

MESSENGER AND VISITOR.

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1889.

A sermon by a Mr. Horton has recently been published in the Christian Register, the organ of the Unitarians. It is on "Liberal Christianity as a Motive Power." The preacher admits that the old Calvinistic faith had vigor and robustness while the new spirit often lacks vigor; it limps and does not run a race; it has the appearance, frequently, of undue amiability and weak tolerance and nebulous "good will." This is a frank confession of what are its patent facts. Liberal Christianity has inaugurated no movement which requires a self-sacrificing strength which would advance undauntedly upon appalling difficulties and even death. There is no higher motive power than humanitarianism. No man can be determinedly heroic, unless there be that which will both grip his conscience and stir the deepest love of his soul. Conscience without love will bind a man to duty; but it will not give that cheerful and joyous buoyancy to obedience which will enable a man to do the most. Love with- out conviction will be a spasmodic, impulsive motive power, which cannot be trusted to meet the steady demands of service. It requires these two in the highest measure, supplementing and steadying each other, before a man is fitted for the grandest deeds, the highest and best sustained service.

It is just here that Liberal Christianity fails. Neither of these great motive powers are stirred to any great extent. It seeks to make sin a defect to be pitied rather than the ground of the deepest guilt and blame. It robs Christ of His divinity, His death of all atoning efficacy and the cross of its glory. The condition of men is not so hard as to call for great exertion; but the supply of bodily wants, the obligations of service are not riveted upon conscience by the example of a sacrifice that is infinite and by a need that is as deep and far reaching as eternity. The depths of love are not stirred by the exhibition of a divine love un- speakable and awful in its majesty and glory. Belittle sin until it loses its power to wring the soul with a sense of heinous guilt, degrade our Lord to the level of a man and you cut the sinew of the strength of the two greatest motive powers of the soul. We do not think, therefore, that Mr. Horton's hope that "Unitarianism will take on it the vigor and strength of old time Calvinism" can be realized. As well attempt to impel an ocean steamship across the Atlantic in the teeth of the storms with shavings as fuel, as to move men to the highest and most steady and forceful activity, without the burning heats of the deep mysterious truths which have their fiery focus in the cross of the divine Christ.

The New Theology of the time, which is none else than revamped Universalism and Unitarianism, with a good amount of German Rationalism added, and all doctrines of that ilk, but sap the strength of Christian character. A non-just God, a non-divine Christ, a non-atoning sacrifice for sin, the non-eternity of future punishment, are not teachings which will intensify conviction or kindle the soul to interest and ardor. May the Lord preserve the church from the in-roads of all such encroaching ideas.

THE WEEK.

The Farnell Commission has at length reached the core of the matter for which it was appointed—the letters published in the Times. The attempt to connect the Irish leaders with the crimes of the Nationalists, has broken down. The Times' counsel has declared he was never prepared to prove this charge. He only was proving that they were allied with people who were connected with crime. He has taken a great deal of trouble to prove a very small matter. But this lesser charge has not been very well sustained, as the evidence in its favor is that of a man who has, on his own admission, prepared himself to gain his knowledge. It seems a little queer when the Times evaded the issue of the Scotch courts trial, on a technicality. The Pall Mall Gazette thinks the Times stakes everything in the matter of the letters, on the word of Tigott, who furnished them, as it admits he was not asked where he got the letters.

The British Parliament opens to-morrow. Both leaders have sent out urgent whips to secure the attendance of their respective followers, as it is expected that important business will be brought up immediately. It is said the Liberals are arranging for a monster petition to the Queen, urging Her Majesty, in view of the change in public sentiment shown by the recent by-election, to dissolve Parliament. Bismarck has been giving Britain some advice. It is to the effect that she is in

more danger of an attack from France, backed perhaps by Russia, than is Germany, armed as this power is to the teeth. His counsel is for Britain to increase her naval armament and seek alliance with Germany. This seems to be good counsel. Germany, Austria, and Italy are now allied, while Britain and the Royalists. Boulanger urges the instability of the governments of the present Council of Deputies, as an evidence that it has not the confidence of the people, but does not seem inclined to press for any further advantage. It will be almost impossible to form a new government, unless it be a coalition one.

France is in the midst of a political revolution. Floquet has been defeated by the union of the Opportunists and the Royalists. Boulanger urges the instability of the governments of the present Council of Deputies, as an evidence that it has not the confidence of the people, but does not seem inclined to press for any further advantage. It will be almost impossible to form a new government, unless it be a coalition one.

Japan has virtually placed herself in line with western nations by adopting a liberal constitution. It is modelled after that of Great Britain, largely. There is a House of Peers and of Commons, the latter elected by the people. Liberty of religion and of speech are granted. The Empress Frederick is about to compile the memoirs of her late husband. The work will possess great interest and will probably arouse feeling.

A retaliatory bill has been introduced into Congress, directed against Canada. Among other provisions, it proposes to impose the following import duties:

- Barley, 15 cents per bushel; eggs, 5 cents per dozen; hay, 25 per cent. ad valorem; straw, \$3 per ton of \$2,000 lbs.; potatoes, 25 cents per bushel; fresh fish, one cent per lb.; dried apples, two cents; poultry and game of all kinds, 20 per cent. ad valorem.

The onerous rule increasing freight charges on coal over the I. C. R. has been repealed. This will be very glad tidings to thousands in the Maritime Provinces.

Several motions of some consequence have been before the House at Ottawa. One for the government to assume control of all telegraph lines was not entertained by Sir Hector. Mr. Jamieson moved a straight out prohibition resolution with the addition that the enforcing power be in the hands of the government. An amendment was moved to substitute for this latter provision the indefinite clause, when the public sentiment of the country is ripe for the reception and enforcement of such a law; and an amendment to the amendment, to substitute for the latter clause the provision that a majority vote in favor of prohibiting must first be obtained and compensation to the liquor trade be made. The vote has not yet been taken.

Another resolution, to the effect that farmers who imported grain to feed cattle for export should receive the same rebate of duty that distillers received on corn imported for the manufacture of spirits, etc., was voted down. Distillers are privileged gentry. A motion to take the duty off imported fertilizers, in the alleged interest of farmers, was opposed by the government and also voted down.

The Canadian Baptist Hymnal.

It appears from his article in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR of the 30th ult., that "D. A. S." desires information in reference to two or three hymns contained in the new Hymnal. I can answer only for myself; other members of the Committee have no responsibility for what I here offer in reply to our friend's questions.

"D. A. S." objects to the version given of 329, "Return O wanderer, return." He calls it "the latest" as well as the "inferior" version. To my mind, three considerations at least go to justify the Committee in adopting the version in the Hymnal—

1. The evidence available shows that it is the original version, and not the latest as "D. A. S." would have us believe.

In Miller's "Singers and Songs of the Church," an elaborate and standard work, an account is given of the hymns of Dr. Collyer, the author of the hymn in question. Miller refers to this hymn as beginning, "Return, O wanderer, return," the reading given by the Committee, and as being entitled "The Backslider" (Jer. 31: 18-20). No mention is made of any hymn by Dr. Collyer, or by any other writer, beginning "Return, my wandering soul, return," as in Psalmist. Collyer was a London preacher of note (1782-1854). This hymn was published in 1812, while the Psalmist did not appear before 1843.

Again, the version given by our Committee is the same as that of the English Baptist Hymnal, in the preface of which we are told that "whenever practicable, the original text of every author has been consulted; and this text has been, rigorously followed, except in cases where to the Committee of Preparation there seemed to be specially strong reasons for a change. When any change has been made, though it be only in a single important word, the fact is indicated by affixing an asterisk to the author's name." As there is no asterisk affixed in this case it is clear the editors of the English Baptist Hymnal, who had the best opportunity for looking into the matter, believe our rendering to be the original

one "D. A. S." seems to think we "tinkered" this hymn; but we did nothing of the kind. We gave our readers the very words of the author, and that is what editors of hymn-books are generally ex- ported to do.

2. The best critical and editorial authority is in favor of our version. The English Baptist Hymnal is a book that has had an immense sale in Great Britain and that is regarded, on both sides of the Atlantic, as of the very highest character. The editors of that book were, surely, men of literary taste and spiritual sensibility and they printed the version now given to the Canadian Baptists.

The "Baptist Hymnal," published by A. B. Publication Society, has the same version. So has the "Service of Song" (In the last two books there are two or three very slight verbal changes which do not, however, touch the points raised by "D. A. S."). The "Service of Song" is edited by Rev. A. J. Gordon, D. D., of Boston, and Rev. S. L. Caldwell, D.D., LL. D., formerly professor at Newton.

These brethren as well as the editors of the "Baptist Hymnal" had, of course, the Psalmist's version before them but they passed it by and took the original. Not only so, but after "brooding" over the matter five years or more, and after receiving all the criticism of the Baptist denomination, the editors of the "Service of Song" issued an abridgement of the former work, in which they retained this hymn precisely as they printed it at first—the version adopted by our committee.

There is no evidence that their reputation for literary taste and "spiritual sensibility" has suffered thereby.

3. The committee did right in choosing the version given because it is the better of the two. Look at some of the objections urged by "D. A. S."

"Who is responsible," he asks, for "were kindled by reclaiming grace," instead of the noble adjective we have been accustomed to, "Were kindled by redeeming grace?"

The author of the hymn is responsible, and he knew what he was writing about. For it is reclaiming grace he means. The entire hymn agrees with the original title, and suits the case of the backslider. There is, indeed, the grace of God manifested in the work of Christ which redeemed us, "purchased" us back; but there is also the grace of God manifested in the work of the Holy Spirit within our hearts reclaiming us from our wanderings. It is the latter grace that is here spoken of—"Those warm desires that in these burn, were kindled by reclaiming grace." Reclaiming is, therefore, the proper adjective to be used here.

Again, our friendly critic says, "His heavenly balm shall heal thy smart" (Psalmist) is better than "His hand shall heal thy inward smart" (Hymnal). Possibly it is at first a little pleasanter to the ear. But the poet must have something more than smooth verse. There must be a looking into the heights and depths of things, a comprehensive thought as well as a pleasant sound. Read the stanza through and look into the thought.

"Return O wanderer, return, And seek a Father's melting heart; His pitying eyes thy grief discern, His hand shall heal thy inward smart."

In the second line it is the Father's "melting heart"; in the third line it is His "pitying eyes"; and, continuing in the same line, in the fourth it is His "hand."

In other words, it is the great love of God expressed by His "heart"; the Divine omniscience by His "eyes"; and His mighty power as indicated by "His hand." Thus these great attributes of the Deity are appealed to as ground for urging the wanderer to return. Thus viewed, the stanza has unity, imagination, idealization. Compared with this, what a break in the unity, what a falling off of thought is the Psalmist's "tinkered" line.

But the worst line of all to our critic's mind is, "Go to His bleeding feet and learn," instead of the Psalmist's, "Go, view His bleeding side and learn." But compare the two lines, "Go to His bleeding feet," i. e., Go to the feet of Jesus and sit down; "watch Him there" on the Cross; let His greatness, His sufferings, His love take hold upon you; "consider Christ Jesus"; meditate upon Him—that is what the author wishes us to do.

Now read the Psalmist's line: "Go view His bleeding side." That is, take a view of it. But it is not a cursory view even of such a sacred subject that will move a man profoundly. It is only this prolonged meditation on Jesus, the continued communion with Him, the sitting at His "bleeding feet" that will lead us closely to Him. The Hymnal's line is suggestive; the Psalmist's in comparison superficial. The music of the verse is a part, but it is not all, not even the most important element in poetry.

These considerations, it seems to me, fully justify the committee in publishing the hymn as it is. Suppose the Psalmist's version had been chosen, how easy it would have been for the critics to chastise the committee for not giving the original, for departing from the standard text of the best authorities, and for sacrificing the thought, purpose and strength of the hymn in an attempt to increase its musical effect. After "D. A. S." has used the Hymnal as long as he has used

the Psalmist, he will probably like our version better than the one he now prefers.

II. "D. A. S." desires the committee to explain how "Prayers rise from hearts so dear" in "Almost Persuaded" is to be taken. He fears the jingle has deceived our good taste. This hymn was composed by the lamented P. P. Bliss. The version given is the one printed in the "Service of Song," the "Baptist Hymnal" and in every other book that contains the hymn, as far as I know. It is most probably the original reading, and the meaning of the line quoted seems to be clear enough. Let us suppose ourselves in a revival meeting where the Spirit and the bride are saying "Come," where friends are praying for their dear ones and exhorting them to believe on Jesus. At last they break out into singing this hymn in which they urge the hesitating ones to believe because Jesus is now present inviting them, because angels are waiting "to carry the tidings home," and because their loving friends are praying for them. So considered, what is wrong with the meaning? What would be suggested as an improvement?

Other points might be noted; but enough. Even good people will probably always differ as to the merits of hymns as well as on a few other subjects. It should be carefully borne in mind that while "D. A. S." in a few cases has found alloy where others have only found pure gold, he has in the same article praised the new Hymnal and advised the churches to adopt it. Let no one remember his criticism and forget his exhortation.

ONE OF THE COMMITTEE.

Correspondence from Rochester Seminary.

The opening days of February find us all hard at work. We have entered upon the second term's studies with increasing interest and profit. It is a source of gratification and thankfulness that such an excellent spirit pervades the institution. The spiritual condition of the Seminary has been steadily improving for months past.

Two new plans for usefulness have been introduced into the Seminary of late. The success with which these plans have been carried out proves their usefulness and justifies the innovation. In the first place, a number of the students formed themselves into "bands" of three each for the purpose of arousing a deeper interest in missions. Each band procures all information available concerning the special field assigned to it. Then the bands go out and visit the churches in the city, giving them the benefit of the information they have gained.

The second plan was the formation of "evangelistic bands." Several of these were employed during the Christmas vacation in evangelistic work. Contrary to Apostolic precedent, these bands are supposed to contain three members. The churches throughout the city, for the last few months, have been enjoying special blessings. The pastors, not only in the city but in the surrounding country, report large gatherings. Yesterday the monthly ministers' conference was held in the Seminary chapel. In this meeting a few minutes was given to the hearing of reports from the various churches. Seldom have the reports been so encouraging. The subject discussed at the ministers' meeting was, "The relation of faith to knowledge." Dr. Henry E. Robbins read an excellent paper upon this subject. He showed that the relation was a vital one, and one not always recognized. Faith must have an intelligent foundation. It requires knowledge to feed and nourish it. The Doctor surprised some of the members of the conference by laying down the proposition that the spheres of faith and knowledge are commensurate. He attempted to give the reasons for the ground which he took, and they were in a measure convincing. But a good many of those present felt that they needed a little more light before they could accept his ground. He, however, admitted that there is a sense in which the sphere of faith is greater than that of knowledge.

For instance, there are truths which we can apprehend, but which we cannot comprehend. Here faith must go ahead of knowledge. This paper was followed by a warm discussion. A strong appeal was made for a more intelligent faith. The lamentable fact that many people do not recognize any relation between faith and knowledge was emphasized. Perhaps this state of things is due in a large measure to the preaching of to-day. The preacher too often dogmatizes instead of proving; he too often exhorts without first giving a clear presentation of the truth as a basis for exhortation.

These discussions suggest the need of more doctrinal preaching from our pulpits. Would not a doctrinal class in the church be a good institution? It certainly is desirable that more of our church members should know what they believe, and why they believe what they do. Last Thursday being the day of prayer for Colleges, the Seminary and University as usual combined in observing the day. It was a day long to be remembered by those of us who attended the services. For some years past it has been custom-

ary on these occasions for Dr. Anderson (formerly president of the University) to preach. The Rochester Baptists have always looked forward with pleasure to the opportunity of hearing this "grand old man." This veteran educationalist has been at the head of the University, and a leader in educational matters throughout the country for nearly forty years. In conversation with him not long since, he told me of his former acquaintance with Dr. Crawley, and of his travelling through Nova Scotia in company with him many years ago. Dr. Anderson is now too old to teach and is spending the winter in the South. In his absence, Dr. Strong, the president of the Seminary, preached to the students on the day of prayer for Colleges. His sermon was a masterpiece—the best, I think, that I ever heard. It was especially adapted to the students, and was well calculated to meet their needs. His text was John 7: 17. He referred to the fact that truth is hidden from many minds because of their hostile attitude towards it. It is revealed only to those who have the humble and obedient Spirit. Even Nature withdraws her truth from those who are unwilling to learn, and to obey her laws. We must have the right attitude toward the truth else we never can know it. He spoke of the truth as personal; all separate truths are but parts of one whole, since truth is a unity. Then by way of climax he said that Christ is Himself the truth. Christ is the truth in manifestation; and God is the truth manifested. All truth that is gained apart from Christ is imperfect—if not false. All truth centres in Him who is the embodiment of truth. Therefore we must submit ourselves, as little children, to Christ if we would discover the truth. The doctor appealed to the young men to surrender their minds and their wills to Christ that thus they might be led by Him out of the fog of doubt and error into the clear light of His truth. The profundity of thought, the simplicity of expression, and, above all, the spirit of his delivery, were characteristic of Dr. Strong's inimitable style. His closing appeal to the young men was especially touching, and there were few dry eyes in the audience.

During the winter, and especially on the day of "prayer for Colleges," I have been thinking of our own College at Wolfville. Acadia has long had a reputation for the Christian atmosphere which pervades her halls. Young men are not often made skeptics at Acadia. On the contrary it is proverbial that those who go to Wolfville unconverted, generally are converted before they leave. Doubtless thousands are praying that God's Spirit may be felt in great power at Acadia this winter. Our institutions at Wolfville owe much to the fervent prayers of those who are so deeply interested in her welfare. From the homes and churches of our land there rises, like an incense before God, many earnest prayers for Acadia's prosperity. May God grant to the institutions at Wolfville, and also at St. Martins, a rich blessing in the conversion of many souls. Ought we not to pray that God may send forth from our institutions a larger number of ministers? "The harvest truly is plentiful but the laborers few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into His harvest."

W. V. HIGGINS.

Missionary Correspondence.

DUMMONTAFORUM, Dec. 9, 1888. The rice crop is a failure this year and the people will suffer terribly. We told them last year God would punish them for their idolatry and other sins. Now when we tell them the punishment has come as we predicted, they say it is our fault that their gods are angry, because we have spoken against them and because the people listened to us. It seemed little use to try to teach them, and as it was chilly they soon went to their houses.

It was so different from last night in another village. There the people gathered in crowds and listened nicely and some seemed much impressed. There is a very great difference in villages apparently. But much depends upon going just at the right time and taking them in the right way. So far on this trip our work in the evenings has been very interesting, while much of the forenoon's work has been rather discouraging, simply because we have not found the people in the villages. We spent four days at Virahottam, a large village on the main road, and had three very interesting evenings. Many listened very attentively to the simple Gospel story. I had only the young man with me till the last few days. He has on the whole done very well. He does not incline to argument so much as Nursiah, but tells the simple story of Christ's life and death. I hope he may prove to be a good worker. He is not settled on some points. Mr. Goffin and his people have been teaching him and his father very loose notions. They have told many things about us Baptists that are not true and have compared the small salaries we give with what they give and in different ways have tried to prejudice them against us. Nursiah and the young man have been having an argument to-night on baptism. He has been quoting the London mission people as authority that it does not make

much difference how we are baptized. If we have faith we have salvation and that is the chief thing. That is the sort of stuff Mr. Goffin is teaching and it will be hindrance to us and a curse to the cause of Christ. The controversy between him and myself is still going on. At least I expect a reply from him to my last letter. It is unprofitable, but the fight has begun and I do not mean to back down yet awhile. He will move heaven and earth to keep B. Gurus from joining us and will do his best to get this young man away from us. His brother, a younger one, asked for baptism at Akulampara, but this one advised him to wait, as he did not think he had believed in Christ as his Saviour yet. But Mr. Goffin hopes to pour water on him next month, faith or no faith. Indeed he does not ask for faith before baptism. If a person is only willing to be poured that is sufficient. You will hardly believe this can be true, but it is his plain teaching. But as I must be up early in the morning to take down the tent and start for another place, I will say "good-night" and betake myself to my cot.

BOBBILL, Dec. 18.—You will think this is quite a gap in point of time. At my last date of writing I did not expect to return to Bobbill till just before Christmas. I was so busy day by day and it was so chilly at night that I did not feel like writing. I went to Nuraught, where I planned to stay four or five days, but the nights were so cold I felt it was hardly safe to do so. And besides it was hardly profitable to remain. The people were nearly all in the fields during the day, and at night it was so cold they would not come out of their houses to listen. So on Thursday I started towards Bobbill. There was the appearance of a big storm close at hand and I was anxious to be on the home side of the large river. I got my handies off at 2.30 p. m. to go to a village five miles away. When I got there at 6.30 there was no sign of them. It began to rain a little and the prospects for a comfortable night were not very bright. At 8 p. m. I decided to cross the river on a native cot carried by four coolies and as I was doing so my coolie from the other side called out that the handies had come. I was glad to hear the report. They had taken the strong rail and had gone to a village three miles up the river and thus had come back. The storm did not come.

On Friday, we went in the morning to two villages on the other side of the river. Opposite the second one was a village on this side which I was anxious to visit, as the people listened so well last year. The only way to get across was to wade. I hesitated to do so, but at length concluded to risk it. I presume the stream was nearly two hundred yards wide and in places the water was above my knees and very cold for India. We had rather a poor hearing in the village and on Saturday morning I began to feel aches and pains about me and on the way home had quite a touch of fever.

Saturday and Sunday nights were wretched enough. But I feel much better to-day and if it is only the cold I caught, I shall be all right in a few days.

There is nothing special to write. The famine will not be so severe as it threatened to be when I last wrote. As I hoped then a cyclone did form in the bay and we got just a little of the rain. Farther south they had a heavy rainfall. This tended to allay the fears of the people somewhat, though it did not help the people in this neighborhood. All about Bobbill the rice crop is an absolute failure. In the villages farther east there is in some places a partial crop, but it is nothing to what is required. Already the pinch is being felt. Most of the people are living on cheaper grains than rice and very many are nearly starving at that. Some are beginning to look emaciated already. Two months more will see the distress much more severe, and I know of no way of relief.

We plan to hold our conference at Bimil this year, on the 12th of January, and our Telugus Association at Chicacoli immediately after.

Our Ontario Baptists are certainly making good progress in their work both at home and abroad, and are getting ahead of us in the Lower Provinces. This is naturally to be expected. They have a fine country in many respects, and their people a larger income than ours. But still there is no doubt our people could do much more than they are doing if all were faithful. I was deeply interested in the report of work done at the convention, but not satisfied with the practical outcome of enthusiasm manifested. Acadia is still unprovided for, and is still to be a drag on the more directly benevolent work of the denomination. I imagine there was some pretty sharp discussion on some points. Are we never to get at the best plan and be satisfied with it? Must there always be this change and friction? It seems as if it ought not to be.

We are grieved, too, to hear of the illness of Mr. Masters. So the workers are constantly changing, but the work must still go on. I trust there will be a rich outpouring of saving grace upon our denomination this winter, such a revival as will not only add numbers to our churches, but add a great increase of spiritual power and life to all who now

belong to the church richly. Is there no foreign field in the mission lines, or is no action? I suppose taste of wine to learn of home for the losses will be sent Chas. am teaching punishing since Am other rule for But I must close. Mrs. C. Stewart. May you a home have and New Year. With Christ family and all and other en

The regular held on the wire receive Wallace and any pastors of Bleakney, of New Ross and Greywood Ervine, of Lower Stevia; ton; Bars, Windsor Plar son; Dyken Port, of Mar Porter, of Di Wa. Co.; and

I. To Son N. S., \$75.00 one fourth of for one year. 2. To Penn N. B., \$100 to pastor for on 3. To the N. S., \$50 to services of pastor for on

Bro. Hayw and imports Carleton Co. month. Bro. Walla at Little Son ing a good st meeting house. Bro. A. T. reports pro Two have been Bro. Murri the outlook Bro. Heer, encouraged returning, an expected soc built at Greec for use in the

Bro. Hend been encour in prayer, exc taking their people short ber camps. Bro. F. A. s, Co., C. s, seeing long a and the prom have recently pected. Bro. Krivi been mad sickness and funerals dur Bro. D. Fr King's report all the stati

Being now shall be able visiting fields My P. O. add before, and at tention will be sent Better for al do their na do not wish it has not rec

Ord In respons Church at Me gates met on room of the if deemed a Hutchison, church, to th the meeting appointment Montreal, to Cressey led council organ A. G. Upha James A. K Clerk. The found to com First Baptis