

Messenger and Visitor.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER,
VOLUME LII.

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Of the 1,200 vacant churches of the Presbyterians (North) 400 have a membership of from 1 to 25.—Dr. Dwight Spencer said, in Boston, that the Baptists were the only people, in the West, who insisted on a converted church membership; all Pedobaptists urged people to join the church, to get converted afterward.—Time came when North and South looked at each other over shining rifle barrels, and they found there were true men at both ends.—Dr. Broadus, in Boston.—It is a disgrace to God to dedicate a dry goods box and call it the Lord's house.—Dr. McArthur.—A great layman in the pew can make a great minister of a comparatively small man.—Dr. McArthur.—A church was sacrificed by a minister, and the church has sacrificed two ministers in return.—Dr. McArthur.—The most ungrateful form of error is that which gains all its excellences from the Bible, and then seeks to destroy confidence in it.—Williams, of Upland.—The chief end of man, at the present time, is to be looked at, to avoid mediocrity, to invent some form of error, and place it on exhibition at vanity fair.—Williams.—Like an old-fashioned stocking, when a man begins to unravel theologically, he is apt to unravel all.—Williams.—The pulpit that has not a good grip upon the masses has not a good grip upon the old gospel.—Dr. Henson.—The men who do something are the men who think something is going to be done.—Dr. Henson.—No college can do its work steadily and efficiently unless it is endowed.—Dr. Anderson.—The opposition of a large minority of the Methodists of the West to college federation with Toronto University is persistent and irreconcilable. The injunction against further steps looking toward removal of Victoria University from Coburg has been continued by a decision of the courts. A very bitter feeling exists between the federatists and the anti-federatists, and it is deepening in intensity.—The pew rental of Park Street church, Boston, is now about twelve thousand, of which Dr. Gregg receives seven thousand. The "new tax" of Trinity Episcopal church is \$22,000, and the rector, Phillips Brooks, receives \$12,000 as his annual salary.—The churches presided over by men from Spurgeon's college have had a prosperous year. There has been a total gain of 7,347 and a net gain of 2,724.—Spurgeon is of the opinion that the down grade tendency will be stopped.

Uphold the Church.—Dr. Judson is reported in the *Central Baptist* as saying: Christianity would not have stood the storm one hundred years against the force that threatened to pulverize it had there not been that local organism, the New Testament church. The longer I live the more I am determined that what energy I have shall flow down through the channel of the church. Many people have the notion that philanthropic work must be done in any way but through the church.—A Distinction.—Dr. Broadman gave the outline of an address he proposed to give at the educational meeting in Tremont Temple, during the May meetings. He worked out his line of argument from a distinction between knowledge and wisdom. The former had to do with facts, the latter with truths. As Christ was the truth and the wisdom of God, in whom all things consist,—are held together in an orderly system—nothing could be taught right except from the standpoint of our Lord. Common schools and secular colleges can only impart knowledge by teaching facts. Hence the need of denominational and Christian schools to teach truths and show the relation of all facts to Christ and His teaching and thus impart wisdom. Some may question whether Dr. Broadman's is the distinction between knowledge and wisdom; but none can fail to see that it is a distinction upon which much depends.—Dr. Broadus.—Perhaps no Baptist of the present generation in America has shed more lustre on the Baptist name than Dr. Broadus. He was present at Boston and spoke at the education meeting. Small, dark, bent, simple and unpretending, there was nothing to impress one with his greatness. In manner of speech he was simplicity itself, just talking to the people. He had scarcely begun to speak before one felt he had a great power of getting in touch with his audience and of keeping in touch with it. There was no attempt at oratory; yet one listened with growing interest, and could feel the power of a genial, large hearted, noble-souled man. The play of humor which brightened his address was of the most kindly sort, while one had the impression of reserve power which gives a speaker's words double force. He declared in favor of large cities the best locations for universities; but

thought small colleges often did the best work, because the elementary branches were there taught by the leading professors.

Gratten Guinness.—No one was more heartily welcomed at the Boston May meetings than Mr. Guinness. He is of fine presence, and a good, matter of fact speaker. In speaking of the Congo, he said he was proud to call it a Baptist river, as all other denominations had given it up to the Baptists as their mission field. Its basin is 50,000 square miles larger than the combined areas of those of the Mississippi and Missouri, and all the vast territory is teeming with a population of a single general language, and most accessible to the gospel. A large number of students in the Southern colleges are looking to the Congo as the field of their future work. Over thirty students in the negro colleges have told him of their desire to go to Africa. His own mission he was establishing on one of the branches of the Congo, was in subordination to the Missionary Union, and would be handed over when the Union was prepared to take it up. The mission of the English Baptists on the Congo has had a good degree of blessing during the last year, a large number having been converted at two of the stations.

Burdette.—Robert Burdette gave an address at one of the meetings in connection with the anniversaries in Boston. Here are some of his sayings as reported by the *Standard*: It takes an earthquake to knock a little money out of some people. But every time the church wants a dollar it can't go round with an earthquake in one hand and a pestilence in the other.—Spasmodic benevolence doesn't count much for all-the-year-round suffering.—A man can't get a job now even in white-washing—except in politics—unless he knows which end of the brush to stick in the whitewash.—Some sing, "In some way or other the Lord will provide." No, He won't. The Lord doesn't provide in some way or other. I provide in that way, and my paper goes to protest every time I do it. The Lord provides in a particular way.—\$50,000 is a good deal for a training school says one. It isn't much. God doesn't ask much of us now.—No voice comes from heaven saying, "Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, and offer him." But when you ask some men or \$10 for the church, you would think by the horrified countenance that you had asked them to sacrifice the whole family.

Father Damien and the Lepers.

Father Damien's little house almost joins the church; he lives upstairs, and his comrade, Father Conrad, a man of considerable refinement and of warm affections, lives on the ground floor. They take their meals in separate rooms as a precaution against contagion. Two laymen, Bro. Joseph and Bro. James, assist them in nursing, teaching, visiting, and other ways, and they are often in communication with Kalaupapa, where live and work Father Wondolon and three Franciscan sisters. The church at Kalaupapa was built partly by Father Damien's own hands. He is good at carpentering and building, and apparently able and ready to work at anything as long as it is work. He is especially scrupulous and businesslike about accounts and money matters.

After living at Molokai for about ten years, Father Damien began to suspect that he was a leper. The doctors assured him that this was not the case; but anaesthesia began in his foot and other fatal signs appeared. One day he asked Dr. Arning to give him a thorough examination.

"I cannot bear to tell you," said Dr. Arning, "but what you say is true."

"It is no shock to me," said Joseph, "for I have long felt sure of it."

And he worked on with the same cheerful, sturdy fortitude, accepting the will of God with gladness.

He said to me, "I would not be cured if the price of my cure was that I must leave the island and give up my work."

A lady wrote to him, "You have given up all earthly things to serve God, to help others, and I believe that you must have more than joy that nothing can take from you, and a great reward hereafter."

"Tell her," he said, with a quiet smile, "that it is true, I do have that joy now." As our ship weighed anchor the sombre purple cliffs were crowned with white clouds. Down their sides leaped the cataraets. The little village with its three churches and its white cottages lay at their bases. Father Damien stood with his people on the rocks till we slowly passed from their sight. The sun was getting low in the heavens, the beams of light were slanting down the mountainsides, and then I saw the last of Molokai in a golden veil of mist.—*Nineteenth Century*.

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God and Creation.

A PRAYER-MEETING TALK ON GEN. I: 1.

Brethren do you accept this mystery of creation? This old gospel, the gospel of the beginning, the creator's gospel. Do you believe this opening sentence of the great Book? Can you stand with firmness here upon the threshold of inspiration? I think you must stand here or stand nowhere; for all've yet read this alone looks like rock, fact, explanation. So I ask again, do you believe this opening verse of Holy Writ? For if you do, within the entire compass of inspiration you will find nothing unbelievable. For when you admit God, the God of creation, who spoke the universe into existence, you have admitted all, and declared ought to be possible. And now when you are asked by the scoffer, "Believest thou an ass spoke to a prophet?" your answer will be at hand: "I believe He made the thunder and the loud roaring sea." "Believest thou he made a fiery cloudy pillar to guide Israel through the desert?" "Aye, for He made the day sun and the thronging stars of the night." "Believest thou the moon stood still, and the sun?" "Certainly, for He who has created sun and moon has complete control over them, inasmuch as the Maker is greater than that He has made." And the creator of Pacific could cause a Red Sea to divide, and the Omnipotent God can do all things. So when Ingersoll asks if your God created the world, say with a thunder of emphasis, Yes; and when he tauntingly suggests that out of nothing, nothing comes, declare that out of Omnipotence all may come. For we do not say God made the universe out of nothing, that were a foolish way of stating it; but we do declare that out of His Omnipotence He made the world. And granting Omnipotence, creation is guaranteed. And creation necessitates Omnipotence.

From a study like this we may be led to realize that the Christian religion is essentially supernatural. And to the enquiry of the sceptic whether as Christians thoroughly understand the mystery of godliness, we must ever give a negative reply. All sufficient for our salvation is so clearly revealed that the wayfarer need not err concerning it; yet in the broad scope of our religion there are—

"Depths of love that I cannot know Till I cross the narrow sea; And heights of joy that I may not reach Till I rest in peace with thee."

For believing in what thou dost not fully comprehend fear no man's sneer. On the contrary, bless God that the Rock behind which thou art sheltered is too large to allow of human measurement. For couldst thou understand all the fullness of the Godhead, then wouldst thou be as large as Deity; for the finite may not comprehend the Infinite. And as the glass is of necessity larger than the liquid it contains, so if thou couldst understand the Eternal, thou wouldst be on an equality with Him. And he who is not contained by the heaven of heavens must ever be beyond the comprehension of the created. So when asked to explain away the mysterious element in religion, I would have thee boldly avow thee utter inability of so doing. For while truths like the Trinity may be revealed by inspiration, and may by thee be firmly held; yet in attempting to explain so vast a mystery, thou dost little more than betray thine own folly.

And of all the foolish whose idle scornings thou shouldst avoid, I would have thee especially shun the man who must have all explained to him by rules of logic and laws of sense. By one of these fools we were once asked, whether in dissecting room, where anatomy is studied, the soul of a man was ever laid bare by the surgeon's knife, and passed around for the examination of the medical students? When, in replying, we admitted their surgeon's lancet never touched the soul, the sceptic sneered. In doing which he betrayed his massive ignorance, and total lack of common sense. No, sir; anatomy reveals no soul. Nor will, nor love, nor conscience. Yet do these things exist. I tell you, young men, when anatomy has on its shelf the something men call genius; when it is able to analyse, and weigh, and label love; then, and never before, will there be aught but the blindest folly in the materialist's idle scornings.

Christianity is supernatural. Admit this, believe it with all thy heart, and the mysteries will not trouble thee; but deny this, and whatever else thou mayest become, thou canst never be a Christian. Understand, however, that the supernatural is not the unnatural, nor necessarily anti-natural; but it is above nature, higher than the natural.

Hence Paul declares that the unillumined mind, the condition of earthly sensual sordidness, cannot discern God, and the things pertaining to His kingdom. For not by induction, logic, or mental superiority, is a man brought into connection with the Highest; but by the birth of the Holy Ghost. Ye must be born again—born from above—said Christ to Nicodemus. And it must be remembered that even to the converted man, whose mind has been spiritualized by the gracious influences of religion, even to him there must ever remain mysteries in things Divine that exceed his finite comprehension. And the most advanced scholar in Christ's school has often to admit that concerning some phases of revealed truth he has to exercise an unquestioning faith in the Infinite God. And all this leads up to our closing utterance, which is this:

That connected with Christianity there are some things which are largely undecipherable.

Personally, I have to admit that the existence and nature of God are more clearly revealed to us by the heart than by the head. And with the heart I believe unto salvation. And as someone said of the Bible, "I believe it inspired, because it inspires me," so say I. Other proofs of its inspiration I possess, and at times produce; but still I have to own that the strongest proof is more internal than external. And I submit that along some lines to feel is the highest of all arguments. "I feel," is the child's reason; but 'tis powerful reason 'neath standing. Says Wordsworth:

"The child who feels its life in every limb,

What should it know of death?"

Aye, what should it—the feeling one—know of death? If a thousand men to-night declare me dead; if by means of "learned disquisition and scientific obscurity" they prove me lifeless; what does it matter to me? I feel my life, and thereby know I live. "How do you know there is such a thing as matter," said one to old Johnson. "Thus," said the philosopher, as he kicked a stone, and the proof was convincing. So God has determined that we should seek Him by feeling after Him, and brethren, it is my fixed faith that the soul of man cannot long feel after God without touching God; and whose thus touches God, the devil can never possess.

Moncton, N. B. W. B. HINSON.

Something About California.

There are many places about which much has been said, both true and false, yet none of them has been more belied than the Golden State of the West. For health purposes it has some advantages over the Provinces by the sea, and many disadvantages. There are few places that lung troubles do not do heavy and rapid work. It is true that a winter here is not colder than September in the Provinces nor much wetter, yet the change from noon to night is so great that one is liable to take a fresh cold as often as once a week. Then in summer the evening is mild and the morning about 4 o'clock cold enough to make one shiver, if not warmly covered.

Then when the lungs are weak and cold settles upon them, it makes rapid strides, often not more than two months in doing its work.

The winter from the beginning of January is of a very moderate nature, seldom any snow, and ice forms only occasionally as far north as Sacramento. One can see calla lilies growing out doors all winter. No one thinks of taking in any garden plant during the winter. Oranges remain upon the trees all winter to be pulled just as you want them.

The farmers plough and sow from October to March. Indeed they are in the height of their summer fallow ploughing now. It looks like farming to see eight and 10 miles upon a plough turning two and four furrows at a time. One man manages this team and plough. He has a seat like a moving machine seat, and takes his ease while his team steps along quietly at their work. Summer fallow land will yield from 20 to 40 bushels to the acre, and this wheat will bring from \$1.20 to \$1.75 per hundred pounds, according to the price in the Liverpool, England, market. English prices rule the wheat here, as it is all shipped there. Next to the wheat comes the grape crop.

There are hundreds of thousands of acres of vines in this State. The yield is from seven to nine tons per acre of green fruit. This when dried to raisins will be from 2 to 3 tons per acre and are worth from \$100 to \$125 per ton. There are an endless variety of grapes planted here. In Yolo county there are vineyards of 300 acres owned by one person. A vineyard of 20 acres of good vines will clear about \$2,000 each year.

In the Southern part of the State, oranges, blackberries, strawberries and

small fruits are cultivated more largely than in the middle and northern sections. Almonds are getting to be quite a source of wealth. Near Sacramento, one man has 150 acres planted in fine almond trees. Last year one man shipped to Chicago 11 tons of almond, and 7 tons of raisins, while another sent to England 400,000 sacks of wheat.

Every thing must be done on a large scale here to make it pay. It takes quite a large team to plough or harrow, or cut the wheat, that unless one has work for them all the year round they would bankrupt him soon.

There are the finest wild flowers in this State of any place on the continent; and such a variety of them. The fields and roadside seem covered with blossoms during March and April. From yellow poppies to the tiniest little white blossom, one has all the variety needed to make beauty blend with grandeur. Vegetation here is of the most rapid and abundant variety. The soil brings forth abundantly. Barley grows as high as a horse's back, and wild oats the same. If the seed is sown at the right time it will flourish. The luxuriant land has made the people indifferent to religion and good morals. The effect of the rush for gold made in 1849 has so thoroughly dominated the whole land that gold is yet the god of the mass.

There are many noble Christians here, but they are eastern people who came here full of gospel love and gospel piety. Few native sons amount to much as workers in the Lord's vineyard. The current runs so strong to do evil that few have the courage to face it. But when you find a Christian, you have a genuine one. We are not without the beautiful hypocrite. He stalks about on every occasion, and will parade his coat of many colors before you to hide his deformed soul and sensual heart.

The Baptist churches are mostly small in numbers, but they have nice houses of worship. There are about 186 churches and 300 ministers. But the ministers are not all preaching. Many are old men and are settled upon a small vineyard or orange grove. There were 1,000 baptisms last year, and the churches report about 10,000 communions. The fields are large and the sinners hard, so few of them go to meeting at all. There being no Sunday laws, every place of amusement and sensuality is open, and largely patronized. The youth seem to gravitate to these places instead of the church, because sin likes its own kind, and brings forth after his kind every time. God and His grace are needed to check the dreadful rush to ruin in this State. Life seems of little value, and goodness of small account. Yet the Lord rules in Heaven if not here, and this State will find that it is a part of the United States and will have to come into line with the other States some time, sure. If these lines are of sufficient interest to the MESSENGER AND VISITOR, you can give them a place.

G. E. GOOD.

Woodland, Cal., April 28.

Literary Notes.

The *Homiletic Review* for June is a little late in making its appearance, but it is a very excellent number. The *Kind of Preaching* for our Times, by Dr. Denis Wortman; Dr. Murray's article on Luther's Table Talk; Dr. Stone's series of papers on Body and Mind, in *Christian Life*; Prof. Thwing's article entitled *Unrecognized Elements of Power in the Preacher*, are all full of interest. The sermonic section is full of sterling discourses, in full or in outline, by such eminent preachers as Drs. J. M. King, O. P. Laffiear, A. P. Peabody, J. Wesley Davis, A. T. Pierson and R. F. Sample. The *Prayer-meeting* service Dr. Wayland Hoyt makes highly instructive. Drs. Chambers and Crosby give interest to the Exegetical Section, while Dr. Stuckenberg lays himself out in this number on Albrecht Ritschl, the eminent German theologian, who has just died. Published by Funk & Wagnalls, 18 and 20 Astor Place, New York; \$3.00 per year; 30 cents per single number.

There are 107,230 evangelical churches in the United States, with 82,723 ministers and 11,869,000 members. The Baptists have more churches than any other denomination. In 1800 there was one evangelical church member for every fifteen of the population; in 1850, one for every seven; in 1870, one for every six; in 1880, one for every five, and today there is nearly one for every four. There are encouraging figures. Although it is certain that many of these members ought to be excluded, the same thing was true in 1800, in 1850, in 1870 and in 1880; so the figures indicate the real progress of evangelical Christianity in this country.—*Western Recorder*.

W. B. M. U.

"Arise, shine: for thy light is come."

The Hidden Life.

Oh! there are some who, while on earth they dwell, And seem to differ little from the throng, Already to the heavenly choir belong, And even here the same sweet anthems swell, They joy, at times, with "joy unspeakable"; Pouring to Him they love their heartfelt song, While to behold Him "face to face" they long. As the parched traveller for the cooling well, Ask you how such from others may be known? Mark those whose look is calm, their brow serene, Gentle their words, love breathing in each tone, Scattering rich blessings all around unseen. They draw each hour, from living founts above, The streams they pour around of peace and joy and love.

From "Woman's Medical Work."

I can tell you a very encouraging story of medical work here this spring. Dispensary practice has greatly increased, and those who come for treatment seem to have much confidence, and are far more respectful than formerly.

Very frequently do patients come, for whose sakes I long for a hospital. For many eye diseases promise cure in a hospital; but surrounded as these poor creatures are in their homes, little can be expected.

Their houses made of mats, through which rain and sunshine alike enter freely, damp earth floors, windowless walls, no ventilation, no comforts and possibly twenty persons living in one small room,—all these offer many obstacles to recovery.

A few days ago, a boy came, most urgently begging the doctor would visit his mother, whom he feared was dying. The rain was falling in torrents, and I was not strong; but somehow could not resist the boy's earnestness. In a few moments the drops fell pattering upon my sedan chair-top, as I was carried along the narrow, dreary streets. The woman lived at the farther extremity of one street, which we young ladies remembered particularly, because nowhere else were we treated so rudely, or greeted with such vile names. Never before had I been asked to visit there. We had sometimes gone that street with no other object in view than that of allowing the people to become familiar with our presence, and learn that we were not the foreign demons whom they delighted in believing we are. Was there not a little encouragement, then, in being asked to enter one of their homes? The chair rested before a little, mat-house, whose frail walls reminded me of the poetical ex-rassin of the child, "holes in the roof for the stars to shine through." A number of women met the chair, and at once I was ushered into the inner room. I found myself surrounded by as many women as could be tightly crowded into the small space, each eagerly watching any movement of the doctor. Leaving some medicine, and urging the necessity of the woman's remaining in bed for several days, I departed. Not long after the poor old lady walked over to my house to return thanks for recovery. Since then, that famous street, Sin Ben Shan, has been strongly represented in the dispensary daily, and the chorus of voices that formerly greeted us has been growing fainter. One remarkable circumstance connected with that visit was the fact that there were no tablets for worship, nor any idols to be seen in that house. It was the first heathen home I had entered containing neither. Six months ago the man expressed a desire to join the church, and I wondered if there were any connection between that once expressed wish and the absence of the household gods.

On the way to this house we passed an idolatrous procession. The beating of gongs, the exploding of guns and fire-crackers announced the coming of two paper boats of gay colors, borne upon the shoulders of four men, followed by other bearers carrying paper houses and burning incense. The Goddess of the Heavenly Flowers (the small-pox) was brought to the city a few days ago that the people might intercede with her for safety from the dreadful disease. On seeing that procession, I at once thought that at the river's bank their paper houses and boats were to be burned that in the spirit land they might aid the goddess in returning to her home, north of the Yangtze River. The Chinese are full of superstition. Not long ago a woman begged to know if it were indeed true that some departed spirit was haunting her and caused her illness. She was very timid and hesitated long before she would consent to my examining her lungs; for the natives say we have a mirror which we hold before their hearts, which causes them to forget.