

are offering for the work, and several will be sent out ere long.

The various seminaries where young men are preparing for the ministry reported a favorable year's work. Union Seminary, Virginia, had sixty-five, Louisville sixty, Clarksville thirty-three and Columbia twenty-eight students in attendance. The Stillman Institute in Alabama, where colored men are trained for the ministry, had nearly thirty in its various classes. In all there are, in colleges and theological seminaries, nearly 450 young men in preparation for the ministry. One of the pleasing things in the seminaries is the prevalence of an earnest missionary interest and zeal. Mission work among the colored people is receiving more and more attention from year to year, and deeper interest in it is being aroused.

Other schemes of work, such as the Church Building Fund, the Invalid Fund, Publication and Colportage, Education for the ministry, Sabbath Observance, and Sabbath School work, together with the interests of the Young People's Societies, also received the earnest attention of the Assembly. Several questions in connection with some of these subjects elicited a good deal of discussion.

It should be added the opening sermon was preached by the retiring Moderator, Rev. Dr. Hemphill, of Louisville Seminary, and that Rev. Dr. Mallard, of New Orleans, was unanimously elected Moderator. Dr. Hemphill's sermon on the love of the spirit was very fine, and Dr. Mallard made an excellent Moderator.

The Assembly next year goes to Charlotte, N.C., and meets there in the First Presbyterian Church, within a few hundred yards of the historic spot where the Presbyterians of Mecklenburg County issued a declaration of independence from Great Britain nearly a year before the historic declaration was issued. In connection with the Assembly there in 1897 a service to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Westminster Assembly is to be held.

Louisville, Ky.

THE GOD OF THE MOSLEMS.

BY HISTORICUS.

Though far from desiring a controversy about the tenets of Mohammed and his followers, yet I cannot allow the remarks of Rev. T. Fenwick to pass unnoticed. I am truly sorry that anyone, after my express disclaimer, should suppose that my wish was to whitewash bad men of any kind, when I compared the practical outcome of Islam with that of Christianity in mediæval and modern times. In my contrast I wished simply to remind Christian writers that from history a great deal may be said in favor of Mohammed with his laws of sobriety and hospitality, and that in fact many nominal Christians have been as cruel and intolerant as any Moslem.

As I have already said, I did not intend to enlarge on the theoretical teaching of Islam, but as Mr. Fenwick quotes the 47th chapter of the Koran in proof of his position, I must also say a word in regard to that point. I quote the passage in the very literal version of Palmer, with as much of the context as may explain its meaning. It runs thus:—"The chapter of Mohammed, also called Fight. In the name of the merciful and compassionate God. Those who misbelieve and turn folk from God's way, He will make their works go wrong. . . . And when ye meet those who misbelieve, then striking off heads until ye have massacred them, and bind fast the bonds! Then either a free grant (of liberty) or a ransom until the war shall have laid down its burdens. . . . Verily those who misbelieve and turn folks off God's path, and then die misbelievers, God will not pardon them."

Thus we see that Mohammed would treat severely those heathen who turned

away others from Islam, and who to him seemed very sinful before God. That his command is special and not general in its application, is confirmed by a note to Sale's version of this very chapter, where we read: "This law the Hafilites (a large section of orthodox Moslems) judge to be abrogated, or to relate particularly to the war of Bedr."

If Christians are not so reasonable as to accept this natural explanation, it is very likely that they themselves may be held responsible for commands given by Moses to the people Israel and found in Deut. vii. The Revised Version reads: "When the Lord thy God shall deliver them (the Canaanites) up before thee and thou shalt smite them, then shalt thou utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them. The Lord thy God, he is (the) God, the faithful God, . . . which repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them."

Of course these words have reference only to a particular time and place, and to circumstances that have long since passed away; still many Christians have deemed them a sufficient reason for oppressing and destroying those of a different creed or ritual, especially if the latter were not abjectly submissive in all civil affairs.

It is a very important Christian precept, "Do unto others, as ye would that others should do unto you." If this command were more implicitly obeyed by the agents of the Christian churches in India and elsewhere, in regard to the religion of Moslems, it is probable that there would be more success in converting these unbelievers from the error of their way, and in making them followers of the meek, but righteous Prophet of Nazareth.

THE RED CROSS IN TURKEY.

The Armenian Relief Committee, with headquarters at Chicago, sent out lately the following circular. In it there is a reference to a report which had been circulated that the American missionaries and the agents of the Red Cross Society were not working harmoniously together.

The Red Cross Society has now gotten a good foothold in Turkey, and is doing a grand work. The agents of the Red Cross have sent out three expeditions, one of which has gone to Marash and Zeitoun, one to Ourfa, and a third to Harpoot, each aiding the districts along their way. They have everywhere been welcomed by the missionaries whose work they are grandly supplementing. The following extracts of reports from Miss Barton's letters should stir a chord of sympathy in every one of our readers, sufficiently deep to touch his pocketbook:

"I have a body of relief on these fields, hundreds of miles away in the mountains, a thousand miles from me, that I could not draw off in six weeks. The best we could all do would be to abandon ten thousand poor, sick, suffering wretches to a fate that ought to shock the entire world. Dying, sick, foodless, naked, and not one doctor and no medicine among them; whole cities scourged and left to their fate, to die without a hand raised, save the three or four resolute missionaries, tired, worn, God-serving at their posts until they drop. The civilized world running over with skillful physicians, and not one there; no one to arrange to get them there, to pay expenses, take special charge, and thus make it possible for them to go. And we, seeing that state of things, holding in our grasp the relief we had been weeks preparing and organizing, in anticipation of this, to turn back, draw off our helpers, send back the doctors already started, give all up, because somebody had said something, the press had circulated it, the world had believed it, our disappointed committees had lost heart and grown sore, struggling with an occupation rather new to them and the people had taken alarm and refused to sustain them. Was this all there was of us? No purpose of our own? 'On change,' like the price of wheat on the market? In the name of God and humanity, this field must be carried, these people must be rescu-

ed, skill, care, medicine and food for the sick must reach them."

The missionaries in Harpoot at latest news were anxiously awaiting the arrival of the expedition.

A revised edition of *The Armenian Amphitheater*, a 64 page booklet, with a concise summary of the massacres and relief work, will be sent to any address on receipt of ten cents, by addressing the Armenian Relief Committee, Room 15, 139 East Madison St., Chicago, Ill.

POLYGAMIST CHRISTIAN CONVERTS.

MR. EDITOR;—Before referring to the passage in Timothy which has been quoted in favor of admitting polygamists to the Church of Christ. I would like to draw the attention of those interested to the second chapter of Revelations. We notice there that there were Nicolaitanes in the early church; they were heretics who assumed their name from Nicholas of Antioch; who, being a Gentile by birth, first embraced Judaism, and then Christianity; when his zeal and devotion recommended him to the Church of Jerusalem, by whom he was chosen one of the first deacons. Many of the primitive writers believe that Nicolas was rather the occasion than the author of the infamous practices of those who assumed his name, who were expressly condemned by the Spirit of God Himself. "But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate," (Rev. ii. 6). They allowed a community of wives, and made no distinction between ordinary meals and those offered to idols.

God condemns these Nicolaitanes. Are the missionaries in India kinder than God? Does not the Creator know best what is good for the being created? Jesus said: "It was not so from the beginning." God made one woman for one man. Now in reference to the passages from Timothy; if Dr. Kellogg lived more of his real life among the people, he would attach an entirely different meaning to that passage: "A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife," etc. The people read it; not one wife at a time, but one wife altogether. And a minister loses a great deal of real heart influence among the great majority of the people of our country, if he does not deny himself and refrain from marrying a second time.

The Bible is very lucid. "All the lore its scholars need, pure eyes and Christian heart." Why do we try to read it the most difficult way when the real reading is so simple and so easily understood?

Is it because we think that simple way is too strait a way for us to live?

A. P. MELDRUM.

Toronto.

The Irish Presbyterian Church began mission work in India in 1840. In the two provinces of Gujarat and Kathiawar (Bombay Presidency) they have now eight central and twelve out-stations, thirteen ordained missionaries, three native pastors and one hundred and thirty six other native Christian helpers; communicants number four hundred and sixty-two and adherents two thousand two hundred and twenty-seven. They have a mission press and a training college with fourteen students. In Manchuria, where mission work was begun in 1867-70, they are now making rapid progress. In the last seven years their converts having increased from seventy-six to over one thousand (four hundred and forty-six communicants). They have five stations (seventeen sub-stations); ten ordained, three medical missionaries, and sixty-one native agents. One convert recently made light of walking twenty-five miles in a busy season to receive baptism. A jungle tribe's mission and Zambana mission are also carried on under the auspices of this Church.

Teacher and Scholar.

BY REV. A. J. MARTIN, TORONTO.

July 19th, 1896. THE ARK BROUGHT TO JERUSALEM. 2 Sam. vi. 1-12

GOLDEN TEXT.—Ps. lxxxiv. 12

MEMORY VERSES.—11-12

CATECHISM.—Q. 67.

HOME READINGS.—M. Exod. xl. 17-38. 7. Josh. vi. 1-20. W. 1 Sam. iv. 1-11. 74. 1 Sam. vi. 1-21. F. 2 Sam. vi. 1-23. S. Ps. cxxxii. 1-18. Sab. lxxxiv. 1-12.

Shortly after David had gained possession of Jerusalem, the Philistines, alarmed at his growing power, determined to check his career before he should become too strong for them. They therefore invaded Judah. Acting under Divine directions, David went out to battle against them and drove them back into their own country. Then the king turned himself to the upbuilding of his people and nation. In Jerusalem he had an ideal capital from a political point of view. The one thing essential to a foundation for lasting greatness was lacking however. For seventy years the services of God's sanctuary had been completely neglected, while the ark of the Lord lay in the house of Abinadab at Kirjath-jearim, whither it had been carried when returned from the Philistines. Without a public recognition of God, David felt that all his efforts to build up the nation would be vain. Therefore he built a new tent in Jerusalem for the ark of the Lord, and after consultation with the representatives of all the tribes, he determined to bring up the ark to Jerusalem, and so to make that city the religious capital of Israel. Our lesson for this week relates the effort. Let us consider the *marring of a great purpose*; and the *achievement of that purpose*.

I. The Marring of a Great Purpose.—There can be no question as to David's purpose being a great and good one. He had learned during the years of his adversity the comfort and the strength which comes from a consciousness of God's presence. Not as a matter of superstition, but as a part of his life's experience, had David kept God with him in his wanderings. Now his aim is to make the most and the best of God's chosen people. He knows that only in the proportion in which God is recognized and honored by the nation, will there be any enduring greatness achieved. Therefore he purposes to bring up the ark of the Lord, and to restore the national worship disregarded for so many years. His purpose was good and his hope was not of the kind which had led ungodly Israel to look upon the ark as a mere charm against their enemies. David's heart was right in this matter. But he neglected to look into the requirements which God had prescribed for the handling of that sacred ark. To us these requirements seem in a certain sense arbitrary. But to Israel they were necessary to teach the need of reverence and holiness before one could approach God. These things God has taught us in the gift of His Son, yet we are very apt to forget them. The removing of the ark seems to have been entrusted to the Levites correctly enough, but they remembered only how the ark had come into their midst from Philistia, and forgot God's way. Therefore they set the ark upon the new ox cart. One act of irreverence precipitated another, for the roughness of the road caused the cart to sway until it seemed as though the ark were about to be dashed to the earth. Uzzah put out his hand to steady the ark, and was smitten dead for his sacrilege. Awed and alarmed by this, the purpose of bringing the ark into Jerusalem and establishing a national religion was abandoned for the time, and the ark put in the house of one of the Levites, Obed-Edom, of the family of Kohath.

II. The Achievement of a Great Purpose.—The thoughts of David and the representatives of the tribes upon the death of Uzzah we can only imagine. So certain had they been that they were doing what God approved of, that this mark of Divine anger struck them dumb with amazement. They abandoned their purpose and went home sorrowful. Yet God's indignation was not directed against their purpose, but against their sinful methods of accomplishing it. It was essential that at this point in the nation's history, only right and exact thoughts of God should prevail. No irreverence could be tolerated if God was to be in the midst of His people for their blessing. Therefore God showed to David and to Israel, by His dealings with the house of Obed-Edom during the three months while the ark of the Lord remained with them, that the fault lay in their own hearts, and not in the desire to establish a nation upon God's presence. Therefore they were encouraged, and brought up the ark to Jerusalem with great rejoicing, and without anything to mar that joy, since they now wrought in God's way. The church of Christ has great need to learn the lesson David learned—and so have individual congregations and individual believers. We must not imagine that any purpose however good can be accomplished by methods and in ways which God cannot bless. These may bring what seems success for a little while; but they cannot but issue in disastrous failure. Let it be ours to strive to do God's work in God's way, under the leading of God's spirit.