

## Appeal for Help for Annuitants.

Early in the year circulars were sent out to all the church clerks by the Annuity Board, asking for collections for the ministers, widows and orphans' fund. As the response was not general circulars were then sent to all the pastors.

So far 43 churches have taken collections and 11 brothers and sisters have sent in donations. The donations amounted to \$32.15, the collections to \$186.28, the total \$218.28. The brethren of the Board thank the donors and the churches for their gifts. On the 1st of July the Board will send to the annuitants all there is in the treasury for the purpose. One brother writes the Board that he is disabled by consumption, that his wife after suffering for two years with sciatica is also very low with consumption. They are surrounded by helpless children. This is an extreme case. Aged brethren who have borne the burden and heat of the day are very needy. Will not the churches and benevolent brethren and sisters come to the help of the Board. Take collections quickly, please. Send in all you can to the treasurer at once. The needy will look to the Board on the 1st of July.

The Board would ask the churches and Christians generally to pray for these lonely brethren and sisters. Kneel in your closets and pray for them. Will not the pastors pray for them when they lead their congregations to the Throne of Grace. Do this, brethren and sisters, and you will give all the Lord requires of you. Please don't delay.

I have sent a statement of all that has been received. Will the donors please look it over in the next MESSENGER AND VISITOR. If there are any mistakes please let me know before the auditor goes over the accounts.

Halifax.

E. M. SAUNDERS, Sec'y-Treas.

## From Halifax.

Pandita Ramabai lectured in St. Matthews church on Friday evening the 3rd of June. Although it was raining the house was packed with eager listeners. This Christian woman of the Brahmin class appealing to an English audience on behalf of the 22,000,000 of Hindoo widows in their degradation and state of despair was both pathetic and phenomenal.

The special providence of her father and mother fleeing, when she was but a child, to the wilderness, so as to be away from the storm of public sentiment while they educated their daughter, is a note-worthy event. "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." How strangely the home in the forest affected the child. The howling of wild beasts by night, the looking upon the densities of the woods and the luxuriant wealth and beauty of the tropical climate by day, wrought effectually on the intelligence and sentiment of the little girl. Her retentive memory became a storehouse of vedic and philosophical lore. But her ways were directed to another source of knowledge. The Christian faith engaged her trained intellect and appealed to her heart into which the Holy Spirit of God had poured light. The audience was delighted with Pandita.

The District Committee held its monthly meeting with the Cornwallis St. church. Pastor Robinson unfortunately was not in town. The committee transacted its business in the afternoon. The Missionary, Rev. P. S. McGregor, reported his first month's work. The field seems to him large and the work great. Beside his missionary work, he has been rendering service to some of the churches during the month. Bro. S. C. Freeman, a member of the graduating class at Acadia, has come to the Sackville, Lucas Settlement, Fall River and Hammond's Plains field. Bro. Asaph Whitman still preaches in a part of these stations half of his time.

A resolution was submitted to the committee, condemning the breaking of law in leasing the speed track of the exhibition for horse racing, and also for the attempt to make the people of Nova Scotia partners to this demoralizing sport and its gambling and drinking accompaniments. Intense feeling exists in connection with this matter.

The Law and order League of this city has given its attention to this subject. They have been driven to the conclusion that there is a sad lack of respect for law among the people. A circular has gone forth from them to the ministers, requesting them to preach on the subject of the sacredness of law, and how much the welfare of the community depends upon the careful observance of law. They regard it as alarming when the Minister of Justice for the Province gives his influence to disregard a law which he helped to enact. The whole matter is clearly placed before the readers of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR, in the deliverance of the Evangelical Alliance, found in its issue of last week. The people of the Province will consider this subject carefully, and will have a chance to express their opinions, at their annual gatherings through the summer and in petition next winter. The whole country will surely be stirred up and the Legislature will be petitioned to cancel this illegal bargain made with the Halifax Riding Club.

In the evening at the Cornwallis St. church, a public meeting was held. It was addressed by the Revs. A. C. Chute, W. E. Bates and P. S. McGregor. Mr. Chute stated briefly and clearly the ecclesiastical and doctrinal views of Baptists. He was listened to with much attention and satisfaction. "Ye are the body of Christ," was Mr. Bates' subject. His address was "clear, compact, comprehensive and cogent," and delivered with becoming seriousness and animation. Mr. Bates reveals in analogies. He has unusual skill in sounding out the truths of revelation, by showing to how many things the Kingdom of Heaven may be likened. Mr. McGregor made the audience feel that he is an evangelist. Special prayer was offered for his success.

The Rev. Mr. Robinson had some material help for his church, in connection with Dr. Lorimer's lecture. He is now having a rally Sunday. Circulars have been sent out, asking citizens to give a dollar each. He wants to raise the mortgage of \$1,400, and pay up a \$200 current debt. It is to be hoped he will succeed.

Halifax is brushing up, so as to be prepared for the summer travel. Large numbers of tourists are expected from the United States.

REPORTER.

## Travel in Palestine.

DEAR EDITOR.—Our party under the personal leadership of Mr. Clark, whose ability, especial fitness as the director of a Palestinian party, are becoming so well known in America, has completed the Holy Land part of our tour. It has been the event of our lives. One of the things that for years and years we have had in mind and hope, and now that it has been accomplished we wish to record our thankfulness to our Heavenly Father, for the privilege accorded, and for the loving care over us during the days, when in making our way through the land, we were exposed to dangers both seen and unseen. Since landing at Gibraltar 13th March until this present, the 22nd April, we have not had to raise our umbrellas on account of rain. Every day has been fine. Our company has been able to pursue the journey each day and in accord with our itinerary prepared while yet we were at home. Just now we are Westward bound, having left Beirut for Constantinople last evening. While anchored at Cyprus and after a short time on shore I take advantage of the quiet for a few lines for the MESSENGER AND VISITOR.

I only wish I could put on paper at this time, and in such a way as in heart I desire, this trip through the land of all others the most interesting, and associated with the tenderest and most sacred associations. We have gone through it as much as we could in our limited time. From Joppa on the Mediterranean, east to Jericho and the Dead Sea. To the south of Jerusalem we went to Bethlehem and Hebron, and north of the City of David, through Samaria and Galilee, as far as Dan, thence across the head waters of the Jordan to Caesarea Philippi—now Banias. This I presume was the northern point reached by our Lord in his earthly ministry. Thence east ascending the high slopes of one of Hermon's shoulders, and across the Hauran country, the great grain growing section of Syria, to Damascus. Thence in a westerly direction to Beirut, climbing to the snows of Lebanon, while beneath us the terraced hillsides are beautiful with verdure and flowers. On this part of our touring we stopped off at El-Mallaka and took coach for Baalbec, eighteen miles distant, that we might visit ruins that have called forth exclamations of wonder, and surprise from all who have visited them.

The most of this touring was done on horse-back, and you can rest assured it was no easy work to men and women unaccustomed to this kind of locomotion, to be in the saddle for two weeks. Our way led us most of the time along the most primitive of bridle paths, through a country noted for its high hills and deep valleys, paths that were next to impassable because of rocks, and where even the sure footed Syrian horses we rode, must have again and again trembled for their own lives, if not for the safety of those whom they so patiently carried. There were times when our prudence was exhibited in our dismounting, leading the way up some height or down into some deep valley. The picturesqueness of such a journey can better be imagined than described with pen. As highly colored as had been our imaginations from boyhood of the beauties of Palestinian scenery, now that our eyes have seen the hills and vales, the peculiarly varied geological formations of the same, the lofty mountains, Hermon and Lebanon, capped with snows, the lovely embosomed Lake of Galilee, the unsurpassed for beautifully situated plains of Bethlehem, Sharon, Jezreel, the situations of such cities as Jerusalem and Nazareth, the glimpses of hill sides terraced to the top, and giving intimations of marvellous fertility, and can truly say my expectations in these directions have been more than realized. I was prepared for many a disappointment. The land is no longer as it was in the days of Israel's greatness, or even when under Roman rule in the time of our Lord's ministry. You feel the depression in travelling, that comes from not passing the dwelling houses of the tillers of the soil. Now we have weary stretches and no house. For safety even the men who plough the fields, and those who care for flocks, congregate in some village far away it may be from that portion of the land they cultivate, or the pastures to which day by day they lead their flocks. Then, for causes known to your readers, the land is not so populous as in the past. While Palestine could support at least 2,500,000, I think the present population is only 600,000.

## FERTILITY.

The fertility of the land impressed me. The first glimpse of Sharon was a surprise. It is true there are barren portions, hillsides that are bare as the limestone rocks can make them, and you have to exercise a great amount of faith, to believe that there was ever a time when these were productive in vines and figs, and olives; yet we saw hills that were the same as these, terraced and thereby the soil saved from being washed away by the heavy rains, and these were giving us surprising evidences of splendid harvests. The imperfect manner in which the soil is worked, and then that it should give such returns adds another to our list of surprises. These Eastern people follow the customs of the past. The only plough we saw used, was the one-handed plough of which we had read. I saw no sign of a harrow, cultivator, scythe, mowing or reaping machine, the fact is time is of no account. What the fathers did is good enough for the sons. Even along the railroad from Damascus to Beirut, you will see grain carried to market in the old time slow way, on the back of the little donkey or the slowly moving camel. That there should be returns even from these valleys so attractive in natural situations is remarkable. But one instance: We rode from the old city of Jezrul on the south side, at the base of

little Hermon, and all that way we passed through a grain field that Canada's richest soil will hardly surpass, and yet this soil has been cropped and cropped for thousands of years, merely tickled by the little plough, and never a thought of adding to its productiveness by any artificial enrichment. There being no forests, the manure is gathered by the women, and made into cakes for fuel, instead of being given to the soil.

Our touring was not marked by any incidents of special character. We learned under circumstances favorable and unfavorable, that this kind of vacation had in it more of the real than the unreal. It was more like work than pastime. That it was sober earnestness, demanding endurance and nerve, rather than just for the fun of the thing. To ride under the hot sun when the thermometer is more than 90 in the shade, when limestone hillsides and the glittering sands along your way almost blind you, when the mouth is parched and every bone in your body is tired, is what we experienced on the way down from Jerusalem to Jericho and the Dead Sea.

To see the white tents now not far away and where we know we can rest, where a thoughtful cook has waiting your arrival a hot cup of tea, and where within a beautifully gotten up tent is prepared for you on an iron bedstead and a restful bed with its invitation to rest and sleep; to be awakened in the early morning so refreshed that you wonder that you could have ever been weary or could ever be tired again, was of the character of our evening and morning experiences. There was only one night when we were at all disturbed by what was unusual. It was when a Bedwin thief, trying to steal one of our pack mules, and being detected fired once or twice at the guard. This was not a pleasant awaking, especially as we knew many of these fierce nomads were in the vicinity. Some one asked our dragoman, Solomon, if he was not alarmed, and he coolly said there was no cause for alarm at all "only a mule that wanted to get stole." For my own part I always felt safer when we had some of these Bedwins for night guards than any others, on principle that it "takes a thief to catch a thief." Always when camping near their village three or four of them were sent by their Sheikh for which of course they were paid. This is wise, then if anything goes wrong, anything stolen, the whole village is held responsible by the government.

The people of the land are generally poor. Their homes are the abodes of poverty. I should think it a struggle to live at all. They are an oppressed people. The taxes consume the greater part of what they produce. Some one acquainted with these things told me that all that is left to a poor man is some 15 or 20 per cent. of his earnings. On this little he supports his family. Well indeed for him that it does not cost him much to live. They are inveterate beggars. The cry "Baksheesh" seems born with the children, and if one is not old enough to articulate that word it will hold the little hand for "Baksheesh." No matter what you pay a man to do something for you he expects "Baksheesh" in addition. Beggars call for it, old and young, strong and weak, each, all, expect the tourist to constantly give, give; and when your pity is moved by some special case and your heart responds you only find that you have awakened a hornet's nest around your ears, and you say I won't be guilty of this offense again.

I have wondered can anything be done for such people. I have had doubts such as never before. And yet I've seen exceptions. But, oh, the yielding up demanded of those who give themselves to such work! Our missionaries who labor for such as these, should have our sympathies and prayers, and these intensified into an earnestness a thousand times greater than is usual among us. The life of missionaries to Orientals must be depressing indeed. And yet for such a people our blessed Lord labored. From among these he won to his side both men and women whose lives were completely transformed. His power is the same to day and the needs of suffering, sin-sick humanity are not less now than when He was here—than when He gave his marching orders "Go into all the world." But it is not my purpose to moralize.

## PLACES OF INTEREST.

There are many places of marked interest to the visitor. I wrote you of Jerusalem. I shall not soon forget our parting view of the city. We had started on our northern tour. Reaching the top of Scopus, we turned our horse's heads towards the city, and gazed transfixed on the city of all others most interesting. How beautiful in that early morning, looked the hills of Moriah and Zion. How sacred seemed that garden at the foot of Olives. How the heart swelled as we looked once more and for the last time, on that "skull-shaped knoll," just outside the Damascus gate. Then we sang "The Sweet Bye and Bye" and turned our steps towards those historic parts of the north.

Bethlehem to the south of Jerusalem was very interesting to us, not so much because of the church of the nativity and the various things seen and told us there, as for the glimpse of the beautiful plains where the shepherds "were keeping their flocks at the advent," and those fields once the possession of Boaz, and where the Moabitess Ruth gleaned.

Nazareth, as first seen after a hard, hard climb, up a long steep and stony hill, Nazareth as we gazed upon it the morning of our leaving it, halting on a hill some 300 or 400 feet above the now beautiful town. How active is the mind. We see the old threshing floor, for ages the common play ground of children, there He played, up this hill how often He climbed, these nature scenes. His eyes gazed upon. Around this place of all other centres interest, for here so many years of His earthly life was spent.

The Galilean Sea, who can tell the hush that crept over us as we first gazed on its quiet waters, the emotions as we sailed on it from Tiberias to the site of ancient Chorazin? Other places in that northern tour, both in Samaria and Galilee brought to mind events in the Master's life, and drew our hearts out in holy consecration to Him. And not alone those places made sacred from association with the life of Jesus, but the many points of interest in connection with the history of Israel of the Old Testament times.

But my letter is already too long. I hope you and your readers are enjoying the presence of His "indwelling spirit," whom having not seen we all love and try to serve.

Cordially yours,

G. O. G.

Mediterranean Sea, near Cyprus, April 22nd.