

CONTRIBUTED.

For the Wesleyan.

A QUESTION.

MR. EDITOR.—Permit me to make a few remarks on the interpretation of Mark iii. 20-35, with special reference to comments on these passages in the Sunday School Banner for February.

Verse 20. And they went into a house. And the multitude cometh together again so that they could not so much as eat bread. 21. And when his friends heard of it they went out to lay hold on him; for they said He is beside himself.

"Mary doubtless was perplexed by the reports concerning Jesus. . . . Perhaps at this moment she was a mere tool in the hands of Christ's enemies. The 'friends' or 'kinsmen' of Jesus? What position have they taken up? . . . They are trying to stop him. . . . They will not support him. They will not even let it be supposed that they concur with him in what he is doing. . . . but they are determined to compel him to reply to their questions. It is strange that they should have been able to persuade Mary his mother to accompany them with reluctance. But anyhow she is for the time assuming their ideas and attitude. And they . . . are acting the part of foes. They cannot be reckoned on his side. . . . Does he recognize them as friends? By no means. He cannot do so while they are so acting. And so to the announcement that his 'mother and brethren stand without,' he replies, 'Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?'—Extracts from S. S. Banner.

Is there any Scriptural proof to sustain a charge so serious against the mother and brethren of Christ as that of open opposition to Him? Certainly no such charge is made by any of the evangelists in express terms; and it may be gravely doubted whether such an imputation can be sustained by logical inference from the facts recorded in the gospel narrative. Equally difficult is it to prove that the Saviour publicly rebuked his mother and brethren, or regarded them at any time as among his enemies.

The readings of verse 21 differ considerably in the Greek MSS. There are several readings other than the received one which is that of the Syriac version. The ancient Cambridge MS. (D) represents the verse thus: And when the scribes and the rest heard concerning him, they went out to lay hold of him, for they said He is driving them mad. The Gothic version thus: And scribes and others hearing of him went out to lay hold on him; for they said He is out of his senses. Griesbach gives the text of the latter in this verse as alternative with the Syriac.

2. Our English translation of verse 21 is disputed. The expression *hoi par' autou*, rendered "friends" or "kinsmen" in the margin, is not used in any other instance in the scriptures. Luther, Coverdale, Wicliffe, Griesbach, Vater, Kocher, Homberg, Schottgen, Wolfe, and Sir Norton Knatchbull all translate the expression, "they that were about him," or "his disciples." The last three named explain the meaning thus: Christ and those with him were in the house; the multitude pressed upon them so that they could not even take food; and the disciples or friends then went out of the house to restrain the crowd from rushing in and disturbing the Master. And they contend that the 21st verse should be rendered in the following manner: And when the disciples heard (i. e. heard the crowd making such a noise) they went out to restrain it, for they said, It is furious. Dr. Adam Clarke regards this interpretation not unfavorably. Griesbach and Vater think Christ had gone out into the crowd, and they render and explain the verse as follows: And when they who were with him (his disciples and other friends) heard (how he was exerting himself among the crowd) they went out to bring him in, for they (i. e. some of the crowd) were saying, He is carried beyond himself.

3. Admitting that the authorized version gives us the correct rendering of verse 21, it is extremely doubtful whether the most careful exegesis warrants the conclusion that the mother and brethren mentioned in verse 31, were the identical friends referred to in verse 21, or were actually included among them. Dr. Schaff says: "verse 21, *his friends*, literally those by him; the exact reference here is doubtful; the near relatives spoken of in verse 31 may not be included." Morrison does not think it necessary to suppose that every one of the Saviour's kinsfolk inclusive of Mary, used the very strong phraseology recorded. Bishop Elliott and Dr. Plumtree hold that the "friends" were sent to Christ by his mother and brethren, and also that a considerable interval of time may be assumed as having elapsed between the visit of the "friends" and the visit of "his brethren and his mother."

In the authorized version "kinsmen" is given in the margin as an alternative reading for "friends," in verse 21. This marginal reading is not inserted in the revised version—a very significant omission, implying as it does that the revisers did not approve of "kinsmen" as an equivalent in that verse, of *hoi par' autou*; for they distinctly state in the preface that alternative readings are given in the margin "whenever such renderings seemed to deserve attention."

4. The plain, inforced meaning of verses 31-35 (see also Matt. xii. 41, 50, Luke xiii. 16, 27) does not embody the remotest hint of any hostility to the Son on the part of the mother, or brethren, or of any slight put on the mother or brethren by the Son. Affection and solicitude doubtless led to the visit on the one hand; and on the other, our Lord "took the opportunity" in the language of Doddridge, "of expressing his affection to his obedient disciples in a peculiarly endearing manner." The family relation is used frequently in scripture to illustrate the relationship subsisting between our Lord and his faithful followers.

Yours, &c., JOHN T. MELLISH, Belle Aire Terrace, Halifax, N.S., July, 1882.

FROM THE CIRCUITS.

CHARLOTTETOWN, P. E. I.

Last Sunday was one of our special days, that come all the more agreeably from being in part, unexpected. The Rev. George Young, D.D., of the Toronto Conference, preached in the morning from "By terrible things in righteousness will thou answer us, O God of our salvation."—Prayer—Its answers: and the processes. The sermon was full of deep thought, beautiful for simplicity, and charged with Apostolicunction and fervor. Touching references, causing tears to fall from many eyes, were made to some of the painful experiences through which Christians are called to pass, and to the sudden death of our dear friend Robert Longworth, in whose beloved memory the church was draped with mourning.

We hope to have the opportunity of welcoming Dr. Young back into our midst before long and of listening to some of his grand missionary addresses. The Rev. H. P. Cowperthwaite, M.A., the retiring pastor, delivered his farewell sermon in the evening—appropriately taking for his subject the Doxology of the Christian Church. "Unto him who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins, and hath made us kings and priests unto God." The occasion was one of great interest and solemnity. In his closing remarks the preacher said, "I am doubly reminded that this is a world of change, and that no earthly relation is permanent. This sable drapery reminds us of this general truth, and especially speaks to us of the departure of one whom we have long claimed as an honored member and trustee of this church. I cannot allow the opportunity to pass without paying a loving tribute to the memory of our dear friend and brother, Robert Longworth. He was one of the Lord's kings on earth—a prince in our Israel whose meek and blameless life, pure character and philanthropic spirit will long be to this church an inspiration and a benediction." Feeling and touching reference was also made by the preacher, to the term of his pastorate just closing. Mr. Cowperthwaite carries away with him the love and esteem of the many friends, both within and without the Church, whom his genial manner and able pulpit ministrations have gathered around him.

The Rev. Mr. Smallwood, whose health has been somewhat feeble since returning from Conference, we are glad to say is recovering vigor and spirit. He is a grand sample of the Christian veteran—and his services are of inestimable value here. The people with true Methodist loyalty ready to give a hearty welcome to their new pastor, the Rev. Mr. Burwash—who is expected this week—and are praying and looking for a year of great prosperity. Charlottetown, 18th July, 1882.

MONCTON, N. B.

The Moncton Times, of the 18th inst. says: "The announcement of a special meeting of the Methodist Institute for last evening, as made from the pulpit Sunday evening and through the columns of The Times yesterday, was of an innocent character, and very little suspicion was aroused by the fact that a general invitation was extended to the congregation to be present. The vestry well filled at the appointed hour. The Institute met, and after the usual routine, the assembly had a recess, when Mr. George Ackman read a most appreciative address signed by Messrs. George E. Sangster, W. B. Knight and George Ackman on behalf of the church. The address was accompanied by a handsome silver ice pitcher and stand. Mr. Duncan was completely taken by surprise, and a set reply was out of the question. He said such an occasion had been furthest from his thoughts, and expressed his gratitude to the kind friends of the congregation for their remembrance of him in such a manner. At the conclusion of Mr. Duncan's address in reply, the following literary programme was submitted: Chorus—Let the hills and vales resound by members of the Institute. Recitation—Mr. Albert Williams. Instrumental Music—Miss O. Elliott. Dialogue—Ann Betsy's Beaux. Solo—Mr. Geo. Ackman. Recitation—Miss Laura Knight. Musical Museum—Institute. It was then announced that ice cream and strawberries would be served to all present, and some time was spent very pleasantly by the assemblage in doing justice to these seasonable luxuries. The credit for the success of this last social gathering, for the present at least, of

Rev. Mr. Duncan and the Methodist congregation at Moncton, is largely due to Mr. R. Taylor, President of the Young People's Institute, and the Institute committee appointed at a previous meeting, who worked hard to make the affair as much of a surprise and as pleasant as possible.

FREDERICTON.

After a residence in this city of three years the Rev. E. Evans took leave of his congregation on Sabbath evening when he preached a practical and masterly sermon from the 8th and 9th verses of the 4th chapter of Philippians. He referred to the responsibilities connected with his position and claimed that his sole purpose was the salvation of the souls of his charge and the glory of God. In a pathetic manner he reviewed the different phases of his visitations among his people and he had endeavored to comfort them in adversity and rejoice with them in prosperity. During the delivery of his discourse many of the congregation were visibly affected. In closing he referred in a very flattering manner to the eloquence and ability of his successor, Rev. Dr. Sprague, who he intimated would be unable to enter upon his duties for some time owing to indisposition. In the meantime the church will be in charge of Rev. John Wadman, A.B., who will be assisted by Rev. Mr. McCully. In the afternoon the members of Mr. Evans' Bible Class, through Mr. Martin Lemont, presented him with an address couched in language expressive of their great love for him and appreciation of his labors. A valuable dressing case accompanied the address. Mr. Evans was completely taken by surprise by this unexpected acknowledgment of his services and gratefully accepted this mark of their esteem. Mr. Evans had previously received an address from the official Quarterly Board, and retired from his charge with the best wishes of every member of his large congregation. At Marysville, Rev. W. W. Brewer, preached his last sermon on Sunday, and although it was not absolutely of a farewell nature, he addressed some parting words to his congregation at its close, and congratulated them upon the prospect of having such an able man for his successor as the Rev. E. Evans.—Reporter.

SUSSEX, N. B.

A very large gathering assembled last evening (17th) at the Methodist parsonage, to witness a presentation to Rev. Mr. Betts and family previous to their leaving for Manitoba. Brown Harrison, Esq., in a neat speech presented the Rev. Mr. Betts and family to the members of church and congregation. He also presented Mrs. Betts with a very handsome silver table service, and a nice Bible to their little boy Chesley. Mr. Betts replied in a very appropriate manner, thanking the people for their gifts to himself as well as to Mrs. Betts and their little boy, and remarking that during his connection with them he spent three of the happiest years of his ministerial life. Mr. Betts will be greatly missed by the people of Sussex as he is not only an able preacher, but his genial countenance and social intercourse with the people have won for him the esteem of every one with whom he was acquainted. He has been a hard worker while on the circuit and has been successful in paying off a debt of something like two thousand dollars on the mission house and repairs on the church. He was also a strong advocate of the Canada Temperance Act and in him the Temperance people of this place will lose a faithful and efficient worker.—Correspondence of St. John News.

ANNUITANT SOCIETY.

The Second Annual Meeting of the Annuitant Society of Ministers of the Methodist Church of Canada was held in Fredericton on the 6th inst., Rev. R. Duncan, President, in the chair. The financial statement showed that the Society now has a capital stock of eleven thousand six hundred and thirty-two dollars (\$11,632) invested at six per cent. The membership of the society includes the names of fifty-three ministers, residing in several of the Provinces of the Dominion. The financial outlook indicates that, even without any addition to the roll of its membership, the Capital Stock of the Society will amount to upwards of sixteen thousand dollars before its treasury will be opened for the payment of claims. Additions to the roll of membership will still further the amount of the Capital Stock. The Committee for the ensuing year was appointed, as follows: Rev. Robert Duncan, President; D. D. Currie, Secretary; John Read, Treasurer; Edwin Evans, H. McKeown, Howard Sprague, D.D., Isaac N. Parker, Charles Comben, H. P. Cowperthwaite, Thomas J. Deinstadt, Stephen T. Teed, and Thomas Marshall. D. D. Currie, Secy. St. John, N. B., July 15, 1882.

The readiness for death is that of character, not of occupation; and God does not wish me to be always thinking about dying. He wants me to live, he wants me to walk with himself while I live, and if I will do that I may leave the dying to take care of itself, or rather he will take care of the dying.—Rev. W. M. Taylor, D. D.

BREVITIES.

A Frenchman, by way of giving expression to his love of nature, exclaimed, "O madam, I love ze cows, ze horses, ze sheep, and anyting that be beastly."

For the best results there needs be the longest waiting. The true harvest is the longest in being reached. The failures come first, the successes last. The pinastactory is generally soonest seen.—Henry Calderwood.

A Scottish student, supposed to be deficient in judgment, was asked by a professor, in the course of his examination, how he would discover a fool. "By the questions he would ask," was the prompt and highly suggestive reply.

The Locomotive publishes engravings showing how boilers look after they have exploded. This doesn't seem to meet the case at all. What is needed is a picture showing how a boiler looks just before it is going to explode. We could then learn when to get out of the way.

The numerous suits for breach of promise recently instituted against old men by young women is having its effect. "Miss," said an old man in a crowded street our yesterday, "Miss, I'll get up and give you my seat if you'll swear before all these witnesses that you don't consider it an offer of marriage."—Philadelphia Chronicle-Herald.

A barrel of liquor was once being carried up a street. By accident, it fell to the ground, and the head was driven in. One of the spectators, seeing that the liquor was spilt, said: "O dear! O dear! what a pity!" "O no," said a little boy who was looking on. "It is not a pity; the drink will do better on God's earth than in God's image."—Leatlet.

A school in the north of England once made the following announcement: "Larkin" taught here three pence a week—and then as larns manners twopence more." Mr. Samuel Morley, M. P., speaking at the Stockwell Orphanage the other day related this anecdote, and added that he sincerely wished a score of members of the House of Commons could be sent to that school.

The governors of Massachusetts cannot claim to have belonged to the aristocratic classes. Talbot was a factory lad, Rice a stationer's clerk, Gaston a Connection shopkeeper, Banks a "bobbin boy," Everett a clergyman's son, Emory Washburn a country lawyer, William B. Washburn a manufacturer, and Andrew a country merchant's son.

A lawsuit about a horse was decided in the Supreme Court of Michigan a few days ago, which had been before the courts for sixteen years. The defendant, Capt. E. Cahill, of Lansing, was a young lawyer when the suit began, and the plaintiff alleged that Cahill used up the horse by over-driving. The decision was in favor of the defendant. Cahill has had sixteen years' court work for the case, and now gets back \$200 costs and interest.

A Derry clergyman, the Rev. A. Fulton, vouches for the truth of the following: Questioning some children in a Sunday-school a few weeks since, he asked one of them, an intelligent little boy, "Who was the wickedest man mentioned in the Old Testament?" To his surprise, a ready answer came, "Moses, sir." "And why Moses?" inquired the clergyman, in amazement. "Cos, sir, he broke all the ten commandments at trunst."

Purchasers of old china, old clocks, old furniture, old jewelry, old bric-a-brac of all sorts, will be interested to learn that the manufacture of such articles is one of the liveliest branches of industry in Europe. Old Rosen and Sévres ware can be had in any quantity at a month's notice, and the Limoges enamels made the other day by an enterprising firm and buried for a month in moist earth, date from the fifteenth century without question.

The late Dr. John F. Gray, America's pioneer homoeopathist, once gave to a poor sewing girl who came to him for advice a vial of medicine, and told her to go home, take the dose and go to bed. She replied that she could not do so, as she was dependent on her daily earning for a living. "Then," said he, "I'll have to change the medicine a little." Taking back the vial, he wrapped it in a ten-dollar bill, and returning it to her repeated the order: "Go home and go to bed, and take the medicine, wrapper and all."

A citizen who lately built himself a residence, was the other day showing a friend through it, and, when everything had been noticed and discussed, he asked: "Well, do you see any place where you could improve it?" "Yea, I noticed a bad error right at the start," was the reply. Being asked to explain, he continued: "You have no balcony in front." "But I didn't want one." "Well, perhaps not; but when you are running for office and the band comes up to serenade you, and the populace calls for a speech, you will either have to go to the roof or come down to the ground to respond. A balcony is a sort of middle ground—just high enough to escape making pledges, and not too high to promise all sorts of reform. Ought to have a balcony, sir—regret it if you don't."

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