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Contributors and Correspondents

WATCHING AND WAITING.

MR. EDITOR.—Some unknown friends have sent me a pamphlet* by F. W. Grant, published in Toronto, purporting to be a reply to my tractate on the "Second Coming of the Lord." It is well called a reply, for it is no answer. To me it is most satisfactory; (1) because with the exception of an altered misrepresentation (p. 12) which amounts, even if true, only to a misunderstanding on my part, and which does not in the least impair my argument, the writer admits the general correctness of my statement of the doctrine held by the Brethren, and tries to establish it as against my reasoning. The charges which I bring against these doctrines, as to their tendency, he refers to "Him who judgeth righteously." As I had done this before, we leave the decision safely at the same tribunal, and God will judge both the doctrines and me. (2) Because the tract affords as good an illustration as I could desire of that self-complacent arrogance of which I complain, and of which our friends seem to be utterly unconscious, which leads them to fancy that no one is an honest, earnest student of prophecy, or knows the Bible, or is guided by the Holy Spirit, but themselves. (3) Because it also illustrates the subtle, ingenious, and evasive mode of argument which our friends use in support of their theory, and the extraordinary shifts and pet phrases to which they resort in order to turn the edge of the sword of the Spirit and evade the point of a text. For example, I am now told that the Church is God's house (and each individual saint a temple), the body of Christ, formed by the baptism of the Spirit, the Eve (!) the bride of the last Adam; and as these are not figurative terms, but express a reality, and were never used in reference to the Old Testament Church, therefore it was not God's church; but the Church began at Pentecost and will leave the earth, taking the Holy Ghost with it, when Christ comes for His saints. Again I am told of "Man's Day," (1 Cor. iv. 8) as being "the time in which he has the world to himself, just as the 'day of the Lord' is when he takes it into his 'own' (sic) meaning, (as I suppose, for it is not very clear, and I have no wish to misrepresent) that 'man's day' corresponds to the interval between the Lord's coming for the Saints and with them." But my object at present is not to reply to Mr. Grant. I know too well that he and all who have embraced these views are beyond the reach of argument, and will treat anything I may say as the folly of one who is "bold," (1 Cor. x. 8) wanting in honesty and courtesy, and untaught of God, inasmuch as I am not of their opinion. My object is to set in more clear light the chief question at issue, and which in my opinion covers an error, that is at the present time doing a world of mischief among good, earnest, serious-minded enquirers. It is for the sake of these I write, and I beseech them to search the scriptures and see for themselves.

The common doctrine of the Universal Church of God has been: that the gospel of Christ is to be preached for the discipling of all nations, and that Christ by His Spirit (John xvi. 7, 8), is to be with the Church, thus teaching and witnessing to convince "the world" until the end of the age. When He shall come to take His people to Himself and to judge "the world" (John iii. 16, including saints) in righteousness. The doctrine I impugn is: that Christ may come in the air any hour and take away His Church and the paraclete before the end of the age and the day of judgment; and that saints ought to be hourly expecting His coming of Christ in the air.

The question is not of a personal coming; Christians generally believe that; but of a coming in the air before the personal coming. Are we to expect Christ ANY DAY, to take away the Church and the paraclete? The brethren say, yes. I say, no. The tract which I am noticing asks the question, "ought we to be watching?" I answer yes; five thousand times, yes. And I trust when the Lord comes to me, I will be found watching. That is not the point. To state it more clearly, I cannot do better than quote from Mr. Grant's tract.

"I cannot watch for what I know cannot come for a thousand years yet. Wait, I can and must, of course. Watch, I cannot. Watching is based on the uncertainty of when he may come. According to Mr. Laing, it is certain He cannot come in our time. As to that then we may go to sleep, as we list; watching is in vain."

Here a very proper distinction is drawn between watching and waiting, a distinction found in Scripture, and which deserves Mr. Grant's attention, as it is evident the Spirit has not yet led him into all truth.

The word watch occurs twenty-three times, viz: Mat. xxiv. 42, 43; xv. 18; xxvi. 38, 40, 41;—Mark xiii. 34, 35, 37; xiv. 34, 37, 38;—Luke xii. 37, 39;—Acts xx. 31;—1 Cor. xvi. 16;—Col. iv. 2;—1 Thes. v. 6, 10;—1 Pet. v. 8;—Rev. iii. 2, 3; xvi. 15.

Now in not one of these passages is a person or an event referred to as the object of the watching. NEVER IS IT SAID OR IMPLIED, WATCH FOR THE LORD OR HIS COMING. To watch means to be awake, and at the post of duty: 1 Thes. v. 6, 10. In this sense we ought to watch, and in this sense true Christians are watching. But it is a different thing to say that watching is expecting Christ. It is never used in that sense. Look at Rev. iii. 8. It is said, not "If thou shalt watch, I will come and take thee to myself, therefore watch in expectation of my coming," but the very contrary. "If thou shalt not watch, that is, be awake to duty—I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I come." Watchfulness or wakefulness is enjoined throughout in view of danger and of judgment, not in view of Christ's coming to bless. The watching of the Brethren thus is not the watching of the Bible.

The word wait occurs seven times, viz: Rom. viii. 19, 23, 25; 1 Cor. i. 7; Gal. v. 5; Phil. iii. 20; Heb. ix. 28. In every instance it has reference to Christ and His second coming as the object of the waiting. His coming to redeem creation, not to take the Church: His revelation (1 Cor. i. 7), not a coming into the air; His coming to fashion our vile body like unto His glorious body, that is at the resurrection. Another verb occurs, Titus ii. 13, and Jude 21, also connected with the epiphany, not the invisible coming.

The verb also occurs in Luke xii. 36, when the Master is expected by the servants.

The waiting then for the revelation of Jesus is not the watching for Him coming in the air, but the patient waiting of 1 Thes. i. 10, (a different word) to which even the most ardent must submit, until God's purpose of love to all nations in the gospel shall be fulfilled. In 1 Thes. v. 6, Christians are exhorted to watch as contrasted with sleeping, and in verse 10 it is said: "whether we are watching or sleeping, we shall live together with Him," and in verse 4, "The day of the Lord," for destruction to others is spoken of as coming and overtaking like "brethren," not unprepared but waking and watching; but how could that be, if "the brethren" had been caught up into the air years before that day?

"Ought we to be watching?" Yes, ten thousand times yes; not cherishing baseless hopes of a coming in the air, and terrifying men by unfounded statements of impending judgments; but being fully awake to our privilege and duty; active and zealous in proclaiming the gospel, the love of God, and His long-suffering which is salvation, and patiently waiting for the fulfilment of the promise that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and that at the end of this gospel age our adorable Saviour will come again to receive us to Himself, that where he is there we may be also: "Even so come Lord Jesus."

JOHN LAING.

OUR OWN CHURCH.

No. IV.

MR. EDITOR.—In a former letter I referred to the situation of probationers and licentiates of our Church, and showed that the remuneration which they receive is much under what it ought to be, and that it is not such as to encourage respectable young men of talent to enter the Church and devote their time and talents to the work of the ministry. I would like now to refer to the

CONDITION OF MANY OF OUR VACANCIES.

Some congregations remain too long vacant where there is no sound or valid reason for doing so; and the result is that a spirit of hyper-criticism is largely developed, and the people come to regard themselves as standard judges of preaching. What would be regarded as good preaching from a stated pastor is looked upon as very common-place; and instead of listening with satisfaction and often with profit to the unfolding of the Gospel of Christ, people grow to want something new. Then differences arise as to who should take the lead in congregational matters. It may be that the more intelligent of the people have been managing, and as this has not brought about a desirable state of matters, the more ignorant are induced to step to the front, and matters very often instead of being improved are made worse. Then again by protracted vacancies the preaching of the gospel is often reduced to a question of dollars and cents. The congregation thinks that the Presbytery should send them the very best supplies, while they are willing to pay just as little as possible, and pride themselves in the thought that they are getting supplied for eight dollars a Sabbath,

and considerable variety at that, the sum total paid being much lower than such a congregation could offer to any respectable or average man. Such a selfish, worldly spirit is destructive of all true spirituality of mind, and must result in spiritual decay or death to the congregation which fosters or encourages it. There is one other feature occasionally exhibited by congregations in the selection of ministers which must be condemned, and that is the question of nationality. No doubt on this point the less said the better; still I am glad to notice that before the growing intelligence and deepening piety of the members of our Church this hateful spirit is quickly dying out; indeed the days would almost seem to be numbered when if a minister was asked to preach in a vacancy, and in all sincerity "shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God," and "kept back nothing that was profitable to them," instead of asking with all honesty of purpose—Is such preaching calculated to edify the "body of Christ?" before leaving the pew such questions were often heard going the rounds "What part of the north of Ireland is he from?" or "Is he a Scotchman?" or "Don't you think from his accent he is English?" or "Does he speak Gaelic?" We are in Canada building up a great Canadian nationality extracted from each and composed of all, and whatever may be the honest pride we all feel in the old land, still the church is not the place to exhibit such. It is not likely to be a question which will trouble the Invisible Church, and we should not allow it to trouble the visible Church. Everything which causes divisions should be discountenanced, come from whatever source it may, and the whole Presbyterian family put forth one undivided front, illustrating that their principles are not only sound and scriptural but harmonious as well.

LOUIS OF CHANGE.

is becoming more apparent year by year, and if encouraged will probably work mischief in the end. The changes which have been introduced and the differences which exist in the psalmody of our Church are coming to be inconvenient, especially to a person who travels much through the country; as the psalm books and hymn books which suit in one church are not used in another, and the consequence is that at present one does not know what sort of book to take to church. It is not very long since I worshipped in a Presbyterian church where the minister did not give out a psalm or paraphrase, but all hymns. On this occasion my psalm-book was of no use to me. Very soon after that I worshipped in a church where no hymns are sung, and on this occasion my hymn book was only an incumbrance. Now it is in no unfriendly spirit that I call the attention of fathers and brethren to this unseemly want of uniformity. We are inundated with hymns, and hymn writers, and it is utterly impossible in a life-time to become familiar with them all, three or four or five hundred hymns, and as many different tunes, so that if a person should live the age Methuselah he would fail to attain to a full acquaintance with them. I am not insensible to the difficulties and prejudices which surround this question; but I think there is sufficient wisdom and talent in the Church to settle it satisfactorily; and the sooner the better.

This love of change has laid hold of the ministry of the Church to some extent, the pastorate of many ministers being of only a few years duration. No doubt there are just causes for many of the changes which take place; still the tie which unites ministers and people is very sacred and should not be easily broken. Not long since a clergyman from the United States told me that in the Presbytery in which he lived there was not a minister three years in his congregation. Well we are not so bad as this, but if we drift along we may some day be able to say the same. We disapprove of the practice of the Methodists as to their systematic changes; and even some of them are getting tired of them; as very often when a minister has just begun to see some results from his labours, or when he has got properly acquainted with the people, he has to lift his stakes and go to new fields of labour. Encouraged by past success and cheered by the hopes of the future, let our ministers and members gird themselves afresh for the work which lies before them and to which they are specially called, knowing that the time is short; that the battle will soon be ended and the victory won; that the time cometh when the Church shall enter upon her millennial reign—"when violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction in thy borders," but praise ascend continually, the music of which shall be loud as "the voice of many waters," and sweet as that of "harpers, harping with their harps."

"And yet a banner thou hast given,
To them who Thee do fear;
That it by them because of truth,
Displayed may appear."

PREBYTERIAN.
Toronto, May 1st, 1877.

THE SIOUX REFUGEES IN THE NORTH-WEST.

MR. EDITOR.—The venerable Dr. Williamson, of St. Peter's, Minnesota, so long and so faithfully laboring among the Sioux or Dakota Indians, in advising me of the shipment of a box of books and medicines for the Sioux refugees in the vicinity of Fort Elllice, encloses the accompanying article, of which he says: "By request I send you an article addressed to the Christians of Manitoba and the Dominion of Canada. The writer and her husband were for some time Indian missionaries, but not among the Sioux, and had to leave on account of ill health." The brethren to whom I have shown the communication strongly advised that it should be published, with the hope that it may excite practical sympathy in behalf of those poor neglected Sioux, who are now without doubt to be permanent residents of our country. I hope, therefore, you may be able to find room for it in the PRESBYTERIAN, with this note, which is needful for the proper understanding of it. I may say that the Solomon referred to is the missionary for whose translation to Fort Elllice all arrangements were made last year, when our Foreign Mission Committee found they could not undertake the \$600 a year necessary for his support. I hope the Church will soon remove that difficulty. He is a Sioux—a man of piety and intelligence, and a regularly ordained Presbyterian minister of many years standing.

"Enoch Cloud-appearing" is the best educated of the Sioux in Manitoba, and perhaps the most influential. He and his mother have been members of the Presbyterian Church for many years. His father, now about eighty years old, was received in 1876.

"White Eagle" is another chief, for whom and his band the Church of England has provided. Yours truly, JOHN BLACK.
Kildonan, Man., May 12th, 1877.

To the Christians of Manitoba and the Dominion of Canada:

DEAR FRIENDS.—There comes to my sick room occasionally, a little paper—*The Tappi Oage*—a sheet published monthly by the Dakota Mission. In the March number I find the following:—

FROM MANITOBA.

Thirty-five years ago, Enoch Cloud-appearing was one of three Dakota young men, who were taken to Ohio for a year. After the outbreak of 1862, he and his father's family went off to the Assiniboine River country, in Manitoba, where they continue to reside in the neighborhood of Fort Elllice. Within two years past they have been making efforts to obtain a religious teacher. And it was confidently expected that the Presbyterian Missionary Society of Canada would call one of our native pastors to do that missionary work. Want of funds prevented it.

To Solomon, who was expected to have gone there, Enoch writes, under date of Nov. 17, 1876. He says: "Lately I went down to Fort Garry, and there saw and conversed with several ministers, when I understood why you did not come. They thought perhaps they could send me an English missionary. But I am hoping that your promise may yet be fulfilled, and I answered them accordingly, that I was hoping in God's mercy."

"They have sent White Eagle a missionary and all that is needful for education. But for me they have done nothing as yet. Still I am hoping, and I do not forget to pray to God every day. This winter I desire to hear what you will do."

"You must tell all this to Dr. Williamson and Mr. Riggs. I want to have a school and preaching in this country, but I am waiting for you. I remember what you told me; but it does not yet appear when it can be accomplished. Perhaps there is some hindrance in the way that you can tell me of."

"At Fort Garry I saw a minister, Rev. James Robertson by name, who gave me slates and pencils, with which I will teach writing this winter. Moses Flying-Arrow can now read as well as I do. I will now teach him to write, and others also. I greatly rejoice that my children have made progress in learning. But how they will be able to advance further does not appear, and that grieves my heart."

"When you came here the Lord's Supper was given to us, but now, for a long time, we have not partaken thereof. When you partake of it remember us. And if no one comes to us, how shall we be organized into a church?"

"Then, how I am to do this winter I know not. For I am as if I could not do anything. I am like one on a tree calling out. Nevertheless, for myself, I am earnest in prayer. And I say to others, 'Remember to pray. Believe the Son of God, and trust in Him. If you do this you will live. Whosoever does this will live. Therefore do it! But if they wish to follow, what are they to do? And there is nothing to follow, and so how can they? It is not in vain, though it seems as if it were in vain. But I think whatever God commands me to say and do, is right. Also I have been a great sinner and a leader in evil deeds, as you know my name is Cloud-appearing. But now every day and night, I seek to enter the narrow gate in the way that leads to life. And as for my kindred, I wish that they may all follow. And all you, my relatives, who belong to the church

of God, by prayer help us, that we may all together see each other in the country of Mahpeya.

"Truly, as yet, this country is a wilderness, and dwelling in it is difficult. But here we are, and here we shall abide; and so I wish you to remember us, and help us by your prayers, that in this country we may know God's mercy."

He then makes an appeal to Dr. Williamson and Mr. Riggs for medicine and books. "If they can give me some books, they will make me very glad. I am unable to buy books, and if they do not give them to me, it is not probable that I can get them anywhere. Father and mother are yet alive. Father says, when I am able I will write to Mr. Riggs, and perhaps he will put some words in the *Tappi Oage*."

When I had read it, I sat a long time staring at it—I saw two sentences that to me, meant a great deal.

"They thought they might send me an English missionary. But I am hoping that your promise may be fulfilled, etc." Do you know why he hopes the promise of his Dakota brother on this side the line, may be fulfilled in going to him? He will not despise the words of an English missionary, but the words of such an one, to the Dakota, must necessarily, for a long time be words in an unknown tongue. This people, in order to comprehend the sweet old story

"Of Jesus and His love."

must hear it IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE.

Is it strange that this man is "hoping in God's mercy" to send him a minister whose speech he can understand?

Suppose you and I were set down tomorrow in China, and that all the preaching or instruction we might get was in Chinese. How much good would it do us? We might have our English Bibles along. I hope we would not forget to take them. But suppose we had only a part of God's good word, and that most of us could not read even that—what then? Would we not cry out that in "God's mercy" a teacher of our own tongue might be sent us?

"And if no one comes to us how shall we be organized into a church?"

Our old geography tells us that "the Indian is fond of hunting, fishing, and war, implacable and revengeful." If the geography is right then here must be a new thing. What has happened? Surely this red man with such a question on his lips must have met Jesus on the way, and have "learned of Him." And is there no affirmative answer to his question? Cannot some way be devised to give him his heart's desire—a preacher, and Sabbath privileges, with the communion?—If he desired to buy powder he could get it—If he wanted "fire water" and was too poor to purchase, there would be no lack of white men to give it to him. Shall he long so earnestly for the best things, and fail to obtain?

I learn that a converted Dakota, a native pastor among his own people, is ready to respond to the call of his kindred in your Dominion, but that the "Native Dakota Missionary Society" are too poor to send him. How could it be otherwise? Just struggling up out of the darkness and degradation of heathenism, we think they do nobly to accomplish what they do. Devoiced by the locust, and oppressed in many ways, it is wonderful that in their poverty they have courage to attempt a work for those in the regions beyond. I hear that they had designed, "at their own charges," to send this man to Enoch, but that the money failed.

Dear Canadian Christians, if, by giving to this good work in your Dominion, a man who having the language at his tongue's end, needs no expensive interpreter, no long years of study, before he can begin to work, we can reduce the expense of such a mission to the simple support of a pastor's family, cannot you, in your love for your own Home Missions, find a way to bridge the chasm between your waiting people, and our waiting native brother? If we will give you the man READY for work—and that means everything, where there is an Indian language to be taken into account—cannot you find a way for his support and "call?"

"How shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?"

The Manso, Rochester, Minnesota, April 8th, 1877.

THERE are a few people in Canada who advocate the abolition of capital punishment. To such we commend the following item, culled from an American exchange: "Capital punishment was established in Maine in 1875, and during the year following there was but one murder in the State, and in that case the murderer committed suicide. It was abolished in 1876, and in one year there were ten capital crimes demanding legal punishment."