

Messenger and Visitor

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER,
VOLUME LIII.
VOL. VI., No. 20.

Published Weekly by the Maritime Baptist Publishing Company.

THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR,
VOLUME XLII.
Printed by G. W. DAY, North Side King St.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 1890.

Presbyterianism in England is not strong. There are only 65,065 members. There has been a gain of 1,000 during the last year, and an increase of over \$100,000 in benevolent contributions. — The wealth of Great Britain can be judged of from the fact that one penny added to the income tax brings a revenue of \$11,000,000. — The London *Freeman* thinks there never has been a time when the demand for strong preaching and the supply of weak preaching has been greater than now. — The anniversary of the Northern Baptists begin one week from the date of this paper. They are held in Chicago. — Berlin, with 1,500,000 of a population, has church accommodation for only 50,000, or one in every 30. — The cathedral of Milan, still unfinished, is said to have cost up to the present \$110,000,000. How many missionaries would this have supported? — Not half of the forty-four students at Newton are from New England. It is no wonder that our churches there make demands upon outside States and provinces for pastors.

— OUR AFRICAN CHURCHES.—A brother, in the obituary of Bro. Hopewell, refers to the little African church at Onabog. There are several African churches in New Brunswick and a larger number in Nova Scotia. We believe that our denomination should have a more tender and generous care over these scattered flocks. If brethren in the ministry should visit them occasionally we are sure that good would be done both to preachers and hearers, and the warmest feeling of brotherhood would be aroused. Shall there not be more of this attention given to these brethren in the Lord in the future?

— PERIODICAL LITERATURE OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA.—From Rowell's American Newspaper Directory we learn that there are 17,760 periodicals published in these two countries. Of these 13,164 are weeklies, and 11,118 have a circulation of less than 1,000. According to the lowest estimate, these 17,760 periodicals send out the enormous number of 3,481,610,000 copies per year. This would give 267 copies of papers to each of the 13,000,000 families supposed to be comprised in the population of the United States and Canada. It cannot be said the people of this continent have not enough to read. If the quality were as good as the quantity is great, what a grand thing it would be!

— DOWN GRAD.—The London *Freeman*, in the following editorial remark, evidently recognized as a fact a "down grade" tendency in England, although it was rather severe on Mr. Spurgeon for his writing and action respecting it:

And if such a student were to ask the chief secret of failure in the pulpit at the present hour he might perchance find it to lie in want of definiteness. A very widespread complaint asserts that much of the preaching of the day is too hazy. There is a want of clearness. Careless souls are not led to see clearly their danger. Anxious souls fail to find clear direction on the way of salvation. On the authority of Scripture and the Atonement of our Lord there is hesitating statement. The culture of righteousness may be well stated and enforced, for on this there seems little room for doubt. But on all points that can be doubted the doubt is left or intensified. Men want this nowhere, least of all in religion.

— DR. PARKER TO MR. SPURGEON.—Dr. Parker of the City Road chapel, London, is the Talmage of the metropolis of the world. He is an adept at sensationalism, while he lacks man of great and varied power. His latest sensation is an open letter to Mr. Spurgeon in the *British Weekly*. For insulting effrontery we have scarcely ever seen it equalled. He speaks to him as Spurgeon, and my dear Spurgeon, etc., in the most approved slap-him-on-the-back way. He tells him that his heart has an immense advantage over his head. Of a caricature of Calvinism which he implies is Mr. Spurgeon's, he says:

"That kind of Calvinism I will not condescend to hate, it is too far down in its native perdition to allow of a boot to kick it and yet retain a boot's proper respectability."

This is very smart, as Dr. Parker seems to be well aware, but it has been just the kind of Calvinism Mr. Spurgeon preaches which has made the strongest and best men the world has ever seen, and, we believe, it has been largely this which has made Mr. Spurgeon's preaching a power to the ends of the earth, while Dr. Parker's has gone little beyond his own people.

The letter gives two instances of people who took offence at Mr. Spurgeon's answers to their questions, and Dr. Parker, in that very egotism he so insultingly charges upon "Spurgeon," reads him a lecture upon how he should have treated

their case. He asks "Who taught you such nonsense?" referring to a statement of Mr. Spurgeon that "Every funeral is God's repetition of his anathema against sin." This is a portion of his parting advice:

"Let me advise you to widen the circle of which you are the centre. You are surrounded by offers of income. They flatter your weakness, they laugh at your jokes, they feed you with compliments. My dear Spurgeon, you are too big a man for this. Renounce it. Take in more fresh air. Open your windows even when the wind is in the east. Scatter your ecclesiastical barn. This enlargement of your social relations will honor you good, and build your character and action on a larger scale. I do not say destroy your circle; I simply say enlarge it. As with your circle, so with your reading. You are incessantly contemptuous in your reviews and notices who have forgotten more than you and I put together ever knew. You are much too off-handed with your brother Baptist ministers. You are also much too free in your excommunications. Believe me, you are really not infallible. Pardon me if I venture upon the suggestion that even you are at least presumably human. I almost tremble at my own temerity, for I cannot but think that any man who expels the whole Baptist Union must occupy a sovereign place in some pantheon of his own invention."

Most men, did they really desire to profit another by plain advice, would speak to him in private, and not through the public print. There is an insolence almost brutal in utterances of this kind before the public. The ostentatious parade of a single desire, in it all, to do Mr. Spurgeon a friendly turn, bears on the face of it the well-marked lineaments of hypocritical pretense. And then the parting, "Good-bye, you sturdy, honest old soul." How self-satisfied the assumption of easy familiarity and half-contemptuous superiority! Mr. Spurgeon has needed much grace in the stand he has taken against New Theology tendencies. This effusion of Dr. Parker will try patience, if it is not regarded as Dr. P.'s esteem Calvinism.

— DR. MURDOCK'S REPLY.—We referred to the *Christian Inquirer's* statement that "after three quarters of a century . . . we have scarcely a self-governing church in all the heathen world." Dr. Murdock, the Secretary of the American Baptist Missionary Union, has replied. He says:

"Now the real fact is that of 521 churches in Burma, 377 support themselves and manage their own affairs with out any help or interference on the part of the missionaries. It is also a fact that these churches manage their affairs as well, on the average, as a like number of churches in any region of the Eastern or Middle States of this country. Their discipline, I might venture to say, might safely be studied by the majority of the home churches as an example to be followed. These native churches not only support their own pastors, build their own chapels, parsonages and school-houses, but they support their schools and native preachers—that is, those who are left to their care by those unwise people and churches in this country, who insist in getting nearer to the missions by taking the work out of the hands of the native people. Nearly all the money expended on native preachers in Burma comes from these specific gifts of our people. It is a fact that some native churches are hindered from doing what they would easily and cheerfully do by the supererogable gifts of American Christians.

In our Asiatic missions there are 642 native churches, of which 426, or nearly two-thirds, pay their own way and manage their own affairs. And it ought to be known that during the last few years nearly all the increase of our means and forces have been directed to new fields, to establish stations and preach the gospel where Christ is not known. We have left Lower Burma with a vast unevangelized population, with only one man each in the more important stations which are the centres of vast heathen communities. It may be that the time has come for an advance; we have been thinking that it is even so; but the line of that advance must be through what we have already gained.

And to show that something has been gained, let it be remembered that the district of Tavoy and Mergui was left for nearly twenty-five years without the presence of a missionary, and that during all this time they paid their own way and directed their own affairs. If they did not make much advance they at least held their own. There is no reason to doubt that the Karen churches, in the Hangan District, in the Bassin District, in Henthasin, in Toungo and other regions, would live and prosper without pecuniary help and only a limited missionary supervision. But there is still need of American help in evangelizing the heathen millions among whom the Christian thousands of Lower Burma dwell. The schools, which are designed to buttress and render more permanent and effective the spiritual life of the people, and the press which is to scatter Christian literature and the Holy Scriptures among the various races of Burma will, for a long time, require the presence of a considerable number of American men and women in the old stations. But the fact remains that our chief strength must be expended for the conversion of the people of the upper regions, which, up to this time, have not been even fully explored.

On Dr. Murdock's letter the *Inquirer* replies:

What we mean by self-government is emancipation from American control. The Spirit of God, and 30,000 Christians, with 324 preachers of their own race, ought to take care of Burma, a country which has a population but one-fourth larger than the State of New York. These native preachers ought to push the gospel in new fields in their own country. They speak the language, they understand the customs of the people, and must be the best-equipped evangelists. Therefore, let our American missionaries in that field go on to new regions. Perhaps the Holy Ghost would honor Himself if allowed to superintend these churches gathered out of heathenism. Perhaps our plans have too little room in them for the Holy Spirit to operate.

— UNUSUALLY PARENTS.—The following from the *Congregationalist* is full of suggestion and solemn warning:

Many a parent indifferent to religious things hopes his children will be Christians; but it is more than likely that they will not be, and the parents will be held responsible for their children's want of religion. A London paper gives an account of a village containing ninety-eight families with children over ten years of age. In twenty-seven families both parents are professing Christians, and so are eighty-four of their 125 children. In nineteen families only one parent is a Christian, and of their ninety-five children only thirty-one follow the Christian parent. None of the parents in the remaining fifty-two families are Christians, and of their 139 children only thirteen are followers of Christ. If fathers and mothers are not lovers of Christ, they may be almost certain that their children will follow their example, and at the day of judgment will charge them with their awful loss.

— CATHOLIC AGGRESSION IN GERMANY.—

The clerical or Catholic party in the German Diet has assumed new importance, since the result of the last election has left the government in a minority, unless this party come to its help. Through its leader, Dr. Windthorst, it has formulated its demands. These include the creation of a Catholic section in the Ecclesiastical Affairs Department; a settlement of the question relative to the appointment of priests; the abrogation of the *Spergesetz*, by which priests in certain cases are deprived of their stipends; a supervision of the schools by priests; the free admission of Catholic religious orders into Prussia, and the prohibition of the use of Catholic churches by old Catholics. It appears as if Dr. Windthorst had made the blunder so often committed by the church of Rome of making demands so exorbitant that they could only be refused. The Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs has said the government could not comply with these demands. Particular denominations could not claim to be represented in the Department of Public Worship. A bill dealing with the *Spergesetz* would be introduced into the Diet. He declined to interfere with the Old Catholic.

The Transfiguration.

BY REV. GEORGE E. TUFTS.

The time was in the night. The apostles were "heavy with sleep." The place was undoubtedly Mount Hermon, about forty miles north of the Sea of Galilee.

Connected with this supernatural event were four miracles in one. The first was Christ transfigured—His face shining with heavenly glory, and His raiment white and glittering as the light. The second was the appearing of Moses and Elijah, two great names of the Old Testament. Heaven could not have sent a more choice delegation of her saints. The third miracle was the luminous cloud, the symbol of God's presence, overshadowing them with its dazzling light. The fourth was the voice of God—"This is My beloved Son; hear ye Him."

First. The Transfiguration strengthens faith. Six days before the event, Jesus told His disciples that He must soon be put to death. This could not be, they thought, if He were really the Christ. Would not His mission then end in defeat, and the cause they had espoused come to ruin? Weak was their faith, disappointed their hopes. But now our Lord takes three of them to Mount Hermon. The glory of heaven is about Him. A voice is heard. Two saints from the other world appear, and add their testimony to His Messiahship. Then it is seen who He really is, and the disciples can doubt no more. Their faith is now strong. God's voice is so plain that it can never become inaudible, and the light of heaven is so clear that it can never grow dim.

Secondly. The mighty scene on the mount is a proof of the soul's immortality. In all ages and in all lands the eternity of man has been held as a fundamental truth. The Egyptians believed the existence of the soul depended

in some way upon the preservation of the body. Therefore they attached great importance to the embalming of their dead. The Greek and Roman philosophers and poets—Hesiod and Plato are examples—held firmly to the same truth. The views of the ages are well expressed in the oft-repeated lines that Addison has put into the mouth of Cato: "It must be so, Plato, Thou reasonest well; Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire, This longing after immortality? 'Tis heaven itself that points out a here-after, And intimates Eternity to man."

And yet the able reasoning of the great thinkers of the past in favor of the soul's imperishable nature does not furnish an incontrovertible proof, but only a strong presumptive argument. In one point it fails. It does not afford an example of existence after death. But the Transfiguration gives the proof. Moses had been laid away more than 1400 years before this event. Did his soul die with the body? Did his burial in the land of Moab terminate his existence? After his death 500 years pass away, and Elijah is carried home in a chariot of fire. Though he is no more on earth, has he ceased to be? With his translation did there come the end of his being? Or is there a future state unseen by the eyes of mortals? Our inquiries are answered. After a lapse of 900 years from the time that Elijah had been borne to heaven, and 1400 years after Moses had been laid away, both of these worthies come forth again to earth. Upon the stage of human action they are seen by mortal eyes and heard by mortal ears. The proof is thus furnished that though men die they shall live again.

Third. The mighty scene gives proof of the recognition of saints in the future world. Many arguments drawn wholly from reason seem to favor the idea that we shall know our friends in heaven. In this life our memories enable us to distinguish one another, and recognize persons from whom we have been long separated. We hold in memory their physical features, tones of voice, and mental peculiarities. And will not our faculties be equal, at least in heaven to what they are on earth? Shall we not then know our friends there as well as here? Moreover, it often happens that persons who are once intimate have been long separated—from youth to old age. Time and change have wiped out every mark by which they once knew each other. They are entire strangers. But they accidentally meet in a foreign land. During the conversation reference is made to some circumstance which occurred in childhood, and mention is made of old associates. Instantly events long forgotten flash upon the mind, the old friendship is renewed, and they are acquainted as in days-long gone by. May we not infer that in some such way, or by some such means, we shall be known and recognized in heaven. But the argument from Scripture is more forcible. David, at the death of his child, said: "He will not return to me, but I shall go to him." In our Lord's discourse, Luke 16, we find that the rich man knew Abraham, and recognized him as his ancestor. Abraham also knew the rich man and called him his son. To these references add the account of the Transfiguration, and the argument is greatly strengthened. Moses and Elijah were separated in this world by a space of more than five centuries; and while heaven is now for a short time represented by them on earth, they seem to be acquainted with each other. They also had an interest in what was going on in this life, so far as it related to their Redeemer's glory. Peter recognized Moses and Elijah, and heard them talk of Christ and His decease. Do we not thus learn that the thoughts and converse of the departed saints are one, and that there are common joys in heaven?

Fourth. The Transfiguration shows that the prominent plan in man's redemption is the death of Christ. What did Moses and Elijah talk about during their short visit to earth? 'If the apostles questioned them about heaven,—its inhabitants, its glory, and the employment of the redeemed,—we have no record of the answers. Neither did those heavenly ones talk of the apostles, their preaching, their success, their trials, their sufferings. Nor did they speak of Christ's pure life, His perfect example, His wonderful teachings. These are interesting, and have their place. But there is one subject towering above these, as the Alps towers above the mole-hill. Not the life of Jesus, but the death of Jesus, engaged the attention of the early saints. His example is important; but His example, apart from His voluntary, sacrificial death, could no more bring about man's redemption

than the example of Rome's moral philosopher, Seneca, who died by suicide, or the example of the renowned philosopher of Athens, who died by drinking the hemlock. But the Christ who can redeem men lost in sin, is the Christ who stepped into the sinner's place as a substitute; who became the world's Passover Lamb sacrificed for us; who was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. His own self bare our sins. He gave His life a ransom. We have redemption through His blood. We thus see why the heavenly visitors now take for their subject of conversation the death of the Lord Jesus. Only through His death were men to be saved, and heaven was interested. The death of Christ was important to the saints of the Old Testament as well as to the saints of the New; and heaven is so interested in a delegation of his saints come to earth and speak of it. The centuries circle round the cross. The Atonement is the central star—the Atonement—in the system of man's redemption, "the Acropolis of the Christian faith."

Fifth. The Transfiguration conveys to our mind some idea of the glories of heaven, and the blessedness of the redeemed. Peter was so captivated by the scene, that he said: "It is good for us to be here." If the dim foreshadowing of the glory of heaven so enraptured him, what must the reality be? The mount was only a faint emblem of the future land, and Christ was only transfigured; but in heaven He will shine forth in His majesty, clothed with honor and power. On Mount Hermon there were only two of the heavenly saints, but in the holy city—Mount Zion—there will be an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect. The mount was only a representation, and that momentary; but heaven will be a reality, and its joys eternal. The disciples beheld the scene with earthly eyes, dim at best; but the glories of the upper world will not be looked upon with the natural vision. These bodies will be fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Son of God. Heaven is wisely shut out from us at present. In the meantime, let us do our allotted work and become fitted to enjoy heaven's glories hereafter. What a destiny awaits the righteous. We shall be like Jesus and shall see Him as He is.

W. B. M. U.

"Be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

PRAYER TOPIC FOR MAY.

For Native Christians, Teachers and Schools.—ISA. 45: 8.

The Missionary Outlook in British India.

BY MABEL ARBUTHNOT.

So far the success of the gospel in India has been almost exclusively among the Pariahs or outcasts. The missionaries as a general rule rather hold aloof from the learned classes, and these appear to have been neglected, owing probably to the fact that they are not easily reached. Any one can see how it might be easier to take a poor illiterate negro, educate him, and help bring him to Christ rather than undertake to influence a wealthy, educated infidel. Yet one reached in this class who will turn his wealth and influence to Christianity would be capable of doing much good.

Among the corruptions of the Hindu superstition is the division of its society into castes, which is incorporated in their whole religious economy. The different castes clustered together in hamlets and were bound by laws to have no intercourse with each other—not even to render assistance in sickness. If they violated these laws they were despised by their family, and reckoned with the outcasts. The women at this time were debarred from all society. A certain portion of the house called the *Zennas* was set apart for them. The women of higher rank were seldom seen in public; and after a hard day's labor the poor native woman often went home to suffer from the cruel blows of an intoxicated husband. Other great social evils are infanticide, child-marriage and the immolation of widows on the funeral piles of their husbands.

In looking at the state of society today we find that ignorance is not universal and that the people are gradually drawing nearer one another. The caste system, the greatest barrier to social intercourse is fast breaking down. At the commencement of railroad enterprise the Brahmins petitioned for the running of caste cars. But as this was impossible they have been obliged to accommodate themselves to established rules.

Now the priest, who is pure enough to enter the most exalted circle of Hindu heaven can sit all day long on a hard bench between two outcast Pariahs, the vilest of the vile, for whom there is no place in Paradise. The locomotive, like a ploughshare turning the sward of the prairies, is cutting up a faith whose roots run down deep into by-gone ages.

There are many other agencies at work tearing away this inveterate distinction. The plan adopted by most of the Mission schools, that caste must be formally done away with before baptism, is working towards this end. In the schools where they educate all the castes together young men find that birth, rank and caste are of no avail; but that all depends upon diligence, perseverance and character.

It is a peculiar distinction of India that it has been the theatre of nearly all the great religions. Hinduism, Buddhism, Mahomedanism and Christianity have all made trial of their moral power here. The first three have each had many centuries of opportunity, and yet Christianity has done more for the elevation of Indian society in the last fifty years than in all the ages of their respective dominions. Neither Buddhism or Mahomedanism had made any serious impression upon caste, nor had been able to mitigate the wrongs which Hinduism had done for women.

The horrors of the *Suttee* and the murder of female infants were left unchecked until the British government, inspired by missionary influence, branded them as infamous and made them crimes. The native sentiment of India is now changed. Child marriage is coming into disrepute, and some of the native states have agreed to forbid it altogether.

In India there is now an opportunity to help millions of women to throw off the bondage which so cruelly oppresses them. The *Zennas* are now opened from one end of India to the other. The Lord has thus given to Christian women a key to open one of the great doors of the mission world. The necessity of woman's work in this country is shown by the condition and needs of the women, by their power in the family, by the fact that their elevation must be brought about mainly through the efforts of Christian women. The women of India are despised and down trodden on every hand. The most of them accept their lot with a dullness and contented apathy; but many have roused to a sense of their burdens. A prayer offered by a pupil in a mission school expresses the soul-longings of many of them. She says:

"O Lord hear my prayer! For ages dark ignorance has brooded over our minds and spirits, like a cloud of dust it rises and wraps us round; and we are like prisoners in an old and mouldering house, choked and buried in the dust of custom; and we have no strength to get out. Bristled and beaten we are like the dry husks of the sugar-cane, when the sweet juice has been extracted. Criminals confined in jails are happier than we, for they know something of Thy world. They were not born in a prison, but we have not for one day, no, not even in our dreams seen Thy world, and what we have not seen we cannot imagine. To us it is nothing but a name, and not knowing Thee, Thy world, we cannot have Thee, Thy Maker. We have been born in this jail, we have died here, and are dying. O God of mercies, our prayer to Thee is this, that the curse may be removed from the women of India."

Recently another form of work for a class of the caste-women of India has been begun and promises good results. Homes and schools of Christian instruction have been established for the enlightenment of the twenty millions of child-widows in India. These despised, maltreated and helpless girls are only too ready to embrace the kindly influence of Christian culture.

If to the social deliverance from the cruel *Suttee* we add the supplanting of a heathen despair by a Christian hope, we shall be able to estimate the richness of the blessing which awaits the women of India. Christian women's work in India is manifold. Teaching in day-schools, industrial-schools, evangelistic work among the poor, in villages, at fairs and sacred places, in hospitals and prisons. The work is yet in its infancy, but there are boundless possibilities before it! As yet the workers are very few. The call to this work of women amongst women is now especially urgent.

In contrasting the India of Lord Clive, Warren Hastings, and Lord Macaulay, with its suttee, its immolation of widows, its death-sweeping car of juggernaut, with the India of today, with its liberal ideas of government and education, we are able to gain an idea of its advance; but it is yet a vigorous stripping with a manly attitude freeing itself from the trammels of a past faith and struggling into the light of something infinitely grander.