforted by his counsels and advice.

Whenever he was stationed he was beloved. On his last Circuit, Halifax, N. S., he was held in great esteem for his work's sake.

"That one so good, so well calculated to do good, so well furnished by the gifts of the Master, and by acts of self-consecration for usefulness in the Church militant, should be first laid aside and then called away, is matter of mystery to us, who yet remain in the wilderness. Truly God's thoughts are not as man's. He permitted health, never very robust, to decline, he appointed for his servant to suffer the life Divine, and though delighting and most wishful to work for Christ, yet he acquiesced with meek submission in the wise arrangement of Him who bid him pass from the ranks of active labourers to those of patient sufferers; that even by this he might serve Christ and "his generation by the will of God."

In this holy place he closed "the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus Christ." Perhaps some of you remember how one Sabbath evening in the fall of 1869, he spoke to you about "the wedding garment," and how the following Sabbath morning, with the parable of the unjust judge as his text, he proclaimed for the last time, the Gospel of Jesus. Perhaps he did not then think that it would be his last public message, for he hoped, if it was the Lord's will, to regain his strength, but so it proved. The trumpet then gave no uncertain sound. Fifteen months of depressing weakness were appointed unto him; restored health, though he sought it in other lands, was denied; his public work was done; the ripening for the heavenly garner was to be accomplished in the chamber of affliction.

His Christian experience was marked by unshaken confidence in the Saviour of sinful man. He had humbling views of himself, but exalted views of the mercy of God in Christ. Resting on the "Rock of Ages," his soul was kept in peace, looking steadily at the prospect of succumbing to the last enemy, he could with holy triumph exclaim, "O death where is thy sting?" He had this confidence, that for him "to die would be gain." For some weeks before his death his weakness of body prevented him from engaging much in conversation, but the few utterances that escaped from his lips gave evidence of the peace within—the glorious prospect before him. Having set his face towards the heavenly Jerusalem he calmly awaited the summons to pass through the gates of death, that he might enter the "city which hath foundations." And the summons did at last arrive; on the morning of Monday, 27th February, as the day was peacefully breaking, the weary wheels of life stood still, the prisoner was released from the burden of the flesh, and the spirit "by angel guards attended" went home to God.

"When from flesh the spirit freed,
Hastens homeward to return!
Mortals cry, 'A man is dead!'—
Angels sing 'A child is born!'"

"For unto the world alone,
They our happy brothers greet;
Bear him to the throne of Love,
Place him at the Saviour's feet,
Jesus smiles, and says 'well done'
Good and faithful servant thou;
Enter and receive the crown,
Reign with me in triumph now."

"Angels catch the approving sound,
Bow and bless the just award;
Hail the heir with glory crown'd,
Now rejoicing with his Lord."

Oh, what a mighty change! Oh, what a glorious vision! Face to face he beholds the majesty and glory of the Saviour, whom he delighted to proclaim to sinful men as the only hope, and rejoices in the sight.

By the death of our brother beloved the Church has sustained a loss—but heaven is enriched—another gem is placed in the mediatorial servant. But he being dead yet speaking, the Master, by the example of his departed, bore witness to the young. He took a lively interest in young men, and having fallen on the battle-field, comparatively young, who will rush to the foremost rank—to fill his place, to oppose as he did, vice in every form—to avow himself on the side of Christ, and fearlessly to lift up the standard of the Lord. Though we mourn his departure we wish him not back, but would rather seek, in the faithful discharge of life's varied duties, so to live that it may be our happiness, in God's own time to meet him again, and to be associated with the completed company of the ransomed host, who sing "the new song" before the throne.—Public Ledger.

WHERE SHALL I FIND HIM?

He was a noble specimen of a man. His figure was commanding. His expressive, intelligent eye and broad forehead marked him as one gifted with intellect, and a smile rarely lit up all his face, and attracted kindly glances wherever he went.

His parents had died when he was quite young, leaving him considerable property, which had not, however, paralyzed his energies; for his record as a scholar was a brilliant one; and now he has entered upon a successful career as a lawyer.

With all his other attainments he was a fine musician, and in the choir, where various instruments were then used as an accompaniment to the voice, he played the flute with great skill. He was always punctual at Church, drawn there as it seemed by his love for music, as the preaching evidently failed to interest him. He spent his time during this part of the service in turning over the leaves of anthem and chant, and when the last sentence was uttered he always seemed to be relieved.

But now there came a Sabbath when the tall, handsome figure entered not the village choir, and the dulcet notes of the flute were silent. To the inquiry as to the cause of the absence, one of our ways so punctual at Church, the answer was given that he had been stricken with a fever.

Before another Sabbath dawned it was whispered that the young lawyer was dangerously ill; then, that there was no hope, and that he had asked anxiously for the clergyman whose ministrations had been wont to weary him. Quickly the man of God obeyed the summons and hastened to his side, but alas! only to find him fast nearing that mystic river, over which, sooner or later, we all must pass. Agonizingly he pressed the minister's hand, and said, with anguish in his tones, "I fear you are too late. I am going—where? O where?"

"Lead to Jesus," said the clergyman.

"But where shall I find him? O where shall I find him?" asked the dying man, and instantly his spirit was gone into eternity.

The next was a solemn Sabbath, indeed, when, with that vacant set before us, those who were wont to hush for ever, the choir sang, with trembling voices, those solemn words—

There is a death whose pang
Outlasts the fleeting breath;
O what eternal horrors hang
Around the second death!

N. Y. Observer.

HOW TO GET RICH.

A very peculiar man was old Mr. Closem. All his life he had been to the house of God on the Sabbath. Very few men ever got so much preaching for so little money. He had been a home man, always at work, always saving, and always laying up money. He had a sort of intuitive knowledge that the man whom he saw in the pulpit with his minister one Sabbath morning must be after money for some good object, and so he buttoned up his coat at once, and so eloquently could he unbutton it. Some neighbor reported that he was once known to give away a shilling; but that was long ago, and so lacking in confirmation that no one believed it.

Just as the old year was going out and the new one coming in, I met Mr. Closem in the road, looking over the wall at a fine-looking field of wheat belonging to himself. There was a glow on his face, which seemed to say, "Ah, sir! that crop will bring me many dollars next year."

"Well, Mr. Closem, you have got a fine field of wheat, to be sure."

"Yes, sir; and it's not the first I have raised. I assure you. My land gives me grand crops of wheat. My barns are more than full of the crops of last summer."

"What are you going to do with it all?"

"Do? Why sell it, to be sure."

"And what will you do with the money?"

"Why, there's a new trouble. It is difficult to know how to invest it so as to have it safe, and yet yield a good dividend. I must have both."

"I can tell you, sir, where you can do it."

"I doubt it; but let us hear. Will the money be safe?"

"Perfectly so."

"And the interest good and sure?"

"Yes, without fail."

"Well, tell us at once all about it."

"I advise you to invest a part in China."

"In China?"

"Yes. We are having the whole of that empire opening its gates to receive our religion, our civilization, and our institutions. The Board of Missions are about to send out a score of young, self-denying preachers of the Gospel, and we want the means. Here you can invest, and the principal will be safe, and the income large."

"Do you suppose I am simple enough to believe that money given away is ever to return, or pay a dividend? Sir, I am not quite a fool."

"I hope you can say that a thousand years hence. But may I tell you a short story?"

"Certainly, if it be a true one. None of your make-up stories for me. Every word shall be true."

"Well, sir, a few days since I met a gentleman, the owner of large paper mills. He took me through the mills, and showed me the great mass of pulp, and the great piles of paper ready for the market, and a world of things which I did not comprehend. After seeing all the machinery and hearing his praises of his men, and how they sent for United States stocks—fifty and a hundred dollars at a time—every time he went to the city, I said:

"Will you please, sir, tell me the secret of your great success, for you told me you began life with nothing."

"I don't know that there is any secret about it. When sixteen years old I went to St. Louis. I was to receive forty dollars a year and my food, no more, no less. My clothing and all my expenses were to come out of the forty dollars. I then solemnly promised the Lord that I would give Him one tenth of my wages, and also that I would save another tenth for future capital. This resolution I carried out, and after laying aside one tenth for the Lord I had, at the end of the year, much more than a tenth for myself. I then promised the Lord, whether he gave more or less, I would never give less than one tenth to Him. To this vow I have conscientiously adhered until now, and if there be any secret to my success I attribute it to this. I feel sure I am far richer on my nine-tenths—though I hope I don't now limit my charities to that—than if I had kept the whole."

"How do you account for it?"

"In two ways. First, I believe God has blessed me, and made my business to prosper; and, secondly, I have so learned to be careful and economical that my nine-tenths go far beyond what the whole would. And I believe that any man who will make the trial will find it so."—Rev. JOHN TODD, D.D.

A "DYING HYMN."

When Alice Cary drew near to the gates of death she was fond of hearing Christian songs sung in her chamber. *Harper's Bazar* says: "She frequently asked her friends to sing such hymns as 'Jesus, lover of my soul,' 'Show pity Lord, O Lord forgive,' and 'A charge to keep I have,' and she loved to have them sung to old tunes." Her frequent quotation from Holy Scripture, when in intense pain, was: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him." How the memories of childhood come back when the world recedes. "Tell me the old, old story." Sing the old songs to the old tunes when death comes. Her poems, conversations, and letters for many months breathed the very spirit of Christ, and here is her "Dying Hymn," as she called it:—

Earth, with its dark and dreadful ills,
Receives and fades away;
Lift up your heads ye heavenly hills;
Ye gates of death, give way!

My soul is full of whisped song;
My blindness is my sight;
The shadows that I dwell so long
Are all alive with light.

The while my pulses faintly beat,
Low as the grass to go,
I feel grow firm beneath my feet
The green, immortal ground.

That faith to me a courage gives,
Low as the grass to go,
I know that my Redeemer lives—
That I shall live I know.

The palace walls I almost see
Where dwells my Lord and King,
O grave! where is thy victory?
O death! where is thy sting?

Central Christian Advocate.

That which is most valuable and lovely of life and earth—sanctified friendship—cannot be said to die with those we love; but through their death it is rather raised to a higher and more influential life. By the transfer of our loved ones to heaven, our friendship becomes spiritualized and perpetuated.—*Light at Evening-Time*.

MISSIONARY GLEANINGS.

By the Royal Mail Steamer which has just arrived from the Cape of Good Hope we are in receipt of papers and private letters which bring missionary intelligence of great interest, but of a varied character, some of the items of information being very pleasing, and others painful and afflictive. The Wesleyan missionary field of the Cape District have generally been in the habit of assembling for the transaction of their annual business towards the close of January; but this year they met a week earlier to enable the respected chairman and general superintendent, the Rev. Samuel Hardey, to proceed to the frontier and Kaffirland—a visit concerning which we hope to hear again in due time, as it is likely to be attended by circumstances of deep interest. The Cape District embraces all the Wesleyan mission stations, both colonial and native, in the Western Province of the colony, and in Namaqualand, and the work is carried on in two or three different languages for the benefit of the English settlers and the native population.

At the district meeting recently held at Green Point, near Capetown, all the ministers were present and apparently in the enjoyment of tolerable health. The proceedings were as usual conducted in a spirit of harmony and brotherly love, and the reports presented from the respective stations, of the progress of the good work, were generally of a very pleasing character. The congregations, societies and schools

which said to be advancing both in numbers and efficiency, and the financial income of most of the funds was reported as satisfactory. This was especially the case with the "Auxiliary Branch Missionary Society." A scheme for the liquidation of debts on chapels and other mission property, which has been in operation four years, aided by the Jubilee Fund, continues to work well, the sum of £735 having been raised for this object in the district during the past twelve months. One native candidate for the ministry passed his examination, and was recommended to be received into full Connection. At the close of the meeting the brethren returned to their respective spheres of labour with feelings of gratitude for the past, and with cheerful hopes of still greater success in time to come.

In the meantime, however, an event occurred which cast a gloom over the mission families, and made every one feel how uncertain is human life, and all things here below. This was the sudden death of the Rev. Charles Pickering, a young missionary of amiable disposition and promising talents, but of feeble health and constitution, who had arrived at the Cape from England just three months before to proceed to his appointed station in the Eastern Province. Mr. Pickering had only preached once in Southern Africa when, on the following day, he was taken ill, being seized with a fit of coughing which broke a blood vessel, and he was entirely incapacitated for further service. He continued unwell for several weeks, during which the best attention was paid to him, both medical and domestic, and at times he rallied a little so as to inspire his friends and brethren with the hope of his recovery. On the Monday before he died he removed from Mowbray to the camp-ground with the hope of deriving benefit from the change. On the Thursday morning following, he took his breakfast as usual, and said that he felt better, and would take a little walk in the avenue before the house. He did so, but had not been out more than five minutes when he was seen to stagger and fall. Help was immediately given, and when raised from the ground he was bleeding profusely from the mouth. When spoken to, he opened his eyes, but never spoke again, and immediately expired. The remains of the dear servant of God were interred on the following day, all the ministers of the district and a large concourse of mourning friends attending his funeral in token of respect for his memory. On the following Sabbath the sudden death of Mr. Pickering was improved in all the chapels in Capetown and neighborhood, large and attentive congregations assembling to hear the impressive discourses delivered on the solemn occasion.

In these "Gleanings" we have only space remaining to advert very briefly to another portion of the mission field from which intelligence has come to hand of a most encouraging character. We advert to an interesting letter from the Rev. George Sargeant, the devoted chairman and general superintendent of the Jamaica District, which appears in the "Wesleyan Missionary Notices" for the current month. For several years past the West Indian mission has been laboring under numerous difficulties of a most depressing and discouraging character. But now, thank God, as we observed some time ago, the tide seems to have turned, and a flow of prosperity appears to have set in, which we hope will be extensive and enduring. This is delightfully evident from the communication before us, as well as from many other which might be cited.

The General Secretaries in England having submitted to Mr. Sargeant several questions on the state of the work and the condition of the people, his replies are of the most satisfactory and hopeful character. On the subject of education Mr. Sargeant writes: "Having personally inspected a number of the schools during the year, I am prepared with some degree of confidence to answer the question. With but one exception they are taught by native teachers. About half the number have been taught in the 'Mico Training Institution.' They are paid in proportion to their ability and the importance of the school. With regard to the progress of the children in our schools, I may remark that we stand on a level with the best Jamaica day-schools. The result of inspection each year shows a steady progress." It is also pleasant to note that the children and young people are fond of reading; and, in the absence of an adequate supply of interesting books, which the missionaries regret, they make good use of the Bible, hymn-books, tracts, and such other little books as they can procure. In illustration of the fact that the labouring population of Jamaica are endeavoring to improve their social condition, Mr. Sargeant says: "In my travels I met an African, brought to this country as a rescued slave. He is the proprietor of a pretty extensive farm, a comfortable and well-furnished house, and a number of horses and other live stock. Many years ago he bought a starving child by the wayside, took her and her mother as his own, and gave her a good education. He also took pity upon two fatherless sons of a poor African, became a father to them, supplied all their wants, gave them trades, and the best education our schools could afford; and these young men are now respected and respectable members of society. This man is a leader and a local preacher among us, and ever ready for every good work. No man of any rank or colour in the neighbourhood is more trusted than he."

To these interesting facts many more might be added, all tending to show that the aboriginal and native population of the island are not the stupid creatures that some have represented them to be, but are capable of improvement and elevation in the scale of being. Nor are they less susceptible of genuine religious impressions. When savingly converted to God they make earnest, lively, happy Christians, among whom the missionaries feel they could gladly live and die. It is matter of gratitude to God that the number of such on our respective stations in the West Indies is constantly increasing, and we have every reason to anticipate the ultimate success of this important department of our foreign work if we only stand by our sable brethren with warm hearts and liberal hands in the time of their weakness, till the good work shall become self-supported by the social, civil, and religious elevation of the people.—*London Watchman*.