

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE.

BASSEIN, Oct. 13th, 1871.

My Dear Mrs. Selden,—

Permit me again through you to communicate with the Societies at home. As you will perceive I have moved from Henthada to Bassein since I wrote last. Many things have led me to conclude that it was undoubtedly best for me to do so. I have learned the language more rapidly than I anticipated, and in Henthada there was no special call for my help, while in the Bassein Female Seminary there was great need, and every reason to suppose that if I did not come immediately to supply as well as I could Mrs. Carpenter's place, the school would be scattered and this most efficient and promising work very seriously hindered. As this work is entirely in the Karen language I felt that it would not hinder my progress to undertake it.

This decision arrived at was speedily put in execution. And a few days after the close of the school in Henthada, I embarked in a Burman boat, accompanied by the Henthada native teacher and his wife. In order to reach Bassein in time for the Pastor's Conference on the next week, I was obliged to leave on Saturday, and spend Sabbath in a Karen native village on the way. I had received urgent messages from both Mr. and Mrs. Carpenter to try to see the native teachers at this gathering, that they might have more confidence in me and so send their young women into school.

After several hours toiling against the strong current of the Irrawaddy we turned into a smaller stream which empties itself into the Bassein River, and about nine o'clock that night arrived at a Christian Karen village. "Perayin." A few weeks ago the river which has been unusually high this year, carried away their chapel, so they have been obliged to worship in a native house.

The pastor here is a very worthy man, but struggling with discouragement. He gathers the children and teaches them in his own house, since they have lost their chapel. His church are anxious to build another, but the rise of the river has destroyed their paddy, and they fear they will not be able to do much this year, though they will put up a small building. The Karens are very dependant on the paddy harvest, for it is almost their only resource.

The Sabbath morning came, breezy and bright, and the ripple of waves and rustle of leaves woke me early, so that I was ready to meet with them when the gong struck at six for morning prayers. They gathered from near and far, the women carrying their children, and coming at this early hour, as they were glad to do. Their pastor conducted the service, sitting on a mat at the back of the house, the women sitting round on the right, and the men on the left, myself the only occupant of a chair, and that brought up from the boat.

I enjoyed the service with these simple-hearted christians, and after shaking hands and talking with them awhile, we all separated for breakfast. They could not stay away long however, and as I went up to the house again about nine o'clock, the women and children gathered round me till I thought I would improvise a Sabbath School. Sending one little fellow for a Catechism, I asked them questions in Bible history here and there, till we came to "the old story, of Jesus and his love." One by one the women joined in and at last one old man forgot his age, in his interest and answered with them too. Then I told them the history of Christ's ascension, and how he would surely come again in like manner as they had seen him go. As I finished one woman said, "Our hearts are very happy as we listen, and our knowledge increases."

Soon the gong struck again for service, and we had an instructive sermon from the Henthada teacher on the words, "Be ye followers of me even as I also am of Christ."

At one o'clock about twenty women gathered for female prayer-meeting. They have one every week, and Karen mothers find comfort there as weary women often do at home.

After the evening service they gathered round to know if I would not sing. So we sang together for a while, and parted with mutual assurances of future remembrance.

Early Monday morning we were on our way again, and Tuesday at four P. M.,

arrived here. As to life in Bassein, I will tell you at some future time.

One word more, one of your Societies has sent me a special donation to be appropriated for school purposes as I thought best. I would rather my sisters would not send me money in this way; gather all the funds you can and place them in the hands of your Board, to be appropriated as the needs of the field require, but do not send funds to be appropriated in some certain way, and to accumulate uselessly or be spent needlessly. I will tell you know where I see real need, and then I have perfect confidence in the Board to supply it if practicable; but please do not send me out any money. I have not applied for. Look at the first article in the Macedonian for June, 1870, if you want to know what special donations amount to in Burma. Have sufficient confidence in your Board to allow them to control your funds as they are advised, by those whom you send out. I think this a matter of no small importance, and hope you will be able to see it in its true light.

Your Sister in Christ,
H. M. NORRIS.

For the Christian Messenger.

MENTAL CULTURE.

Mr. Editor,—

Passing by those malicious and withering lunges which you correspondent "Justitia" so cruelly makes in his article of last week, having as I have previously protested, no time to devote to personalities. I come to a statement of his which I wish fully stated and clearly understood. I am flattered by your correspondent of wilful falsehood and gross misrepresentation in asserting, as I did, that graduates of Colleges at the present time knew little or nothing about the Classics. "Justitia" simply denies the fact without giving a shadow of proof worth anything to a man of judgment, and so our two statements are balanced and I suppose I might leave it so. But I will suggest a convenient method of settling the matter. Let "Justitia" and me get together, and selecting a suitable classical scholar of the old school go forth with a copy of Caesar, as simple as any Latin I know of, and a copy of Xenophon's Memorabilia as simple as any Greek, and waiting on the graduates of Acadia College for the last four or five years, or by one we will present to each a passage from either of these authors, and if more than one out of ten can read it off with even decent fluency I will grant I have very wickedly and feloniously misrepresented modern graduates. And while I state this of Acadia's sons, I will say that it is my firm conviction that Acadia stands as high as any institution in the Province in its qualifications for a degree.

And while I make these seemingly disparaging statements in reference to the classical knowledge of our students permit me to pay a merit compliment to our Classical Professor, who I am bound to say exerts him self to the utmost in the endeavor to cultivate a love for classical literature in the minds of the Students; and I am sure I am sincere, Sir, when I affirm that the not a trifle indifference which these same students manifest in these studies, must be taken as overwhelming evidence of the great change of feeling in reference to this branch of learning; and is sufficient to show that no hot-house work, or galyanic battery can force a growth, or re-ignite to latent life, these withered shivered and dying systems of Classical Education.

I have no desire to pursue the argument in reference to the College Curriculum. Perhaps I met all the severest objections with which many of your correspondents have favored me. But I can only answer, as apology, that my motives, as far as I can analyze them, have been to a certain extent at least good. I am sincere in my belief that a reform is needed in the matter of our College Curricula. And I am quite confident that time only is required to bring about just such a state of things as I have contended for. I wish no radical movements, but a gradual healthy reform, and I am certain that the spirit of the age will bring about this in spite of all opposition. We see an awful sight of old fogyism in all ranks and conditions of men, and under all circumstances. There are always a few conservative to the fault will stick by old dead forms, and become the apologists of

dying quackeries. I always leave a margin for such parties, and am thus able to make allowance for any of the furious onslaughts of my opponents. If I have succeeded in any way in directing public attention to this important question, I shall not have written in vain.

One of your correspondents some weeks ago recommended that I cease writing on this subject, and do something for the College. There may have been force in his suggestion, but it is scarcely wise to give exclusive attention to any individual thing to the ignoring of everything else. But in all modesty I would assure your correspondents that I am trying to do a little every year to further the interests of our College. If every man in the denomination worth \$1,000, and over, were to give as much as I contribute every year an endowment would soon be raised. I only make these statements for the purpose of saving my ideas and views from any prejudice that might arise from the misconduct of the author of them.

I have a great deal more to say in support of my views on this interesting subject, but perhaps I have continued the discussion as long as it is profitable, and so I will stop for the present, holding myself in readiness, in failure of some more competent person to come forward as the opponent of logyism and the advoc of progress in this matter of the College Curriculum. As I promised in my last letter I will write *Finis* at the end of this—but not without thanking you, Sir, most cordially for the generous use of your columns which I have enjoyed in this discussion.

Very sincerely,
MODERN CULTURE.

Dec. 15th, 1872.

For the Christian Messenger.

FROM NEW YORK.

A GOOD FIVE MINUTES IN FULTON STREET—ONE MORNING'S FISHING IN THE COUNTRY—PRAYER FOR VICTORIA AND HER SON—COMMUNION BY CABLE—CURRENT CHRISTIAN LITERATURE.

New York, Dec. 14th, 1871.

A veteran lay missionary, a plain style of man, rose in the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting the other day (Dec. 8.) to relate one of his experiences in "testing the promises of God." Said he: I was visiting in the neighborhood of my early home, for a few days. Finding myself at leisure and at liberty, the first morning, I said to myself, now you are going a hunting or fishing to day: you might as well just go to work as if you was at home. I thought I wouldn't pick out an easy job, but would take up the hardest one on my mind, and that was, to go and see a gentleman of very high standing and abilities, a lawyer, whom I had never yet faithfully urged to repentance. I felt myself weak for such an interview; but I thought of the promise, "Them that honor me I will honor," and that promise I resolved to test.

On inquiring for the gentleman at his office, I found that he was not in. The gentleman who told me so, however, said that he could attend to the business just as well. I told him I was afraid not; but he insisted, said he was his partner, and wanted so much to do the business, that I thought I would let him try. So I told him what I had come for; admitting that he was equally concerned in it with his partner, and hoping that he still thought so himself.

He answered promptly, "I do. I have felt the deepest interest in this subject for more than a year; so much so that I have attended prayer-meetings, and lingered about until everybody had gone home and the lights were put out; but nobody ever said a word to me about religion. I have about concluded that there is nothing in it, or nobody that cares for me."

At this moment, a gay young fellow drove up to the door, and burst into the room. He wanted to know if the lawyer was ready for "that ride." Not now, said he gravely! sit down. He sat down, and we went on talking, and pretty soon he edged his chair up between us. I laid my hand on his shoulder and said to him: What I have been saying to this man is just as applicable to you. Perhaps so, said he; but I am a sceptic.

"A sceptic? and how long have you been a sceptic?"
"O, a number of years."
"Well, has it done you any good?"
"I don't know that it has."
"Do you expect that it will ever do you any good?"
"I can't say I do."
"Well then, if it has never done you any good, and is never going to, you wouldn't

suffer much loss by giving it up, would you?"

"No; but the difficulty is to get rid of it."

"Do you really want to get rid of it?"

"Yes, I do."

"Let us test that."—I drew a total abstinence pledge out of my pocket, laid it before him, and said, Will you sign that? He was under excitement from liquor even then. He took up the paper, and read it carefully through. Then he took

up a pen from the table, and signed his name to it. He was getting away from scepticism faster than I expected (see John vii. 17.) He next took a card out of his pocket and copied the pledge on it, his friend looked on with amazement, deeply affected, and signed the pledge also. It was a time for prayer. We went into an inner room, and turned the key. Before we came out, that young man had given his heart to God. As I bade him good morning, he had his hand on his heart and said, "I never felt so in all my life: I don't know what it means." "Why, how do you feel?" "O, I feel so strangely peaceful, I am perfectly happy." Not long after I heard that he was studying for the ministry. He is now a settled and very useful pastor.

As for the lawyer who attended to my business, I learned afterwards that the Senior partner, while pronouncing him the best-read lawyer of his age in the State, was only afraid he was getting a little too religious. So he was—according to the common notion of things. He is now a judge, and something more. Only a few days ago, I was riding on a railroad some hundreds of miles from here, and a newsboy came through with his papers. I bought one; hardly knowing why, for my pockets were full of papers that I hadn't read. I glanced over it, and the first item that caught my eye was an account of a sermon just preached in some neighboring locality, by this very partner, lawyer and judge. I felt satisfied that he was attending to my business.

But my business was not yet done with the senior partner. Some time after the first attempt I was again in that part of the country. I was riding in a street car in the evening, when a gentleman touched me on the shoulder. It was the distinguished lawyer I had set out to see on that morning; now more distinguished than ever, high not only in his profession but in public life. He asked me to call at his office the next morning. It was a good sign, for by this time he knew my business. I went, he read to me an article he had written for the local paper, in favor of a venerable pastor, of whom he had become a friend and supporter. His conversation showed serious impressions; but he was absorbed in many and important worldly affairs.

At a short distance, an evangelist was laboring with great success. With this old minister I attended the services and he engaged the evangelist to come and preach for him the next Sunday evening. It was with some hesitation he consented to it as an experiment. The indications of that evening would probably decide his course. I was there. After the sermon, the preacher cleared two of the front seats, and requested any who felt interested in salvation to occupy them. Nobody stirred. It was a new thing in that community, where a revival of religion could hardly be remembered by anybody. In vain the evangelist explained and urged and urged.

Right behind me sat the two daughters of the eminent lawyer, accomplished young ladies, of the highest social position of course. I turned about and said to the eldest one, Are you a christian? No, sir, said she, but I wish I was. "Then, why didn't you go forward?" "I would if any body else had." I turned to the youngest and asked the same questions, and got similar answers. She would have gone forward if her sister had. Now, said I, you would have gone if anybody else had, and you would go if your sister would. So now, regarding to that you can both go. Then the girls rose at once and went forward. Ten other persons immediately followed their example.

Of course the meeting had to be continued. A powerful revival followed, such as had never been known in the history of the church. The young ladies became devoted christians. Their father also was found among the inquirers, and was eventually reckoned among the converts. But somehow he failed to take a decided stand, and I fear the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches are choking the word, as yet.

I have told but a little of that morning's

business in the lawyer's office. In fact it is only begun, and eternity will never finish it. After fifty years in this service, I know that my work is now almost done. But not ended. No—here the voice wavered and broke, and after a moment he concluded in quivering accents—I shall leave more than three hundred that I know of, carrying on my business far better after I am gone.

About fifteen years ago, your correspondent took down from this man's lips another of his inimitable way-side interviews, with its blessed results, and published it under the title of "The price of a Ride." It went the rounds of the religious Press in both hemispheres, in a career of manifest usefulness. A second lesson of like character, and still more remarkable, may this story of humble Christian fidelity and divine grace go as far as the former, and "Provoke very many."

The Returned Church Board of Publication have just issued a small volume of recent incidents in the Fulton Street Prayer meeting, from the reports of Rev. L. G. Bingham, who has been the chief chronicler for the books already published on this subject, under different editors. The present volume, like its predecessor, "The Noon Prayer Meeting," is edited by Rev. I. W. Chambers, D. D. It is entitled "Hours of Prayer," is of the most convenient size for Sabbath School libraries or for handing to a friend to read, and in either way, it is adapted by its various and striking illustrations of Divine grace, to do much good to souls.

There has been much prayer in Fulton Street for the afflicted English Queen and for the Prince of Wales. His lingering tenacity of life and returning hope of recovery, though faint, at the moment while I write, have astonished all the world. If God should, after all, restore him to life, and make him again apparent heir to an earthly throne, it may well be that he will have learned, through this awful and merciful experience, to know the Hearer of Prayer. The following dispatch was forwarded by cable to-day, through Cyrus W. Field, Esq., who is now in London, to the Royal Family and the British Press:

"The Fulton Street Prayer-meeting and other praying assemblies in America unite with the Queen and people of England in daily supplications to Almighty God for the life and salvation of the Prince of Wales, Fulton Street Chapel, New York, 12 M. Dec. 14, 1871."

Our most evangelical Monthly has been sadly taken in by one of its foreign "stars" the author of "Wilfrid Cumbermeade." I imagine Dr. Holland will hardly take another serial from George MacDonald on trust. A sort of deistical Universalism pervades the story referred to, and seems indeed to urish its main purpose. The un-religious element is not only pronounced and prominent, it is also exceedingly bitter; above all, in the forthcoming January instalment. The god of this writer appears to be an imaginary being of infinite good nature, complacently smiling all around on good and evil indiscriminately, and intolerant only of such as dread and declare a judgment to come: in short, a large-sized George MacDonald. The morality can be hardly better than the theology of a writer to whom the death of a suicide and an atheist yields no better moral than a sentimental assumption that he is happy in eternity. The moral sentiment of the story, which is only too abundant, alternates between the loose and the mawkishly super-fine. The egotism is enormous, and the verses are inexcusable. Meanwhile, Dr. Holland's destructive criticism in the editorial department annihilates the "slim religion" vaunted in the Atlantic for such writers as these, and smites their school of heartless culture and false sentiment, hip and thigh. I have seen a new editorial on "The Faults of Culture," of which I will get and send you a proof, if possible, with this. It is a much needed exposure of the selfishness of the miserly *dilettanti*, the parasites of culture, who cherish self development as others cherish gold, for its own sake; making it a man's immediate business in the world to elevate himself, whereas Christianity makes it his direct business to elevate others.

This January number of Scribner, I judge from advance sheets, will prove a rich surprise to the appreciative reader. In the popular quality of readability, or amusing variety, it has not been surpassed; while as literature also, it has rarely been equalled on the whole by any number of an American Magazine, and in illustration, never, unless by its November predecessor, "H. H." (Mrs. Helen Hunt) and Mrs. A. D. Whitney, each contribute poetry such as does not appear in