

and disciples immediately after Jesus was taken up from them into heaven, it is said, the mother of Jesus was there.

There is something most impressive in the thought that this is the last mention made of the mother of Jesus in the inspired record; we take leave of her, and she takes leave of us at a prayer meeting. So far from being an object of worship, she meets with one accord in prayer and supplication with those with whom she now meets with one accord in praise before the throne. We think much of the last act of those whom we shall here know no more for ever. When we hear of a departed friend we naturally revert to the last place in which we met him, the last intercourse we had with him, and the last account we heard of him. We are pleased when our last account we heard of him. We are pleased when our last association has been in harmony with our hope of the future respecting him; and are pained if it should not have been all that we could have desired. We cannot help associating him, be it right or wrong, with the last time, the last word, the last act in our experience respecting him. Well is it if the last time we saw him was in the house of God, and especially at a prayer-meeting. When the curtain of revelation fell upon her, the mother of Jesus was there.

Who should attend prayer-meetings? Whole families as far as home duties will allow, "Mary the mother of Jesus and with his brethren." The mention of his brethren in such close connection with his mother suggests that they were real or half brethren. Thus on a former occasion it was said, "His mother and his brethren stood without desiring to speak with him." This was said at a time when his disciples were surrounding him. On another occasion we read, "Neither did his brethren believe in him," which could not be said of his disciples. None could know whether Jesus had brethren and sisters according to the flesh better than his fellow townsmen, and what say they? "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary; and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us?" The mention of cousins, or other near relations, would scarcely be in better keeping with the real aim and force of these enquiries. As Mary was known as his mother, James, and Joses and Simon, and Judas were known as his brethren. These were his brethren who did not at first believe on him. To this he alluded when, in reply to the above enquiries, he said, "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house." He admits that there were those of his own house who did not honour him, which might naturally have excited general surprise. These could not be Joseph and Mary, and must therefore have been his real brethren. Jesus can sympathize with those who have unbelieving brethren. Yet he had doubtless often prayed for them, and he did not pray in vain. Here is Mary, the mother of Jesus, at the first prayer-meeting, after the ascension, "and with his brethren." How delightful for mothers to see their children with them on such occasions! The brethren of Christ could not have been saved by virtue of their natural relation to him; how, then, can the privilege of pious kindred become the salvation of others? There is more hope concerning them from attending the same prayer-meeting than from dwelling in the same house. How many families attend the preaching of the word not one member of which is ever seen at a prayer-meeting! How often, of whole families that attend the Sabbath services, one representative is deemed amply sufficient for a prayer-meeting! Would we know how many of a family should attend prayer-meetings? Take one more glance at the model meeting to which we have alluded. There were not apostles merely, with the women, but Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brethren!

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, DECEMBER 1, 1869.

DECEMBER.

The last month of the year has come again. Time with its ceaseless wing is hurrying us onward. How short the period since we had the closing month of last year. Although it has seemed so short, yet each passing month has been fraught with important events. So far as Time is concerned, we may record the transactions of month after month, and can calculate on

the advancement, or otherwise, of our temporal affairs, but it is not so easy to appreciate the position we occupy in spiritual matters, whether we have made a proper use of opportunities for getting good and doing good, whether we have been progressing in the highest objects of human life. "The harvest is past and the summer is ended." Reader, we trust the remainder of the text may not be affirmed of you. If when thinking of your own case you must say "we are not saved," we would suggest that the year has not yet closed. May it be that before it is quite passed into eternity, you may be led to say "Come all ye that fear God and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul."

REV. CHARLES M. GRANT ON THE LONDON BAPTIST MISSIONARY COMMITTEE.

We informed our readers two weeks since, very briefly, of the discussion which had been called forth in Great Britain by the proposal to make some change in sending Missionaries to foreign stations, especially to India, and stated that in future they would prefer to send out single men for two years, first, for the purpose of ascertaining whether they could endure the climate, before marrying. We had not then seen a letter from the Rev. Charles M. Grant, formerly of St. Andrew's Church, Halifax, now of Calcutta, which appears in the "Monthly Record of the Church of Scotland in Nova Scotia."

Mr. Grant appears to have been incorrectly informed, respecting the action of the London Committee, and imagines that the proposal is a very different thing from what it really is. He indulges in a strain of remark but little respectful to the body of whom he writes, or creditable to himself as a discreet, prudent man.

We copy from the commencement of Mr. Grant's letter, as follows:

"The 'dovecoats' of the Baptist Missionaries in India have lately been, and still are, in a state of flutter, owing to an 'Eagle,' in the shape of a despatch from their London Committee, that has flown over, and caused mighty agitation. The said Committee is evidently scornful of the teachings of history, and believes that a nation ought to be born in a day if only the attendant mid-wives do their duty; and applying this belief to the case of India, are in a state of amazement that this mighty empire has not already been brought to the Christian birth. The fault must lie, not in a prayerless Church at home—not in the opposition of the carnal heart—not in the might of a heathenism strong in the social customs of the people, and the prestige of the reign of thousands of years,—not in the fact that long years—aye, it may be, even hundreds of years, may be required to mould India according to God's plan of working, even as hundreds of years were required to mould the Roman empire with one half the population and a mythology possessing one half the popular hold,—not in any or all of these causes is the real cause to be found, but in the Missionaries, and the Missionaries alone. The Committee solemnly declare their belief that had their Missionaries been more 'self-denying,'—had they gone forth in poverty and weakness—had they only been 'Apostolic'—had they only been St. Pauls—then their Missions would have been as gigantic a success as their enemies say they have been a failure. Nay, still further, the Committee rather hint, that had their Missionaries only entered into a competition with the native Fakirs and Sunyasis, and starved themselves, and gone about with emaciated bodies, and matted locks, and persons encrusted with filth, things would have been different."

This, and much more in the same style, Mr. Grant appears to suppose would please his friends in this province. But we should not mind that if what he had written were resting on a truthful basis. He states some things which any sensible person ought to perceive requires no refutation at all, it being so monstrous. And yet on this, he founds the whole of his animadversions. Here it is: he says—

"Seriously here is the proposal; men are to be called for, who are unmarried, and who pledge themselves, as long as they remain in connection with the Baptist Church as missionaries, to remain unmarried, who will come out here getting their daily food in any way they like, but who are to get no salary from their Home Committee. They may live or die; all the Committee will do will be to say 'be ye clothed and be ye fed,' in the style that is not commanded by St. James. They must live by Faith; they must believe that God will feed them in order that Christians (?) at home may not be called on for such large contributions; they must expect that the heathen among whom they labour will share their rice along with them; or else must determine on some trade at which they will labor and support themselves."

Before making such statements as Mr. Grant has done respecting a body occupying the position of the Executive Committee of the London Baptist Missionary Society, he should, at least, have ascertained, first of

all, if what he had been heard on the subject, were true.

We are much grieved at what Mr. Grant has said, having entertained towards him personally the kindest feelings of friendship and respect; for, by making these inaccurate statements, he has laid himself open to have his statements on other matters called in question. We have before us abundance of material to shew that he is greatly in error; probably he has been misinformed. We regret that we cannot place the whole before our readers, and the readers of the *Monthly Record* also, so as to correct the wrong impression they may have received from Mr. Grant's statements.

The *Missionary Herald*, (September), the organ of the Baptist Missionary Society, referring to what has been written by some of the missionaries in India, says:

"We beg to say that it has never been stated here that Missions in India are a failure, nor do we believe they have been. Their success may not have been equal to our expectations, but when the peculiar difficulties which had to be encountered and overcome, such as did not meet the Apostles and preachers in primitive times, are duly considered, and the small amount of the agency employed also taken into the account; there is more cause for wonder and gratitude, than for lamentation and complaint."

When the resolutions which the Committee have passed are seen by the brethren in India, much of the misapprehension which has arisen will pass away. No unkind reflections on them were ever, for one moment, intended, and the agency proposed to be employed is, after all, supplemental to that which exists, and is not proposed, in any way, to interfere with, or set aside, that now in operation. And surely, considering the growing expense of living in India, for which our missionaries are in no way responsible, and which they cannot help, it is the duty of the Committee to see whether an agency less costly, and yet efficient to carry on the work, albeit in a somewhat different form, may not be found. This duty becomes all the more imperative since, as Mr. Lewis states, the present incomes of the brethren, though lately increased, are "really very much inferior in value to the smaller amount received by them twenty years ago."

Much difference of opinion has arisen on the question of the marriage of missionaries prior to their going out. It is impossible to enter fully into that question here, or to state at length the reasons which have induced the Committee to pass a resolution on the subject. Enough to say that the rule now passed only contemplates a limited time, and that the necessity which existed in former days for a missionary to take his wife from England, does not now exist. Brethren in India, who went out unmarried, and others who have had to lament the loss of their wives, have found there, ladies who are among the most useful of their class. Born in the country acquainted with the languages, and accustomed to the people from their youth up, they have advantages which a lady going from this country can hardly ever, to the same extent, possess.

The proposed employment of a more "mobile agency,"—one freed, for a time at least, "from all those ties which a family and a permanent habitation involve, who shall be prepared to encounter the fatigues and privations which an active and wandering life may entail," has called forth a great diversity of opinion. It has been supposed by some that the Committee intend to institute an order of *missionary celibates*. They intend nothing of the kind. They wish to try an experiment, and to see if men cannot be found, full of the needed ardour and enterprise, to venture upon it. They do not say for how long. This must be left to experience. If they fail, they will have this comfort, that they have tried to do what seemed to them right and good. If, by God's blessing, they succeed, they will rejoice in adding another force, not different in kind, but simpler in its mode of action, to the agencies now in question."

An open meeting of the Committee was held on the subject at Leicester, during the recent session of the Baptist Union there which was attended by about two hundred and fifty brethren. The Treasurer was unable to attend, but wrote a letter, of which the following is one paragraph:

"The policy thus suggested was not regarded by us as substitutionary, in its practical development, but auxiliary to existing methods. We did not contemplate supplanting these, but adding to them, save where the circumstances of any given district might be found to render a change of system desirable. The resolutions, generally embodying our views, leave the Society at perfect liberty to walk in the old paths where it appears expedient to continue in them, or to avail itself of the proposed new form of agency when brethren so offer themselves, in willing devotion to the service of our Lord and Master."

It is pretty evident from these quotations, that the reflections made by Mr. Grant are altogether uncalled for, and not such as a Missionary in another denomination should have chosen to make, respecting a body whose predecessors were the first in sustaining modern christian missions in India.

Mr. Grant closes his letter by a kind and somewhat respectful word concerning the Baptist Missionaries. We should be unjust to him if we omitted to quote that as well as the very objectionable reflections he makes on the London Committee. He remarks:

It may be considered that I am saying too much about another denomination, but whilst I am about them, let me say a word as to all that I have heard and seen concerning these Missionaries, who have been so foully slandered by the very comfortable Committee to whom their Christian fame ought to have been dear.—The Baptists have always had reason to be proud of their foreign, especially their Indian Missionaries. Springing, as so many of them have done, from the lower ranks of society. [Is Mr. Grant from the upper stratum?] labouring under the misfortune of early defects in education, they have yet proved themselves Davids in the presence of the enemy—second to none in the Oriental scholarship,—their unwearied efforts have piled together—the pioneers in Bible translations, and perhaps the best vernacular preachers in India. I wish the same brushes might be employed in painting their Home Committee. We all know how they "nagged" the "Serampore three"—how they grieved Ward's affectionate nature, ruffled the calm even of Carey's temper, and by foul insinuation and open calumny, broke the heart of Marshman. The antecedents of the two bodies cannot fail to make outsiders suspect that now the Missionaries are right in the vehement protest they are making against the new resolutions. Do the Committee think, when they speak of their grief that Missions have not been more successful, that the grief is confined to them alone? How frequently we hear only grumbling from Home Churches and Committees! In this the Baptists are not singular. Again and again we have platform orators like Dr. Landels (and I could name his counterpart in our own Church) speaking as if all concern for the Messiah's kingdom were confined to those who stay at home, and as if the Missionaries, instead of receiving sympathy as the chief mourners, were only the criminals to receive all the blame. Do you think that all the grief of defeat is experienced by the men at home, and none by the faithful army in the field who have done all that men could do? Let the Churches pray and cease to grumble, and then they may expect a blessing, and then will the hands of their labourers be strengthened, and their hearts comforted. Do you think the mist-cloud never passes over our spirits? that our hands are never feeble, and require rather to be held up by the Church than to be pulled down, because converts do not pour in? Who giveth the increase? Not we, not you, but God. Ask Him, then, ye people that are faithful, so to strengthen us, that liberally we may plant ann water, and so to dispose your hearts to give that those who labour in heathen lands may double in number and be more mighty in spirit.

C. M. G.

Mr. Grant's information respecting the conduct of the Committee towards former Missionaries, is doubtless derived from the same source as that on which he now makes his insinuations. Such references as that to Dr. Landels, and "his counterpart in our own Church," are indicative of a spirit, not the most hopeful for mission work. We have placed these matters before our readers, not because we have any desire to parade Mr. Grant's ungenerous letter before the Nova Scotia public; but from a sense of duty to our English brethren, and for the purpose of correcting the errors sown broadcast amongst our Church of Scotland friends here, through the *Monthly Record*.

ONSLow BAPTIST CHURCH.

HALIFAX, Nov. 25th, 1869.

Dear Brother,—

In the last number of the *Christian Messenger*, I observe a Report of a Committee of the Onslow East Baptist Church, which perhaps requires at my hands as Clerk of the Eastern Association, some explanation.

1st. It is stated, "that in the year 1791, there was no Baptist Church existing in Onslow."

By the Minutes of the Eastern Association of 1866, it appears that 1791 was given as the date of organization of the Church at Onslow, and that Rev. W. G. Parker, was pastor, and Bro. John King was clerk.

2nd. As the P. E. I. Churches had formed themselves into a separate Association, during the past year, a revision of the list of Churches was necessary, and any "historical information" that might be furnished was deemed desirable.

Bro. Manning had charge of this part of the work, and, seeing that he is not at present in the province, I think I would be quite safe in saying, that he did not date the organization of Onslow West Church at 1791, through any desire to gratify "party spirit," but in *bona fide*. His authority being as I believe the Minutes of 1866.

I regret exceedingly, that any mistake should have occurred in the Minutes, to mar the happiness of the good brethren composing Onslow East Church.

I trust the members of said Church will accept the foregoing as a satisfactory explanation.

Yours truly,

E. C. SPINNEY.

P. S.—Your remarks in reference to the labor of the Clerk, &c., are most fitting and opportune.

Since the above came to hand we have received a communication from another correspondent, who says:

"The Church formed at Onslow, in 1791, was not a Baptist Church. It was of the Congregational or New-Light Order. The Baptist Church was formed in 1809, and Nathan Cleveland was the first pastor. That church has now become 'two bands,' each tracing its origin to 1809.

This we think may be a very proper and