

Romish propagandists by the labours of evangelical missionaries, and the circulation of bibles and tracts. The Society embraces all evangelic sects which choose to combine their efforts in this direction; and both the report of the Secretary, and the addresses of the speakers, bore testimony to some measure of past success, and announced the purpose of more extended operations. The evils of the Romish system were ably exposed. A Frenchman—a missionary—laid bare some of the revolting features of the Papacy, as seen in the European countries; and an Irish colporteur or catechist, who appears to have New York as his field of labour, cited from his home walk, not uninteresting illustrations of the willingness of Irish settlers to receive the Protestant scriptures, and of the pains of a Jesuitical priesthood to hinder the boon, and prevent the access of the light.

The Anti-Slavery Society (that of the Messrs. Tappan, and other Christian and patriotic men) met on the same day. I was delighted to see the crowd of eager and intelligent listeners, and the good platform, too, albeit the clergy were not rife. The Rev. H. W. Beecher, one of the rising hopes of the American Church, was the life of the meeting, only he monopolized the time, so that but a fraction of the three hours remained for the Rev. Mr. Finnie, just arrived back from England, and for myself. We both spoke briefly, as the time for adjournment pressed, and another Society was to meet in the same place after an interval. Though some were pleased to express regret that a different arrangement had not secured a larger hearing to the strangers, yet I felt little regret for my own part. I was not as a bottle ready to burst, though willing enough to deliver myself on a cause very dear to me; and I was satisfied to see it served by whomsoever I had an opportunity, besides, at a subsequent meeting of the Society, of speaking more at length, and have got a little done with the pen, moreover.

Mr. Beecher's arguments and appeals were fitted to tell on New York ears. From grave he passed to gay; and what with invectives against subservient preachers, and amusing allusions to state politics, he showed himself an adept. I assure you, in all the *outs* and *ins* of northern men and southern men, apologists of compromise, boasters of the glorious union, and, I wish I had not to add, perverters of the law of Moses, and of the words of Christ and of Paul. He shewed himself no child at Theology, by rescuing Philemon and Onesimus from all confederacy with real slave-holding; and in Politics he was quite at home, and touched a sympathetic chord in the hearts of his auditory, which a stranger could less easily have dealt with. The hisses of a few voices in the gallery were drowned in plaudits, and a few questions interjected were good-humouredly replied to by the speaker. The colloquy was highly amusing sometimes. Mr. Beecher was denouncing the inhumanity of the Fugitive Act, and making the supposition of an attempt to lay hold on such a man as Dr. Pennington—a minister of the gospel of Christ and a scholar! "Who," said he, "would lay hands on such a man as that, and send him back to bondage?" "I would," exclaimed one, and another, I think, echoed "I would." "Indeed!" said Mr. Beecher, after a moment's pause, "but would any man in his senses send him back?" The effect was electrical—thousands cheered; I wish I could have caught a glimpse of the querist, as he swallowed this morsel, and viewed himself in the glass thus held up to him!

I am brought in mind by this of the gravity and composure with which the excellent Secretary, Mr. Tappan, treated certain attempted interruptions from the same or a like quarter, while he was reading his report, or putting the Resolutions. He always stops for a moment, then resumes, till he finishes the sentence; but, not contented with this, he invariably reads the obnoxious sentence a second time at all its length, or even a third time, if the interruption is repeated; thus laying

the penalty on the enemies of the light, of ministering to the more emphatic enunciation of the unwelcome truth. He succeeds well in this, with the support of the audience in general, for an American audience, like a British one, loves justice.

I like the plan of this Society, in following up the public meeting of Tuesday by a Wednesday meeting for discussion and business—open to all the friends of the cause. At this latter meeting, questions concerning practical measures were taken up in more detail—suggestions interchanged mutually by representatives of the Anti-Slavery interest, from places widely apart—information communicated—sub-committees appointed, &c. I met, at this latter meeting, with a number of clergymen from various States, and felt much interested in what I heard them relate.

Generally, however, as I have said, the professed Ministers of the Gospel shy the abolition cause. It is truly lamentable to find Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists, so generally standing aloof. I have just time to notice the sad exhibition made by Dr. Tyng and Dr. Cox, at the meeting of the Colonization Society. This Society may be viewed as a set-off against the Abolitionists, though I do not doubt the good intentions of some of its supporters, who profess that the panacea for all the evils of the coloured race is to send them back to Africa. That is, they will send them off from the American soil, unless they will consent to live on it as slaves; they do not stir a finger to loosen their chains, so long as they remain on the American soil by compulsion.

It is not wonderful that true abolitionists are chary of countenancing a scheme which tends, they allege, only to perpetuate slavery, by providing a place of banishment for men whose example might prove infectious. It is not unnatural also, that clergymen should, by a support of what looks so philanthropic, redeem themselves from the reproach of total unconcern about the poor coloured race. The style of the speakers at Tripler's Hall was, accordingly, all egotistical and apologetic, varied by ebullitions of ill-concealed spleen against "agitations," silly boasts about the "glorious Union," and irrelevant assertions of the duty of obeying "the powers that be." The notion of a *higher law* was repudiated, as far as the proposal to subject the Fugitive Act to the eternal principles which it violates, was concerned. Dr. Tyng was not contented to say less than that he would rather see a slave remain in bonds, even if he had the opportunity to redeem him, than redeem him to mingle with others on the terms of comparative degradation to which society still doomed him! How generous! Crocodile tears, surely! Is there any comparison between the case of the slave and that of a colored freeman, even while still so far unfranchised, to whom, however, the path to all sound amelioration is set open, with the rights in person and family, access to the word of God, and all those privileges of an intellectual being which the slave-law denies to him? Could the speaker be serious? Yes; so far as he was not in a passion; for with arm erect and fist clenched, he recorded his vow never more to have to do with the liberating of a negro, unless on colonization terms! I must, for the present, close. I am just setting off for Philadelphia, to preach and collect for Mr. King's mission.

Respectfully yours,

M. WILLIS.

#### SABBATH OBSERVANCE.

SIR.—I am happy to be able to announce to your readers that the "Montreal Sabbath Association" have resolved upon the issue of a publication, which they hope to make a periodical. The first number will appear about June 1st, and will be distributed gratuitously. I shall be very glad to receive communications from any persons who are willing to receive and circulate a number of copies.

F. H. MARLING.  
MONTREAL, May 10, 1851.

#### SHORT COMMENTS ON THE PSALMS.

ERRATUM.—In the remarks in last number on Ps. xv, 5, for "necessities of the hour," read "of the poor."

#### PSALM XVI. *Michtam of David*

NOTE.—The Margin, with the older interpreters, renders Michtam a *gospel psalm*. Some of the best modern interpreters, with greater probability, render it, a poem or writing.

1 Preserve me, O God for in thee do I put my trust.

God, as made known in his word, is the proper object of an absolute and exclusive dependence, on the part of all who know him. And these at all times, and especially under trials and afflictions, commit themselves to his protection.

2 O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee.

The believer may well encourage himself to trust in God, by calling to remembrance the seasons in which he had made an open and formal avowal of God as his Lord and Master, and as the sole and exclusive source of excellency and enjoyment.

NOTE.—By discarding the supplemental words, *O my soul*, which have a very equivocal right to the place assigned them in our version, and taking the verb in the first person singular, as do some copies of the original and the Syriac, Septuagint and Vulgate versions, we read the first clause, "I have said to Jehovah, thou art my God." So, our Scottish metrical version, which, in this and in other instances, takes its own rendering of the original text—

To God thus was my speech,

Thou art my Lord —

The latter clause of the verse, which is somewhat obscure, would, it is believed, be better rendered, "I have no happiness besides thee." So Gesenius, in which he is substantially followed by the best recent translators and annotators.

3 But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.

Believers are all beautiful, through the comeliness of their Lord put upon them (Ezek. xvi. 14), and, constituting one united body, they are called by him *Hertzumim*—*i.e.* my delight is in her (Isaiah lxii. 4). Need we wonder, then, that holy and excellent as they are, they should have a mutual delight in one another?

NOTE.—The supplemental *but* in the first clause, and *to* in the second, are to be left out; and, consistently with the rendering proposed for the former verse, this one would be translated—"as for the saints that are in the earth, and the excellent ones, all my delight is in them."

4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god; their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips.

Those who forsake the living God for idols, cannot but reap a harvest of sorrow; while those who truly honour God will hate idolaters, and will keep themselves at a distance from these sinful practices, and from all approach to communion with them.

NOTE.—Gesenius renders the word for *their sorrows*, *their idols*, but this does not seem consistent with his rendering of the words that follow, which is in accordance with our version, "*who hasten to another God*."

5 The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.