

REV. GEORGE C. KNAPP.

AMERICAN MISSIONARY, BITLIS, KOORDISTAN.

It is sometimes said of the six New England States of America, that they furnish men; while further west and south in the country are found more of such commodities as wheat, cotton, etc., in proportion. Certain it is that the blood of the Pilgrim Fathers took firm lodgment here, though to be diffused very rapidly throughout the land. But of these Atlantic States, or, indeed, in the Union, there is, perhaps, none that has furnished so many able, devoted men, both for State and Church, in proportion to the inhabitants, as has the little State of Vermont.

Among such stalwart ones was the subject of this sketch, Rev. G. C. Knapp. He was born upon a farm in Lyndon, Vt., in 1823. Like many in meagre circumstances, and on a hill farm of scanty returns, his parents had to manoeuvre carefully to bring up a family of five children without much thought of education. Faithful to his task, whether upon the farm or in the short school of the year, young George was an important factor in the family.

In 1835, they moved to Benson, in the western part of the state, where were better facilities for education. Here the son was brought under conviction of sin, that resulted in his conversion early in his teens, from a conversation held with a schoolmate who had newly experienced a Christian hope. He joined the church and became an active member at fifteen. Great was his delight in, and profit from, the regular mid-week prayer-meeting, and that of the young people on Sabbath evening. By dint of economy he secured his fit for college in Burr Seminary in the town of Manchester, near by. It was about this time that William Law's 'Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life' fell into his hands, and, with an influence such as it had exercised before, and has often exercised since, did much to turn his attention toward the Christian ministry.

But how was he to secure a college education? Would his parents approve, and what should he do! They had been burned out, and were in such straits that 'father can't help you,' said the mother. 'But if I may but be the instrument for the salvation of one soul,' said the anxious son, 'I shall be satisfied.' Perceiving their reluctance to his leaving home, he cheerfully served out his minority, at the expiration of which he at once set out with a firm purpose and 'the one-soul argument' to compass the remaining educational problem. He speaks of these years as 'the wilderness period,' and his axe, woodsaw, self-boarding system, etc., played an important part. During the long vacations teaching school, and in term-time ringing the bells, extra work about the dormitories, etc., brought him through Middlebury College without a heavy debt, though at his matriculation he had only twenty-five cents.

He graduated in 1852, and three years later from Andover Theological Seminary, Mass., and was appointed to the foreign missionary work by the American Board the same year. As usual in such cases, no little conflict of mind and heart was experienced ere he came to a decision; 'during which time,' as he puts it, 'like a poor sinner, I was not only under conviction of sin, but of foreign mission as well.' But a night of wrestling with the Lord settled it in the affirmative. 'Since which time,' says the veteran worker, 'I have been in the promised land.'

Miss Alzina M. Churchill, principal of Castleton Seminary, became his worthy companion, and together they set sail for Smyrna, Turkey, in October, arriving December 5. Their passage over the seas was in a sailing vessel, and consumed a long, tedious six weeks, without once dropping anchor. Their ship's captain was an intemperate fellow, and among the Grecian isles, in most dangerous surroundings, was so badly off from liquor, that Mr. Knapp had need to consult the nautical charts for the safety of the ship.

After only a few months at Smyrna, they were called to go far thence to Diarbekir, a missionary station of the interior, situated on the Tigris river, near the head of old Mesopotamia. But this high-walled old town, with its bad water and worse air, soon made inroads on Mr. Knapp's health; so that in less than three years the Mission

physician decided on a change for him. Like Lot of old, he 'lift up his eyes,' not to go down upon any plain, but to the snow-capped mountains up in the Taurus range, 150 miles to the north-east, though, like Abraham, he 'went out,' hardly 'knowing whither.' There was said to be a city before them by name of Bitlis, whose good water and better air would be an excellent antidote to the malaria he had imbibed on Diarbekir plain, and in this he was not disappointed, for physical vigor came as if by magic. Meanwhile, the heroic interest of these pioneer workers goes out towards the large Armenian population in this city and region, if, perchance, something may be done for this gross darkness also.

Bitlis city is a unique old town of an early generation, having for a population something over 30,000, one-third of whom are Christian in name—mostly Armenians, the remainder being Moslem in faith, though in blood largely Koords. From its numerous gardens and abundance of water it constitutes quite a leafy bower through the long summer. This passage-way between Persia and ancient Assyria must have resounded with the clash of arms among opposing forces—the grey old fort in the centre of the town, said to have been built in Alexander's time, having played an important part. But we would take note of these bulwarks

try-man, European, or a doctor. Severe sickness came, and loved children were snatched from them, at a time when opposition of enemies obliged them to bury them in their garden at night by the dim light of a candle. Mrs. Knapp was laid low by fever, after telegraphic connection was set up with Erzroom some years since, and the distracted husband seeks some comfort and advice by taking his position at this end of the wire, while the Erzroom doctor stood at the other. She was raised up from the fever, and still lives to cheer him who feels the weight of years more than she.

No sketch of him could be complete without good reference to her. Coming from school work in America, she took more especially to that here, and set going, in 1861, a girls' school, which, in 1868, was constituted 'The Mount Holyoke High School for Girls' by the Misses Ely, sisters, who joined them that year, and now has upwards of 100 pupils. Boys, too, were gathered for study, and in 1881 a High School for them was formed; this has about as many pupils, in connection with which Mr. and Mrs. Knapp are still doing worthy service. In Bitlis proper we have nearly 500 Protestants, with a church of 200 members. In eighteen out-stations, distant five to seventy miles, we have some 800 more with about 100 members in another church.



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as looking to another campaign, the leaders of which have been here these nearly thirty-five years, they having visited their native land only twice during that time.

Naturally, in such a fanatical place those early years were characterized by much persecution, aimed both at converts and the foreign workers. They found it hard to secure a house for themselves, for school or Sabbath service. But their self-denying, heroic devotion was sure to win in the end. The history of the weird experiences would, indeed, constitute a thrilling chapter of the romance of missions, but be too long for present purposes. Shut in among these lofty mountains, in a city of no built roads, no post office, nor communication with the outside world, save by special messenger with Erzroom, 170 miles north, till the past few years, they sometimes waited a whole three months for letters to come to cheer them. Sometimes fanaticism runs so high, more especially during the time of the war with Russia, that Christians are in danger of their lives. No wonder that such a constant strain has hastened on the weight of years, so they now need to be relieved of burdens.

Not a little of the time—the most trying part—they have been without associates, there not being in the place a fellow coun-

This much as an outgrowth of patient, devoted service of noble workers, whose power has manifestly been with the Great Head of the Church. R. M. COLE, American Board Missionary.

WHERE THE PRUNES WENT.

MRS. JULIA M'NAIR WRIGHT.

In the town where I lived when I was a child, there was a grocer who had under his store a big cellar. A man came to the town with a kind of show. He did not have very good success; no one went to the show; the man was sick, and by-and-by he was nearly out of money.

One day this man, Blake, went into the liquor store, and he said to the owner, 'Have you any very cheap, poor whiskey?' 'Yes,' the man said, 'I have nearly a barrel that I got cheap, and it is so bad I can't sell it. If it were not so far, I should send it back.'

Blake said, 'If you will sell it to me cheap, I will take it all; but I have very little money.'

After Blake had bought the whiskey for a trifle, he went to the grocer, and hired his cellar for a month, for five dollars. Then he said, 'What will you take for that barrel of wormy prunes?' The grocer said

'Those prunes are full of worms. They are worth nothing. It is my fault. I kept them too long in a hot, damp place.'

'I will pay you five dollars for them,' said Blake, 'if you will promise not to tell that I bought them, or talk of what I do in your cellar.' And I will buy that part of a barrel of dark brown sugar, into which your clerk dropped the salt.'

Then Blake sent two boys all round the town, to buy up empty wine-bottles, at two cents each, and whatever demijohns people would sell. Then in the cellar he put the rotten, wormy prunes into the cheap whiskey, and he burned the salted sugar, and put that in, and added fusel oil and water.

Meantime Blake had sent to New York for bottle labels, saying, 'Best Old French Brandy,' and a French label below this. Then he went all about the town to druggists and doctors, and private people, and told them that he had some choice, pure brandy, just from France, to sell strictly for medicine, and to invalids!

It was queer how many people thought they were invalids just then! People who had never used brandy thought they must get a bottle of it now, from Blake, 'just to keep in case of sickness.' Blake sold all his brandy, very dear, and made nearly five hundred dollars clear. Then he took his show and hurried out of town.

After Blake was gone, the grocer came to pay my father the rent of the store, and he asked, 'Did you buy any of Blake's brandy, Mr. McNair?'

'No,' said my father; 'what should I buy brandy for?'

DO YOU KNOW?

Do you know that every cruelty inflicted on an animal in killing or just before death poisons to a greater or less extent its meat?

Do you know that every cruelty inflicted upon a cow poisons to a greater or less extent its milk?

Do you know that fish killed as soon as taken from the water by a blow on the back of the head will keep longer and be better than those permitted to die slowly?

Do you know that birds destroy millions of bugs, mosquitoes and harmful insects, that without the birds we could not live on the earth, and that every little insect-eating bird you may kill and every egg you may take from its nest means one less bird to destroy insects?

Do you know that a check-rein which will not permit a horse to put his head where he wants to when going up a hill is a cruel torture to the horse?

Do you know that the mutilation of a horse by cutting off his tail compels him to suffer torture from flies and insects every summer as long as he lives?

Do you know that every kind act you do and every kind word you speak to a dumb animal will make not only the animal but yourself happier, and not only make you happier but also better?—Geo. T. Angell.

LITTLE BEGINNINGS.

It is the way of God to build up all his works from small beginnings.

Little drops of water,
Little grains of sand,
Form the mighty ocean
And the pleasant land.

Dr. Barnardo's last report shows that the income for the year, amounting to £133,000, was contributed by 74,543 donors, two-thirds of the amounts being in 49,004 sums under £1 each, and that less than 1,900 were of sums of £10 and above. Half the income of the Salvation Army is collected, chiefly in pence, from the poor people who attend the services. The innumerable sweet-shops, which appear to thrive, make their returns in sums which may be reckoned in pence upon the fingers of one hand. The railways have become aware that dividends are created not by the few first-class but by the many third-class passengers. A brother intensely interested in winning souls believes that if the unused thousands of Christians were awakened to their personal responsibility a glorious harvest would be gathered this winter.—The Christian.

A NOTED MORAVIAN pastor, asked how it was that the members of that Church were so zealous for missions, replied, 'When converts join us, we try to make them realize that they are joining a great missionary society.'