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MARAL

BY ANNA D. WALKER.
"The hand of the Lord is gone out against me."
RUTH 1.

THE hand of God against thee? Nay,
O, say it, Christian, this is so,
To stay thy doubts when winds are rough,
The hand survey, 'tis sure enough.
'Tis He who led thee all along,
'Tis He who filled thy mouth with song,
His kindness gleams in all thy way,
The hand of God against thee? Nay.

Because the hour is dark with gloom,
Is that fair reason to stray?
That He in anger turns away?
From thee He loved but yesterday?
The treasure thou mayst not obtain,
Dost He withhold for greater gain?
His love is just as strong in woe,
As when the fount of joy doth flow.

If thou couldst only understand,
Against thee never is His hand;
The winds and storms, He gives them force
To drive thee onward in thy course;
If run a mile and bleed all day,
They might becom' thee, O, thy way?
Thy cross is laid upon the tide,
Has still a pilot, perch, and guide.

His chastenings are never so sign,
That He forgot His love divine?
Thine eyes with sorrow He wakened dim,
That thou mayst grope thy way to Him.
In all His dealings thou mayst trace
His love, His mercy, and His grace.
If thou canst only understand,
Against thee never is His hand.

GENERAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

UNDER THE AUSPICES AND DIRECTION OF THE MONTREAL BRANCH OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE, TO BE HELD IN MONTREAL, QUE., FROM OCTOBER 22 TO 25, 1888.

Programme.
MONDAY, 7.30 P.M.—*Public Reception of Delegates.* Chairman: Sir William Dawson, C.M.G., LL.D., F.R.S. Address: Rev. G. Douglas, D.D., LL.D. Response: General Sir Robert Phayre, K.C.B., Vice-President of the Alliance, London, England. Response: W. E. Dodge, Esq., New York. President of the Evangelical Alliance, London. Response: Rev. R. F. Burns, D.D., Halifax, N.S. Conversation.

TUESDAY, 10 A.M.—*Topic: Current Unbelief.* Chairman: Rev. D. Macrae, D.D., St. John, N.B. Paper: "What It Is and How to Meet It."—Rev. W. Burwash, S.T.D., Chancellor, Victoria University, Cobourg, Ont. Address: Rev. H. J. Van Dyke, D.D., New York. Address: Rev. M. MacVicar, Ph.D., LL.D., Chancellor, McMaster University, Toronto, Ont. Discussion.

TUESDAY, 3 P.M.—*Topic: Capital and Labor.* Chairman: Rev. J. H. Castle, D.D., Toronto, Ont. Paper: "Application of the Gospel to Employed and Unemployed."—Rev. Washington Gladden, D.D., Columbus, Ohio. Address: Hon. Senator Macdonald, Toronto. Address: G. Hague, Esq., Montreal. Discussion.

TUESDAY, 8 P.M.—*Topic: National Peril.* Chairman: The Ven. Archdeacon Evans, M.A., Montreal. Address: "Sabbath Desecration."—Rev. John Hall, D.D., New York. Address: "Intemperance."—Right Rev. Bishop Baldwin, London, Ont. Address: "Promiscuous Immigration."—Rev. J. Robertson, D.D., Supt. Presbyterian Missions in the North West.

WEDNESDAY, 10 A.M.—*Topic: Roman Catholicism in Canada.* Chairman: Rev. Dr. Barbour, Principal, Congregational College, Montreal. Paper: "Its Present Attitude and the Best Way of Meeting It."—Rev. D. H. MacVicar, D.D., LL.D., Principal Presbyterian College, Montreal. Address: Rev. E. B. Ryckman, D.D., London, Ont. Address: Rev. S. N. Jackson, M.D., Kingston, Ont. Discussion.

WEDNESDAY, 3 P.M.—*Topic: Romanism in Relation to Education.* Chairman: Rev. James M. King, D.D., New York. Address: Rev. P. S. Moxom, D.D., Boston, Mass. Address: Rev. Dr. Saunders, Halifax, N.S. Discussion.

WEDNESDAY, 8 P.M.—*Topic: Romish Dogma a Source of Religious, Social and National Peril.* Chairman: Rev. J. A. Williams, D.D., General Supt. Methodist Church, Toronto. Address: Rev. E. H. Dewart, D.D., Editor *Christian Guardian*, Toronto. Address: Rev. G. M. Milligan, B.A., Toronto. Address: Rev. John Lathen, D.D., Editor of *The Wesleyan*, Halifax, N.S.

THURSDAY, 10 A.M.—*Topic: The Dominion Evangelical Alliance.* Chairman: Sir W. Dawson, Montreal. Paper: "Its Needs and Possibilities."

—Rev. W. Jackson, Sec. Evangelical Alliance, Montreal. Address: Gen. Sir R. Phayre, K.C.B., London, England. Discussion.

THURSDAY, 3 P.M.—*Topic: Cooperation in Christian Work.* Chairman: Hon. Judge Macdonald, Brockville, Ont. Paper: "Its Necessity."—Rev. Josiah Strong, D.D., New York, Gen. Sec'y of the Evangelical Alliance in the United States. Paper: "The Christian Forces Co-operating in their Appropriate Field and Work."—Rev. F. Russell, D.D., Oswego, N. Y. Address: Rev. John Potts, D.D., Secretary of the Educational Society of the Methodist Church, Toronto, Ont. Discussion.

THURSDAY, 8 P.M.—*Topic: The Church in its Relation to the Evangelization of the World.* Chairman: Hon. S. H. Blake, Toronto, Ont. Address: Rev. Principal Sheraton, D.D., Wycliffe College, Toronto, Ont. Address: "The Home Benefits of Foreign Missions."—Rev. S. McPherson, D.D., Chicago. Address: "The Element of Personal Character in Christian Usefulness."—Rev. C. N. Stutz, D.D., Chancellor Syracuse University. Address: Gen. Sir R. Phayre, K.C.B.

All the above meetings will be held in the American Presbyterian Church, except the Reception and Conversation on Monday night. Ministers of all denominations are earnestly requested to be present and exert their influence to make the Conference a success. Churches, Ministerial Associations, and branches of the Alliance will oblige by electing Delegates at an early date and forwarding their names to the Secretary so that provision may be made for their entertainment during the Conference.

W. JACKSON, J. W. DAWSON,
Secretary, President.

N. B.—The Secretary's address is Rev. W. Jackson, 58 Post Street, Montreal.

MARRIAGE REFORM IN INDIA.

SUMPTUARY laws, regulating the expenses for dress, equipage, and entertainments, were rather a favourite device in the antique world; and were regarded as a wholesome spur to frugal virtue and a bridle on extravagance. Such laws, however, usually turned out to be a failure, and were evaded and eluded, until they had become a mere mockery against them. It would be too much to assert, however, that they were of any good. Legislation exercises a powerful influence in giving direction and increasing the volume of popular sentiment, especially at the turning of the tide. The laws against duelling were long evaded in this country, but at last that absurd and barbarous practice was abolished by the good sense of the community. The cruel custom of burning widows, alive on the funeral pyres of their husbands, has almost disappeared in the native states of India, as a consequence of its authoritative abolition in those under British rule. On the questions of infant marriage and enforced widowhood, some agitation has been kept up for several years, which will no doubt lead eventually to important modifications of those evil ancestral customs. We learn from the return to an address from the House of Lords, which has been issued by the India Office, the particulars of some reforms which have been adopted by the state of Rajputana in regard to marriage and funeral customs. The number of rules is twenty-two. The first fixes the amount to be expended on the occasion of the first marriage. Rule two provides that no expenses whatever shall be incurred on the occasion of the betrothal. The parties or representatives will simply drink opium water together and present betel leaves, and the engagement of marriage will be recorded in writing. It has hitherto been the custom for the parents of the bride to present to the bridegroom's father an elephant, horses, camels, jewellery, etc. The prohibition against these gifts will materially reduce the expenditure on marriages. Another rule lays down the amount to be expended in the distribution of tyag or largess. This was the heaviest expenditure of all on the occasion of marriages, among Rajputs, frequently a lakh of rupees being expended. By reducing the sum to Rs. nine per cent. of the annual income of a thakur, an effectual stop will be put to the extravagance that has hitherto taken place, and which has involved many families in Rajputana in terrible debt, and some in absolute ruin. The enthusiasm with which these new rules have been received everywhere is sufficient testimony that a new departure has become absolutely necessary. Rule fifteen fixes the expenses to be incurred by the poorer classes of Rajputa. These may be of as pure blood as their richer brethren, but without means. From such as these no tyag is taken, and they are now limited to Rs. 100 to be spent on marriage ceremonies. Rule sixteen fixes the age of marriage of the bridegroom at eighteen,

and of the bride at fourteen. This is the first attempt in Rajputana to put a stop to early marriages, which often cause a girl to be a widow all her life while yet a virgin. Rules have also been drawn up for cutting down the payment of enormous sums at funeral feasts. It is declared that, when a widower has attained the age of forty-five years, and has a son living, he should not contract another marriage. Col. Walter is to be congratulated on his success with the influential Rajputs. He formed a committee and invited them to settle the matter among themselves in friendly discussion. The Rajputs gave a hearty assent, and in due time they invited the Colonel to attend a formal reading of the rules to which they had unanimously agreed. The ceremony took place at Ajmer, under the shade of some beautiful trees, and the forty-one delegates, dressed in their best, filed into their seats. The rules were read and solemnly confirmed. Kuvil Raj Shyamal Das, the historian, genealogist, and bard of Meywar, made a complimentary speech; Col. Walter made another; the assemblage separated with all sorts of assurances of the most distinguished esteem, and thus was inaugurated Rajput marriage and funeral reform.—*Presbyterian Messenger.*

CRITICISING THE MINISTER.

WHEN the minister is first settled, everything is "heavenly"—too heavenly to last. Wherever two or three of the parish meet together, felicitations are exchanged upon their good fortune, and the new minister's praises are loudly chanted. Apparently, his adoring flock would hardly be surprised to see him appear in the pulpit Sunday morning with a visible halo surrounding his head, like the saints of old. Let not the minister, however, deceive himself by dreaming that this ideal state of things will last. His trial hour has not yet come. But it will. Generally in the second or third year of his pastorate, the reaction sets in. The novelty has worn off; and his people, having become accustomed to his special gifts and graces, accept them as a matter of course. The strugglers and drifters have floated off in the train of some other novelty; the episcopal people have become episcopal; the non-conformists, non-conformists; and the dissenting people dissent. "A hot of people, who are always in their pews no matter what the vagaries of the weather and the rest of the parish. The wave of enthusiasm has subsided; and a cold wave of criticism sets in, swelling as it rolls."

Two or three things it would be well for us of the parish to remember. First, because we pay the minister a small sum for services faithfully rendered, we do not own him. He is not a tectotum, to be spun at our pleasure. He is an independent soul, accountable not to the parish, but to God alone for his opinions and the conscientious use of his powers. Secondly, we must remember that the minister is human—indeed makes no pretensions to be otherwise. First-class angels are almost as rare to the pulpit as in the pews. The secret of his power lies in the very fact that he speaks to us from the level of our common humanity. Tried and tempered as we are, like us not always without sin, he seeks to share with us the strength he has gained in trial, to lead us to heights well won from our low and temporal, where he would walk with us as a brother and friend. Being human, he will necessarily have imperfections. But do not let us look at him through a microscope, exaggerating each little roughness into a mountain. Let us stand far enough off for proper perspective, take the large view, and get the "altogether" of him. If on the whole, seen thus, we find him to be earnest in service, faithful to the best he knows, doing his duty as in God's sight, do not let us block his way with our petty criticisms. Let us accept him "for better or worse," just as he is. If there be some points we wish were different, let us remember it is often wiser to "bear those ills we have than fly to others we know not of." Instead of standing coldly off and criticising him, take hold and help him; and very likely his trivial imperfections will shrink back into their proper nothingness, and be forgotten.

Beware always of the first beginnings of criticism. Don't begin it yourself; and, if some one else does, stifle your natural human impulse to bear and to tell some new thing, and stamp it out then and there, as you would a little fire on the edge of a sun-dried prairie. Take a decided stand, hold up his positive qualities, and the negative will be forgotten. We never can know the influence wielded upon one human being who is in need of it. You are only one; but you may prove to be like the little Dutch boy whose tiny finger stopped the leak in the dyke, and saved his native town.

A popular theologian and consider-

ation would seem naturally to mark relations at once so intimate and so solemn; at all events, a great breadth of charity that "suffereth long and is kind," that "thinketh no evil," that "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."—*P. Thorn, in Christian Register.*

Mission Work.

HARVESTING IN CILICIA.

BY REV. ALEX. M'LAUGHLIN, B.A.
This Oriental scene to have a special fascination for "the old paths." But whether this is due to any reverence for the good old ways of their forefathers of three thousand years ago, or to an inherent sluggishness in their make-up, I shall not presume to determine. I cannot help thinking, however, that the almost entire absence of the blessings of a Christian civilization is the primary, if not the sole cause of the present condition of the people in this respect. Having served an apprenticeship at farming in Canada, I have watched, during the last few weeks with considerable interest from our door, the harvesting of a small patch of wheat, perhaps about a couple of acres; and a sketch of what I saw will furnish a good illustration of this special feature of Oriental character which I have referred to. I shall simply write the history of the harvesting and threshing of the grain which grew on this small piece of ground as I watched it day after day, and I may also say, week after week. The sickle, the gleaner, the threshing floor, the treading out of the corn, and the sharp toothed threshing instrument of Old Testament history were all employed as they were in these same fields quite three thousand years ago, and afterwards when our Lord looked upon the fields "ripe already to harvest."

The harvesting of this piece of grain began with the thrusting in of the sickle by two men clad in true Eastern dress. It would perhaps be interesting before going any further to attempt

A DESCRIPTION OF THEIR DRESS.
As far as words can describe it, commencing at the foundation of their shoes, we may call them such, were made of a coarse leather, with no apparent part of the part of the shoemaker to economize the leather, and a decided disregard for the shape and size of the foot of the wearer. They had more the appearance of a piece of leather wrapped loosely about the foot and reaching some distance above the ankle, the whole being securely fastened about the ankle and leg, with coarse leather thong. I must add that the sole of the shoe is simply one piece of thick leather sewed to the bottom of the shoe, there being no heel; the whole terminating in a long pointed toe, and curling up some four or five inches in the front. The same want of economy was especially noticeable in the make up of their "shirts" or trousers. A fashionable American tailor would make at least five pair of pants from the same quantity of cloth. These in question were made from coarse white cloth drawn to the leg just below the knee and hanging down behind almost to their ankles. At the top they were drawn together and fastened with a cloth string, to which must be added a girdle tied in a large knot at the side. The upper part of the body was covered or partially so by something resembling a shirtless collar, and reaching loosely about the neck and shoulders. Their heads were, of course, covered with the usual Turkish fez, around which was wrapped, although the weather was intensely hot, an amber of folds of dark coloured cloth. When going to and from their work the sickles were fastened in their girdles. The grain was cut some twelve or fourteen inches above the ground and deposited in bundles somewhat larger than the sheaves we are accustomed to see in America. There was nothing special to notice in their manner of reaping or in the time occupied, unless it be to observe the ease with which they went about their task and the entire absence of anything like haste. The people in this country are never in a hurry.

The next stage in the progress of what I am attempting to describe was the gathering of the grain to the threshing-floor in the centre of the field. This afforded a good illustration of

THE POSITION OF WOMEN.

in this country, and the great need of the elevating influences of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the gathering of the grain a woman took the place of a beast of burden. A man and a woman were both engaged in the work, but all the man did was simply to assist the woman in gathering a large number of sheaves together in a heap, having done which he quietly sat down, while the womanman tied them all together in one immense bundle, large enough, I should judge, for an ordinary horse to

carry. Having done this she then sat on the ground with her back to the bundle and securely fastened it on her back. Then came the struggle of rising to her feet with this great load fastened to her, with no help from the beast of a man who lounged idly on the ground beside her. Once he had fastened the load while the man idly awaited her return. This went on till the whole of the grain was collected in the centre of the field. The field was now ready for the gleaner, every case, woman, and child, who are usually relatives or friends of the owner of the field, who always enjoy the privilege freely to whom he chooses. The gleaner, after the day's work is over in the field usually thrashes out a piece of straight stick, or a piece of cloth, and then carries this to a small sieve and then pouring water on it till it became thoroughly cleansed. Large mats or rugs were then spread on the ground in the sunshine and the grain spread over them to dry, after which it was ready for use or for the market. To complete my history, I must also add that the chaff is carefully gathered from the ground and sold on the market for fodder. In all more than three weeks were employed in the harvesting, threshing and cleaning of the grain which grew on this small patch of ground. Who will not say that missionary farmers are needed in Asia Minor?

THE THRESHING FLOOR.

It is always made round, and in this case was perhaps forty or fifty feet in diameter. The floor, I should mention, is simply the ground of earth. The grain is heaped up higher around the outer rim and also by the sides. This is done so that the animal which is to tread out the grain will have somewhat of a track left for him to begin his labours between this outer and inner parts of the floor. Both horses and oxen are used for threshing. In this case, however, a horse was used. But before I speak of this I must attempt a description of the threshing instrument. It can scarcely be called a complicated piece of mechanism, and to an American farmer I would simply describe it as a "stone boat" with sharp pieces of flint driven into the bottom of it and protruding an inch or the under side. To those who have never seen a stone boat, it is necessary only to add that it consisted of two boards, each about fifteen inches wide, two inches thick, and perhaps five or six feet in length, securely fastened side by side and slightly turned up at one end. Having noticed them being made in the streets of the city, this spring, I am able to describe more minutely the pieces of flint are fastened in bottom of the boat. Small holes about one inch in diameter, and having an inch in width are chiselled in the bottom of the boards and into these are driven with heavy wooden mallets, the sharp pieces of flint which constitute, in Bible language, a "sharp-toothed threshing instrument." To this the horse or ox is hitched by means of long straps fastened at the outer corners of the front or turned up end of the "machine," and passing around in front of the breast of the animal. This strap is held in its place on the animal by another strap fastened to it on each side and reaching over the back. We are now ready to describe the threshing process, but with this preliminary explanation, anything I might add further has already doubtless been anticipated. When the horse is without a rider the man usually stands near the centre of the floor and by means of a long rope attached to the head directs its movements. For some time at first the animal moves around regularly in a circle, but as more and more of the grain becomes well-trodden down he is moved about irregularly in every direction. Occasionally the animal rests while the driver turns the grain over. This is done every now and then during the process of the threshing, which continues until the straw is all trodden or broken into fine pieces like chaff. In this case the time occupied in the threshing was six or seven days. A western threshing machine would have done the same work in less than half an hour.

WINNOWER.

But still the grain is not separated from the chaff and broken straw, and another day and a half is taken up with this process. It would take me too long to describe this minutely. In the main it consisted in tossing the chaff into the air, allowing the wind to carry it off in whatever direction it might happen to be blowing. From this the prophet Hosea (chap. xiii. v. 3) chooses the figure by which he so fully represents the instability of his wicked. After the chaff was all driven off the floor, the grain was then swept together with a strong broom made of branches of trees. The chaff and gravel were next separated from the use of a strong sieve and the wheat. It is estimated that at least ten per cent. of the grain is lost in the process of threshing and winnowing, and after watching the process I am inclined to think this a very low estimate of the loss.

At this stage the Governmental officers or their agents make their appearance to chaff and receive their tax. The tax on wheat is one bushel in every eight, or a little more, than

that amount. It may be interesting to note that

THE WHEAT TAX.

In this and in five or six of the other provinces of Asia Minor does not, however, pass into the Treasury of the Government at Constantinople, but into the coffers of Russia, to pay Russian indemnity, just as the tax on certain other products of the soil passes to the Treasury of England and France for the same purpose. The grain is not yet, however, ready for the market or for grinding in the mill. There is still much of the dust and soil clinging to it, as can easily be imagined from its having been trodden on so long. This further process was again the work of women, who accomplished their task by putting the grain in small quantities into a small sieve and then pouring water on it till it became thoroughly cleansed. Large mats or rugs were then spread on the ground in the sunshine and the grain spread over them to dry, after which it was ready for use or for the market. To complete my history, I must also add that the chaff is carefully gathered from the ground and sold on the market for fodder. In all more than three weeks were employed in the harvesting, threshing and cleaning of the grain which grew on this small patch of ground. Who will not say that missionary farmers are needed in Asia Minor?

TARBUS, ASIA MINOR.

July 26, 1888.

DRAWING POWER IN THE PEWS.

There may be, and, indeed, there ought to be, drawing power in the pews as well as in the pulpits of our churches. The Rev. J. R. Crosser, Presbyterian pastor, Portland, Maine, describes in the *New England Presbyterian* a visit paid to the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, and says: "I very early found the Tabernacle, the church of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, the king of preachers. As I was entering a man very cordially said to me, 'You are a stranger here, are you not? Come then with me; I have a seat for you.' His thoughtful kindness would have been serious indeed, but then you receive thoughtful treatment from them who occupy the seats, and may also expect to hear a thoughtful sermon. With such a religious atmosphere it is to be more impressive than if the reception had been of some churches it is, and was great respecting. It more than one the members of a congregation should fill the pews.—*N. Y. Observer.*"

MISSION NOTES.

One of the most active members of St. Mark's congregation, Greenwick, is Dr. Pringle. He has come home after forty years' work in the Indian army to devote himself to all departments of mission and temperance work in London. A UNITARIAN missionary meeting, under the auspices of the ministers of all Christian denominations in the district, was held in the U.P. Church, Hall, Cambridge, when addresses were given by Mrs. Stott, who has been twenty years in China, regarding her work there, and by the Rev. Mr. Scott (Natal), who gave an account of the work among Zulu women and the progress of mission work in that country. The Rev. Dr. Fagan (Bothwell) read a letter from the Rev. Dr. Gordon (Boston), regretting his absence owing to numerous engagements in America. In the evening a great meeting was held in Garrison Parish Church, the Rev. Mr. Gillespie (Aldridge) presiding, when Rev. Dr. Pierson (Philadelphia), and other delegates from the London American Missionary Conference gave addresses.

Two important additions have lately been made to the books now available for the Malagasy in their own language. The first of these is a "Bible Dictionary," which has been several years in preparation, under the editorship of Rev. James Sibree, jun., who has also been the principal writer of the 1885 and odd articles, which the Dictionary contains. Members of the London Missionary Society, and the Friends' Foreign Missionary Association have contributed to the contents of the work, which, it is earnestly hoped, will be of considerable service to all native pastors, evangelists, preachers, and students of the Scriptures. The second book is a translation of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," which has been done (in part) by Rev. R. Bacon, and the present proprietor of Tamatave, and recently completed by a young member of the Friends' Mission. The "Pilgrim's Progress" was translated by the first Madagascar missionaries, and has always been a favourite book with the Malagasy Christians.

ANARCHY is the result of human selfishness, which is the cause of all our troubles. They are the seeds of the evil which...