

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

ENGLISH CORRESPONDENCE.

MY DEAR SIR,

In my last letter I confined myself to matters affecting the Nonconforming interests of our country. Since then Parliament has scattered itself all over the land, I might almost say, all over the world. The period between sessions, is usually the time for rest and preparation. And our Premier, who though an octogenarian, is as young and lively in habit, as a man of thirty, has already sounded a note of anticipation for the next session. I am not however about to write another politico-ecclesiastical letter. I will advert to two or three particulars, which are more directly religious. The first in importance is also on the whole, one of the most curious. Some months ago, a well known highly intellectual, very literary minister of the Independent Body, published a little Book of Hymns which he called "The Rivulet, or Hymns for the closet and the church." This little book was reviewed favorably in *The Eclectic*, and unfavorably in *The Morning Advertiser*,—a paper of a professedly religious character, and the property of "The Licensed Victuallers' Society."—The reviewer in this paper, thought proper to offer some severe animadversions, on the Review in *The Eclectic*. This called forth a reply from the Editor of that Review. There the matter ought to have rested. But some of the brethren of the author of *The Rivulet* thinking that his character was seriously involved in these animadversions, issued a protest, signed by fifteen of them. Among these were some of the principal of the London ministers, including Rev. Thos. Binney, Rev. S. Martin, and Rev. N. Hall. From the issue of this protest there has emanated one of the most serious and most painful discussions, which have agitated the religious community, at any rate in my time. It is serious, for this reason. The discussion has passed away from the little hymn book to the question of the orthodoxy of the dissenting ministry in general both Independent and Baptist. *The Morning Advertiser* published a series of articles and afterwards issued them in the form of a pamphlet. Any thing more scurrilous and scandalous than these articles has never disgraced religious controversy. These articles have been endorsed by *The British Banner*, under the Editorship of Dr. Campbell, and have been followed up by him, with a series of articles on the same subject. Whilst this is going on, all the papers of any thing like a religious character, have taken up the subject. Most of the literary papers also and many of the monthly magazines have had something to say about it. From the press it passed into the meetings of the Congregational Union. The issue of the conversations there it was hoped, had settled the matter. But no. The letters of Dr. Campbell were published as a pamphlet immediately after, though he had given his word, to prevent their being published. This has led to a pamphlet from Mr. Binney, in which he severely criticises the entire denominational literature of his own body, complains of personal discourtesy, and threatens retirement from the Union, unless the whole affairs of the Union are differently conducted. As soon as this pamphlet appeared, the Publisher of *The Banner* and *The Patriot* writes, in reply to a part of it which concerns himself. And Dr. Campbell has again opened a series of letters upon this reply. And now the subject has come to be to a large extent personal between the writers. What is to be the outcome of the conflict, it is impossible to foresee. It is not so difficult to judge its nature. It was at first, High Calvinism versus Low Calvinism. It then came to be, The Elder section of the ministry against The Younger; it then came to be the old method of stating old truth, against a new method of stating old truth. Put these three things together, and add a good measure of personal acrimony, and prejudice mingled together with dark ignorance and ignorant pride, and you can see very well what a *melee* is likely to ensue. It is however a most painful spectacle, and one which must be greatly injurious to the cause of truth. I do not believe there is any real ground for the charge which has been so sweepingly made against the orthodoxy of the ministry. That a great change is passing over the ministry, in the manner in

which gospel truth is presented is undoubted. But that there is any serious change in the views of the truth as received by the Fathers, I do not believe, and such reckless talk as this discussion has led to, must be injurious, and is much more likely to drive young men into Infidelity or Unitarianism, than to lead them to a more simple realization of the truths of the gospel. We will hope that the gracious Head of the church will make "the wrath of man to praise Him, and restrain the remainder thereof."

Our own denomination has left this discussion to its own limits, and is itself moving on quietly within its own sphere. *The Freeman*, newspaper, started under most disadvantageous circumstances, and with strongly expressed opposition from a large section of our body has made a place for itself, and I think is becoming a necessity to the denomination. It has acquired a character which those who were not favorable to its commencement, did not expect of it, and which certainly its first numbers did not promise. The seat of publication has been removed to the metropolis and this will increase its facilities and doubtless also its value.

Our Missionary Society has just added two more missionaries to its band of devoted men. They were both designated to their work at Hastings on the 20th inst., one of them, Mr. Kerry, will start for India, on the 2nd Sept. He is expected to be stationed at Calcutta. Though for the present he is to fill up a vacancy at Hourah, caused by Mr. Morgan's return home to recruit his health. The other, Mr. Gamble will leave for Trinidad, about the middle of next month. His case is a very singular one. The circumstances give us much hope of his future usefulness. His mother was the cause of the commencement of our mission at Trinidad. She was connected with the Island in business. On her visits to London she always called at the Mission House to leave a subscription, and never failed to urge the claims of the island for missionary efforts. These appeals were at length successful and a mission was begun there in the year of our Jubilee. There are now eight Mission Stations in the Island, and she had the pleasure of witnessing the conversion of her son there, by the instrumentality of our missionary. And now that son, after having spent a term at Stepney College is going out as a missionary to the Island.

A financial statement from the secretary of the Society, anticipatory of the requirements of the year, has just been published. It awakens some anxiety, because it reveals a demand for current liabilities, which there will be some difficulty in meeting. He tells us we shall require at least £22,000, to sustain present operations. I hope it will be forthcoming, but I am not free of fear. Some additional means are about to be employed to meet this demand. May they be blessed of God. It is grievous to think that such a sum should be difficult to raise, when it is notorious, that but for doctrinal restraints in our churches, double the sum might be raised without any difficulty at all. Will the time ever come when the Baptist denomination in England, will be a united body, co-working in all its parts, for the extension of the Redeemer's triumphs. I sometimes hope it will, but more often fear it will not.

The Baptist Manual, which was issued some little time since, offers two or three items worthy of remark and with these I will close my letter.

The Union reports a clear increase of 1800 members in 1007 churches, or about 1 1/2 per church. But this is not a fair view of the case. There have really been 5222 additions made to the 1007 churches, or about 4 1/2 per church. And if we add to these, those who have been restored to membership after exclusion, the increase will be 5 1/2 per church or in one number 6405. There is shewn to be 642 substations, or village stations connected with these 1007 churches, and in the Sunday Schools 111,234 children with 15,629 teachers. The actual number of Baptist churches united in 34 Associations is 1154. This is for England and Wales only. During the year, there were 12 new chapels erected and 4 enlarged, and 11 new churches formed, against these there are 4 reported as become extinct. There have been 108 changes amongst the ministers,—that is, 108 ministers have become settled. As several of these are from the Colleges and there are several churches without pastors, it is prob-

able that the actual number of changes is considerably above this.

One of the tables of the Manual gives a very interesting and most encouraging view of the state and progress of our denomination in Germany, Denmark, and Sweden. There have been no less than 61 Baptist churches established in these kingdoms within the last 20 years. The increase in these churches during the last year has been 1170, which does not include 72 restored to communion, or taken together an average of 20 per church. In these 61 churches there are 5900 members, and a clear increase on last year of about 14 per church. And in addition to the 61 churches there are 434 out stations for the preaching of the gospel. I am sure that every christian will rejoice at this evidence of the awakening religious life of the continent. The movement is now more particularly prominent in Sweden. In five stations there, no less than 382 of the numbers above given, have been gathered in. From private sources I have rejoiced to learn that the religious awakening is most extensively spreading amongst the young. There are scores of Sunday Schools rising up, and christian persons are coming forward to teach the children. A lady from Stockholm the other day gave me most encouraging testimony in support of what I have just said. I may refer to this matter again. I must close now. And with kind regards, believe me,

Yours truly, H. S. E.

August 27th, 1856.

For the Christian Messenger.

Sayings and Doings at the Eastern Association.

[No 3.]

Foreign Missions formed a subject of consideration, and also animated discussion. It arose upon the bringing up of the report on that subject.

The Committee's report urged the necessity of more zeal and activity in the cause, both in contributing, and praying, and seeking for those who may be suitable to become the bearers of the good news of salvation to the heathen.

That far more zeal was required, more energetic exertion demanded, all admitted. The heathen are dying, generation after generation are going, uninstructed in the way of life and salvation, into eternity. No time should be lost.

But does the report recommend the best mode of accomplishing the desired effect? Should not the funds on hand be expended at once? Why gather funds and lay them up, and wait year after year for some one or two to be found among ourselves who may be willing to devote their lives for the good of the heathen. Expend the funds at once—pay them into societies already at work and who have the men. Is it not sin to keep funds unemployed, and though they may be drawing a little interest, what comparison does that bear, with the importance of being immediately employed to send the message of life to men so spiritually dead.

Moreover, we are not in a position to sustain an entire mission. We have not the funds; what inducements, in shape of support, can we hold out to any person who might otherwise feel disposed to become a foreign missionary? This is a real objection—it was one of the objections of bro. A. Crawley. He saw we had not the funds, and stated it to us.

Neither have we the required knowledge, the knowledge especially needed, that arising from experience. The result of which is, uneconomical expenditure, and positive loss. This is seen in our late missionary operations; when brother Burpe returned in consequence of ill health, having no persons to look after the property there, it had to be sold at a loss. Older and longer established societies, and understanding better the nature of missionary operations, receiving our funds, could expend them to much better advantage, by which the same amount would accomplish more good. This known want of knowledge would militate against success in seeking for a missionary or missionaries of our own. It has done so already, and brother Crawley felt and expressed this in his case.

On the other hand it is argued, the report suggests the only feasible way of arriving at the object desired, ultimately to be accomplished, that of foreign missionary operation. It

seems not to be anticipated, that we shall never have such an organization, that we shall always remain in ignorance, or never be in a position to carry on intelligently or successfully such organization.

As a matter of prudential expediency we should not expend our present funds for any other object than that ultimately aimed at.

But in the arguments is there not an undue inappreciation of our ability to conduct a foreign enterprise? We have learned by the past, we possess or can obtain all necessary information.

Moreover, if we relinquish the object,—that of having an organization of our own, the churches will most naturally loose sight of this important department of christian duty and benevolence; the interest will fail, and the result will be disastrous. For in no way can we awaken the missionary interest so effectually, as referring to what belongs to ourselves, and depends upon our own exertion.

With this object immediately before us we shall be able to raise any needed amount of funds; whereas, remove the operation from under our control, the funds with the interest will decrease.

An addition to the report is proposed, to the effect that until such time as a missionary be obtained, the funds on hand be contributed, for missionary purposes, to some society already engaged in this work.

This was on the other hand considered tantamount to giving up the object; and if the object be not relinquished, what consistency is there in parting with the necessary means by which it is to be obtained? The question on the amendment is put, and lost. The report passes. The decision announced by the moderator is appealed from—the chair is sustained.

A very respectable minority doubted the wisdom of the course. Meanwhile, the question is to be settled by the Convention. The decision arrived at was only of one Association out of five. At the coming Convention the question will likely come up.

It is a very important subject, let there be a full meeting. Churches, send your delegates, and let all appointed attend. In the many counsellors the proper course may appear.

Much prayer should be offered, that true wisdom may be imparted. The heathen, while we are hesitating, are dying, unblest with the gospel. O let us not slumber any longer.

UNUS.

[We regret that the above did not reach us in time to appear before the meeting of Convention.—Ed.]

For the Christian Messenger.

Home Mission Report.

To the Halifax Domestic Missionary Board.

DEAR BRETHREN,

In compliance with your request, after the close of the term at College, I proceeded immediately to the field designated by you for missionary labour. On Sabbath, June 22nd, in fulfilment of appointments made previous to my coming, preached twice in Halifax and once at Dartmouth. During this week was engaged in making acquaintance with the people at Dartmouth, Tuft's Cove and Bedford, and in adjusting plans for subsequent operations. On the next Sabbath preached in the morning and evening at Bedford, and in the afternoon at Tuft's Cove.

Having now surveyed the field to which I was recommended to confine my labors, I made arrangements to preach on the morning of each Sabbath at Dartmouth, in the afternoon at Tuft's Cove, and in the evening at Bedford, also on each Tuesday evening at Bedford and on each Friday evening at Dartmouth. The former part of each week I assigned for visiting among the families at Bedford. Thursday to be similarly spent at Tuft's Cove and the latter part of the week at Dartmouth. This plan of operations I have followed, with few exceptions, during the term of my service. On three Sabbath mornings supplied the pulpit at the North End of Halifax, as directed by members of the Board, and the week before the last of my service was spent in a tour to Lawrencetown, in compliance with the repeated requests of persons from that vicinity. But constant rains on four days of this week prevented my performing all I had desired. However, preached twice publicly, and when the weather would permit, from house to house.

It were highly gratifying to report greater