

The Week of Prayer, 1864.

The Evangelical Alliance have issued the annual address for the week of prayer. It is as follows:—

PROPOSED WEEK OF SPECIAL PRAYER THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.—JANUARY 3-10, 1864.

Christians of all lands are again affectionately invited to observe a week of special and united prayer at the beginning of the New Year.

For four preceding years the commencement of each has been thus hallowed. In almost every country, in every quarter of the globe, Christians have met to present one offering of thanksgiving to our covenant God, and to plead with Him for blessings both for the church and for the world.

It is encouraging to know that their prayers have been graciously answered. The Lord has been in the midst of His people gathered together in His name. They who have watched the progress of God's providence, and who have faith to discern His good hand in passing events, cannot fail to acknowledge that, notwithstanding the audacity of infidelity, the past four years have been remarkable for the very blessings sought for in earnest and united prayer. Amongst these may be named—the power of the Holy Spirit manifest in religious awakening and revival; the progress of the Gospel in heathen and nominally Christian lands; the emancipation of slaves in many countries; the shaking of Papal and Pagan powers; the Christian activity that has carried the Gospel to the neglected masses of our great cities; and the triumphs of truth in many places over various forms of error.

Therefore let Christians again plead before God, agreeing on earth as touching the things they should ask, remembering the promise, "It shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven."

The following topics are suggested as suitable for a prominent place in the exhortations and intercessions of the successive days:—

SUNDAY, Jan. 3.—Sermons: Subject—The work of the Holy Spirit, and our Lord's words on agreement in prayer.

MONDAY, Jan. 4.—Penitential confession of sin, and the acknowledgment of personal, social, and national blessings, with supplications for Divine mercy through the atonement of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

TUESDAY, Jan. 5.—For the conversion of the ungodly: for the success of missions among Jews and Gentiles; and for a Divine blessing to accompany the efforts made to evangelise the unconverted of all ranks and classes around us.

WEDNESDAY, Jan. 6.—For the Christian church and ministry; for Sunday-schools and all other Christian agencies, and for the increase of spiritual life, activity, and holiness in all believers.

THURSDAY, Jan. 7.—For the afflicted and oppressed: that slavery may be abolished, that persecution may cease, and that Christian love may expand to the comfort and relief of the destitute in all lands.

FRIDAY, Jan. 8.—For nations: for kings, and all who are in authority—for the cessation of war, for the prevalence of peace, and for the holy observance of the Sabbath.

SATURDAY, Jan. 9.—Generally for the large outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the revival and extension of pure Christianity throughout the world.

SUNDAY, Jan. 10.—Sermons: Subject—The Christian church: its unity, and the duty and desirableness of manifesting it.

JAMES DAVIS, Secretary. HERMANN SCHMETTAU, Foreign Sec.

Correspondence from Jamaica.

The following encouraging indications of moral improvement in this free British Colony are from the Freeman's Correspondent in that island:—

Jamaica, September 25.

We are going to set our house in order at last! at any rate, we are going to try. You know those Baptist missionaries in Jamaica have always been very meddlesome kind of gentlemen. They can't let people alone; that is to say, they can't let alone their evil doings, without either denouncing them, or trying to correct them, or both. Now you are not altogether ignorant of what the state of society used to be. Well, it is mending; and I am strongly of opinion that the moral and social improvement of what we call here the upper classes—I am not sure what you would call them—is keeping full pace with that of the lower. It will be a grandly auspicious time for Jamaica when they get right ahead; and just now our worthy lieutenant-governor is whipping them up to the winning-post in capital style. It will do your eyes good to read what he writes. But don't let me forget the Baptist missionaries! Know, then, that for several years past the Jamaica Baptist Union has had the temerity to pass resolutions in no measured terms deprecating of the appointment of immoral persons to Government situations. Last year a memorial on the subject was sent to the governor; and I am not going to tell you in what terms it was greeted by some not very far from the governor's person, nor yet of the curt acknowledgment which it received. However, this year it was resolved to bring the subject under the notice of the Colonial Office at home in an address to his Grace the Duke of Newcastle. But, of course, no one here supposes that any influence can have thereby been exerted in high places; only we do take courage

and rejoice to see that the initiatory steps have been taken for the accomplishment of our wishes. His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor has just put forth a document which cannot fail to tell most beneficially on the interests of morality throughout the colony. The following is the notice, which appeared in *The Gazette* on the 25th of August:—

"Gov. Sec. Office, 25th Aug., 1863.

"The Lieutenant-Governor directs it to be notified for general information that for the future no persons will be placed on the list of candidates for employment in the public service, unless the applications are accompanied (in addition to any other testimonials) by a certificate from a minister of religion, or other trustworthy person of sufficient position and reputation, stating that 'he has had the opportunity of knowing the character, conduct, and mode of life, of such candidate for the period of — years, and that he conscientiously believes the said candidate to be strictly honest, sober, and moral in his conduct and habits.'"

"Any persons whose names are already on the list of candidates for employment, and who wish to have them continued there, are requested to send the certificate required above without delay.

"When an officer, already in public employment, is known to be discrediting the service, and to be setting an evil example to those around him, by leading an immoral life, such conduct will be regarded as a bar to promotion.

"By command, "HUGH W. AUSTIN, Gov. Sec."

This is unquestionably a move in the right direction. Yet we were not without our fears lest it should prove a mere form and be allowed to remain inoperative. Great, then, was our satisfaction to see this notification followed up by a circular addressed to the heads of departments calling their attention to the notice in *The Gazette*, and stating that it is to be considered a standing instruction that they are never to recommend to the Governor for promotion any one whom they have reason to believe to be given either to intemperate or immoral habits, and that his Excellency regards it as the duty of the head of every department to make himself acquainted with the general character and conduct of all the subordinate officers serving under him.

A new doctrine in Jamaica morality this! Heretofore in Government offices, on sugar estates, and in almost every other position, the doctrine has been, "Heads of departments, planting proprietors, attorneys, and others, have nothing whatever to do with the character of their subordinates"; and even up till now the veriest beasts in licentiousness have held Government appointments. Let us hope that this new Government regimen will help to bring about a salutary revolution in social morality in every relation. It is especially gratifying to observe that the executive is being well sustained in the course which has been inaugurated. Only one of our island papers has dared to call in question the proceeding; and even that has had to yield to the force of public opinion by qualify its statements. With this one disreputable exception, the whole press of the colony has commended the fidelity and boldness of the Governor. In some instances individual congregations, and in others associated churches, have united in giving formal expression to their grateful sentiments to his Excellency in having thus cast the weight of his influence into the scale in favour of the religion and morality of the country.

The continued low price of the staple produce—sugar—is sinking the hearts of the planters yet lower and lower. In some districts an attempt has been made to reduce the wages of the people from one shilling to ninepence a day; but I do not think it will succeed.

Cotton cultivation is beginning to give promise of becoming a means of developing the riches of the soil, and in some measure of compensating for failure in productions to which the planter has been so blindly wedded. Several experiments are in progress; and some of them give fair promise of success. A company has been formed in Kingston called, "The Kingston Cotton Company." This is purely experimental; and is therefore on a small scale, the shares being only one hundred at 5s. each. But it meets with every encouragement, and seems likely to demonstrate that many of the waste lands around the city may be turned to profitable account. The experiment of the Jamaica Cotton Company in England might have proved a success, but for iniquitous mismanagement. I trust, however, even now, it may recover from its embarrassments. Upwards of 300 acres are already under cultivation; and from thirty of these, which commenced bearing in July, 1,000lbs. of cotton per week are now being gathered. The districts in which this experiment in cotton cultivation is being made, once like a fruitful garden, is one of the wildest I know,—bush, bush, bush greeting the eye on every side for many miles. Yet there is a large population, living from hand to mouth upon their provision grounds, and shut out from all the stirring and civilising influences of extended enterprise. The demand for cotton may yet save Jamaica from utter prostration, and help it on a new course of agricultural and commercial prosperity.

Among other indications of life and progress, I may mention the prospect of our having, through the enterprise of a mercantile firm in Kingston, a coasting steamer, to ply between Kingston and Montego Bay, calling at the intermediate ports on the north side. It is said that the ship will be connected with the Liverpool line of merchant steamers. A direct line of steam communication for both passengers and merchandise will thus be established between the north side and the mother country. This will be a great boon.

It is difficult to speak of the state of religion; there is much to cheer, there is much to depress. Exclusions from church fellowship in many churches are afflictively numerous; and missions are very few. Christian ministers hang down their heads, and the faithful mourn, yet the thickest darkness precedes the dawn. Our faith and hope are in God; and in no part of the world are there brighter examples of the Christian life and character than may be found in Jamaica. Next year will be our jubilee. May it prove a year of spiritual blessing.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Autobiographical Sketch.

By REV. CHARLES TUPPER, D. D.

CHAPTER III.

CONVERSION, AND ENTRANCE ON THE MINISTRY.

(No. 6.)

In addition to my continued fearful apprehensions of having committed the unpardonable sin, I suffered much disquietude with reference to the doctrine of Election. This doctrine always appeared to me so clearly revealed in Scripture that, though strongly opposed to it, I could never adventure to deny it. My view, however, of the nature and design of it was incorrect; as is doubtless that of persons averse to it in general. According to my view, God had designed by predestination and election to limit the exercise of mercy to a very small number, and to place an insurmountable barrier in the way of the salvation of the mass of mankind. But the Scriptures plainly teach us, that the Divine purpose does in reality secure the holiness and happiness of a vast multitude, while it presents no obstacle to the salvation of any. Thus the Apostle assigns a reason why God "predestinated" people "to be conformed to the image of His Son," namely, "that He might be the First-born among many brethren." In like manner Christ says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." So Paul elsewhere speaks of "them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." But to obedient believers he says, "We are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." (Rom. viii. 29. Jno. vi. 37. 2 Thes. ii. 10-14.)

I was strongly tempted, as undoubtedly many others have been, to pervert the doctrine in this manner. If I am elected, I shall certainly be saved: if not, I must inevitably be lost. It is therefore useless for me to be concerned about my salvation, or to use any means for securing it. But I could not rest satisfied upon this ground. In order, therefore, to evade this temptation, I determined not to receive the doctrine, or at least to put it out of mind as much as possible. For this purpose I endeavored to avoid reading anything concerning it. Accordingly, when I met with passages of Scripture in which it is taught, I would close the Bible, and turn to some other part of it. This I did repeatedly. At length on an occasion of this kind the thought occurred to me, that if I were ever savingly converted, it must be to that God who was the Author of the Bible; and that consequently it was altogether inconsistent for me to reject or evade any truth which He had seen fit to reveal. This course was therefore henceforth abandoned.

I was aware, moreover, that if election were discarded, the incontrovertible part of God's foreknowledge might be wrested in the same manner. I could not doubt that it was as well known then to the omniscient JEHOVAH whether I would be in heaven or in hell after my death, as it would be subsequently to that event. As He foresaw it, so it unquestionably would come to pass. On this ground, I might with equal consistency—none at all—relinquish all efforts to obtain salvation.

But either of these views would be equally applicable with reference to the preservation of natural life. If Deity had determined that I should live to old age, or had foreseen that I would die in youth, no means could prevent my early death. I would not, however, from this consideration act so irrationally as to swallow a dose of deadly poison, or neglect any means adapted to preserve my life. Surely, then, it would be madness in the extreme for me, from any such mode of reasoning, to rush on in sin and impenitence, which would as evidently be fatal to the soul as poison would be to the body. In

all secular matters the intimate connexion between ends and means is recognized and acted upon, irrespective of any conjecture as to the Divine purpose or foreknowledge. In proportion as the concerns of eternity are more important than those of time, would the inconsistency and folly be greater under any pretext to neglect the former than the latter. In a word, I perceived that the secret purpose of God, though undeniable, could be no rule of action for me. So Moses says, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us." (Deut. xxix. 29.)

Though these considerations may not all have occurred to me at that time, yet several of these certainly did; and I was aware of the stubborn and awful fact, plainly made known in the Oracles of inspiration, that should I live and die unregenerate, impenitent, destitute of faith in Christ, and without holiness, I must perish for ever. I therefore clearly saw, that it was of the utmost importance for me to take care not to "neglect so great salvation," and to "give diligence to make my calling and election sure."

An increased knowledge of the depravity of my nature tended to reconcile me to the doctrine of Divine sovereignty. I had often in mind wrangled with Deity because, as I imagined, He had not afforded me an equal chance of obtaining salvation with some others. But by this time I had become so far acquainted with the plague of my own heart, through repeated failures in my attempts to recommend myself to the Divine favor by improvements in my conduct, that I perceived, if God did not save me by His own rich, free, and sovereign grace, I would undoubtedly complete my own destruction. It was evident to me that everlasting misery was my just desert, both for my transgressions of God's law, and my rejection of the gospel of Christ; and that my only hope of salvation must arise from a consideration of the infinite and unchangeable goodness and mercy of the Most High. All thoughts, therefore, either of denying or wresting the doctrine were abandoned. As a guilty, depraved, and helpless sinner, justly condemned, and ready to perish, I must look to the Lord Jesus Christ alone for deliverance from the wrath to come. If I were lost, it would be to the glory of God's justice; if saved, "to the glory of His grace."

For the Christian Messenger.

Correspondence from Burmah.

The following was received from our brother Rev. A. R. R. Crawley, in Burmah by the last English mail. It is a continuation of the journal which he gave us some time since—in C. M., Oct. 7th—that, however, being his notes of a missionary tour in the month of June, while this affords a glance at him while at his work "at home."

ZAYAT JOURNAL.

JULY 7th.—On arriving at the Zayat, found a man taking shelter from the rain on the steps. I invited him in, when he continued standing—an inexcusable rudeness, according to Burman etiquette. Told him to sit down. Taking no notice of my request, he leaned across the table, opened a book, and began to read aloud. Seeing what sort of character I had to deal with, quietly shut up the book, and told him again to sit down, adding that I wished to talk with him. But I had again to direct him to be seated before he complied. After a few remarks, directing his attention to the necessity of diligent inquiry, in order to discover truth—the following conversation ensued.

Burman.—I think my God is true, and you think yours is true;—now what is the difference?

We don't think—we know our God is the only true God.

How do you know there is an Eternal God? Listen to me carefully and I will tell you. Look at that chair—what would you infer from the fact of its existence?

I would infer that there must be some one to sit on the chair.

And yet it is conceivable that a chair might exist, without there being any one to sit on it. It is not conceivable that the chair could be without a maker—is it?

No, the chair must have a maker.

How do you know that? what evidence have you?

Evidence! the chair of course.

Very well. You asked me how I know there is a God who created all things. I answer because there are created things—just as you say, you know there is a chair.

O no! the cases are not the same. The sun,