

should be borne in mind that this same conservatism of "use and wont" was the greatest stumbling block that had to be contended against, not only by the Reformers in the sixteenth century, but by the first preachers of Christianity. Seeing then that conservatism proves nothing, and in the absence of any direct command on the subject under the present dispensation, it is safest to follow the practice of the one preceding it, this you admit, but call in question my application of it. I refer you then for proof to Ex. xv. 47-48, to shew that there were no exceptions, or restrictions as to age; and as to the change that was to take place in its observance when they were established in their own land, in Deut. xvi. 16, I find it was "all thy males," no restriction as to age. Of course that must be understood as applying only to those that had physical ability, not to infants nine days old. If you will kindly furnish me with scriptural proof that its observance was restricted till they attained the age of twenty, I promise to do whatever penance you lay upon me, even if it is to confess publicly my presumption and ignorance of Scripture. If you do not, every one can draw their own inference. All that I contend for is, that when children have arrived at an age when they can be taught profitably to hold communion with God in prayer, (a more solemn act than sitting down at his table), and engage in the public worship of the sanctuary, they have then in virtue of their baptism a right to take their place at His table. This, then, is not a throwing down the church fences, but a contending for the right of the lambs that have been admitted therein, to be fed in the choicest pasture.

The argument that would exclude them for their want of knowledge to comprehend its meaning, would also have excluded every one of the apostles when it was first instituted. EQUITY,

King, Nov. 17th, 1877.

LETTER FROM INDIA.

Mrs. Harvie, secretary of the W.F.M. Society has handed us the following for publication:

MY DEAR MRS. HARVIE,—Your welcome and most kind letter we received yesterday, and I hasten to reply because it is six weeks since I last wrote, and my dear sisters will be getting so anxious for my letter. My delay has been unavoidable, so please forgive. We feel so thankful that my letters have been useful. You are quite at liberty to do anything you like with them. Sometimes I write in great haste, and have not time to read and correct; if, dear Mrs. Harvie, you find mistakes, will you be so very good as to correct them before others see them. You see I am talking to you in a sisterly manner, because you have encouraged me to do so by your kind letters.

The following is an account of a visit paid to Mr. Narayan Sheshadri's Bethel village, by a Christian merchant in Bombay. I am sure you will be most interested by it:

A VISIT TO BETHEL.

A Christmas holiday excursion having carried me as far as Arungabad, I took the opportunity of going on forty miles further (a seven hours' journey on these roads), to Taina to see the work at Bethel, in which so many friends are interested for Mr. Narayan Sheshadri's sake and the gospel's.

On the morning of Saturday, 30th December, 1876, I found Mr. Narayan occupying an upper room of the house, which serves as school and chapel, and there he was having morning worship with some of his converts, addressing them in English, Marathi, or Hindustani, as he found one or other most effective in reaching the understanding of his hearers.

Bethel is fully three miles out from Taina, and as Mr. Narayan had been there in the early morning my first visit was deferred until next day.

The time of my visit was opportune. Monday, the last day of the year, being a high day at Bethel. At the close of the year Mr. Narayan has a special address, at which he urges all to be present, also the Lord's Supper is administered, and converts of the preceding six months are invited to make profession of their faith by baptism.

The road to Bethel was mostly through the fields, impracticable except for the strong, tight tonga of the country, and too rough for passengers who are not prepared to endure a good deal of jolting.

The village stands on an eminence, surrounded by undulating plains, bounded in the distance by the characteristic ridgy hills of the Deccan. The church

crowns the eminence, and is consequently seen from far on all sides, an advantage well worth securing, and when the tower and belfry are completed it will be still more conspicuous.

As we approached the village we saw that all ordinary labour was at a stand. Near to the church, family groups were gathering, and when on the roof of the church we could see small parties winding their way from neighbouring villages. Amongst these people there was an evident display of Sunday clothes, a wholesome and homelike sign of their progress. Many too had books in their hands, a pleasing and most unusual sight amongst a gathering of natives even without taking into account that these books were Bibles, etc., etc.

About half-past nine a.m., the people gathered in the church, of which the walls are only up and the roof partly on. The number present exclusive of children was about 150. The inclination of the people is to sit men and women apart; this Mr. Narayan opposes, but as yet his success is not very apparent. All were seated upon cotton carpets on the floor. Mr. Narayan proposes to have benches, because he thinks sitting on the floor conducive to drowsiness.

The service began with the hymn, "Sweet Hour of Prayer," in Marathi. The service otherwise consisted of reading, prayer, and preaching as in our churches at home. Six men were admitted to the church by baptism. One, an old man, had been a devoted worshipper of Khndoba, and resisted stoutly when his son and several of his family became Christians, but has at last through their influence been won over. He listened intently to the addresses and kept his place in front of the preacher when the others retired, as if anxious not to lose a word. Besides these men six infants were baptized, children of members. About seventy-five partook of the Lord's supper. Mr. Narayan's text was, "This do in remembrance of me." The attention of the people was very marked. The congregation did not show the decorous stillness which some people might desire, because mothers had to bring with them small children, and when these became clamorous they were taken out, or handed to the big girls, but except these necessary interruptions which attracted no attention, the orderliness of the service was admirable. The people are low caste, mostly Mangs, and many of their faces show the effects of the poverty, hardship and ignorance which they and their fathers have endured, but here, as elsewhere, is most apparent the physical improvement which Christianity brings, and this will be still more apparent in the next generation.

On Monday morning I went out with Mr. Narayan to see a house in the town which he would like to purchase for a school. In the afternoon I saw a number of the boys attending the cantonment school. These are not of low caste like the people of Bethel, but are Parsees, Hindus, and Mohammedans, also Christians. They are taught English, and are fitted for government or railway clerks. Some of the boys objected to the Bible lesson, but they were told that as to this there was no alternative. They were examined during one visit by two very competent teachers. The number on the roll is sixty, and the average attendance is about forty. There is no other school of this class in the neighborhood, and the work is done in a truly missionary spirit.

In the evening we again went to Bethel to attend a meeting of the evangelists who are employed in the neighborhood. Eleven men and three women were present. Sixteen men and six women are employed.

The Church which is the most prominent object in Bethel is a substantial building of stone and lime. It is the work of the young men of Bethel under the guidance of one or two skilled foremen. It will seat about 400.

The village occupies a nearly central position in the grant of land, which embraces about 800 acres.

The boys are trained as cultivators, masons, plasterers, brick and tile makers, blacksmiths, cartwrights, and tailors. They have done all the building at Bethel under competent workmen.

Without comparing this with other methods of evangelization, it seems to me that for the preaching of the gospel to the poor the system here pursued is admirable. (Signed,) C. M.

Dear Mrs. Harvie the heat is terrible, for the monsoon has not come, and we have only had a few showers, so please excuse this scribbled letter.

With our united love to you and all other dear friends, believe me, yours affectionately,
Bombay, 15th June, 1877. KITTIE STOTHERT.

MINISTERS AND CHURCHES.

REV. ALEX. CAMPBELL, formerly of Beachburg, Ont is now laboring in Rockwood, Manitoba.

A FEW days ago the ladies of the Oshawa Presbyterian Church presented Mrs. Hogg with a very handsome set of furs. At the monthly church sociable the address accompanying the furs was read and Rev. Mr. Hogg, on behalf of Mrs. Hogg, made a suitable reply.

THE Rev. J. McIntyre has been unanimously called by Zion Presbyterian Church, Orangeville. The "Advertiser" says: "It will be fortunate for the congregation if they can secure the services of such a superior minister as Mr. McIntyre, and we trust he may see it to be his duty to accept the call."

THE congregation of Knox Church, Ingersoll (Rev. R. N. Grant's), held a Festival on Friday evening, 28th ult., when, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, an immense crowd filled the spacious Town Hall. Some 700 sat down to supper provided by the ladies of the church. Dr. Cochrane was the only speaker on the occasion, and delivered a lengthy address on the elements of congregational prosperity. The Festival in every point of view was a decided success.

ON Tuesday evening a large audience assembled in the Central Church to hear Rev. Dr. Ormiston of New York. The chair was well filled by Rev. Principal Caven. The subject of the lecture was "California," and the way it was handled sustained the Doctor's reputation as a powerful platform speaker. The fourth lecture of the course will be delivered by Mr. N. F. Davin, author of the *Irishman in Canada*, next Monday evening. Subject, "British House of Commons."

ON the evening of Tuesday, the 23rd ult., a party of ladies from the Durham Road congregation waited upon Rev. A. F. Mackenzie, at the manse in Priceville, where he has been residing for the past two years, and presented him with a sum of money as a token of their regard for him, and expressive of their appreciation of his valuable services among them as missionary for the past two summers, and deeply regretting his departure. Mr. Mackenzie sincerely thanked the members and adherents of the congregation for this expression of kindness and liberality.—COM.

"THE BETRAYAL."

On the evening of Thanksgiving Day the Rev. JOHN LAING, M.A., according to previous announcement, read to an attentive audience his drama entitled "THE BETRAYAL." We copy for the benefit of our readers the appreciative criticism of the "True Banner":

The drama consists of eight scenes relating to the betrayal and death of our Saviour, each of them portrayed in a powerful and spirited manner; and with such a thorough appreciation of the proprieties of time, place and circumstances as bespeaks a minute and intelligent acquaintance with the history of that period and people. Several of the scenes are of intense and thrilling interest, and passages of rare poetic beauty are of frequent occurrence. The language is strong, terse, and expressive—the tone, sentiment, and tendency wholesome, pure and elevating—the style in a remarkable degree befitting the subject, and rarely if ever descending to common-place. The principal characters are very skillfully drawn—that of Caiaphas is a masterpiece. Not a name clothed in verbiage, but a living, breathing man. Some of his soliloquies have a gleam of concealed satire underlying the words which reminds one of Thackeray. The individuality of most of the characters is striking. Witness the consultation held before the taking of Jesus. Each suggestion, consideration, proposition, characteristic of him who utters it. The traitor himself, a most difficult subject, appears in all the scenes and circumstances in which he is introduced—*himself*. His struggles before the betrayal are forcibly depicted; his remorse, terror, and final despair are portrayed with almost painful vividness and intensity. While giving abundant evidence of imagination, feeling, and poetic taste, there is a pervading tone of manliness and strength throughout the whole production, which removes it infinitely above the mere sensational and sentimental."

STUDENTS' MISSIONARY SOCIETY, PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, MONTREAL.—The following contributions, received up to date (Nov. 27th) are thankfully acknowledged by the Treasurer: Plantagenet Mission, per R. Hyde, \$4.00; Ottawa, per A. Anderson and J. Macfarlane, \$2.00; Ottawa City, per W. H. Geddes, \$5.50; Dr. Kelly, Montreal, per Chas. McKillop, \$5.00; Thanet and Ridge, per John Munro, \$2.00; Kenyon, per Rev. F. McLennan, \$9.00; A Christian Friend, per Alex. York, \$10.00, Charles McKillop, B.A., \$10.00, James T. Donald, \$10.00, W. H. Geddes, \$1.00; John Munro, B.A., \$10.00; J. R. McLeod, \$5.00; John Allan, B.A., \$10.00; William Shearer, \$10.00; Thomas Nelson, \$10.00; W. D. Russell, \$10.00.