

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

WITHHOLDING MORE THAN IS MEET.

No. III.

"There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."—Prov. ii. 24.

A worthy deacon of a Baptist Church, lately deceased at a very advanced age, related to the writer some years ago the following incident of his own personal experience.

There had been an extensive Revival in the Church to which he belonged. All winter they had been having good meetings, and a great deal, as usual on such occasions, had been said about "not being our own, but the Lord's, and about consecrating body and soul and possessions and all to his service and glory," and the worthy brother thought that in using such expressions he and his brethren really meant what they said, and were not merely getting off something fine to say. And so when Spring came, and a move was being made to collect the monies usually forwarded to the Association, it occurred to him that now was an opportunity to test their sincerity, and that they would present something really worth while, and not the usual miserable apology for a collection. He would himself put down a sovereign, and the rest giving at the same rate a sum worth sending would be made up. Full of the project and joyful at the anticipated result, he took the first opportunity to lay the proposal before the brethren. But alas, he had reckoned without his host. The proposal met no kindred response, but was received with a very cold shoulder. In their warm rousing addresses the brethren had never meant that their purse strings should be touched. They could pray, sing collection hymns, and make speeches, but they had no idea of giving except on a very stunted scale; and they clearly intimated to him that he was wild. This was a damper. It took the wind terribly out of his sails. He concluded he was wild, and so contented himself with giving a half sovereign instead of a whole one.

But a voice within whispered in gentle admonition. The Rule is, "Every man as he proposeth in his heart so let him give," and not proportion your thank offerings according to other's ideas of what is fit and purper. An inward monitor, and he thought it was the Holy Spirit prompting him, said: "You have devoted the whole of that money to the Lord, and if you keep it back you will be the loser." But alas, he listened to an opposite spirit, and "kept back part of the price." And what then? Why wait a moment and I will tell you what then. The time came for turning the young cattle back into the woods or out into the road, (I forget which,) when they wandered "away back where they had never thought of going before," (these words I remember very distinctly,) and a fine steer got into the mire and died. And said he "the first thing I thought of when I discovered the loss was that half sovereign which had been kept back after having been prayerfully devoted to the cause of God, and I determined at once to pay it." But we all know how good impressions, if we do not act upon them promptly and rigidly, and especially if we allow ourselves to argue and debate the matter, and more especially when the question in such cases is between conscience and inclination,—we all know I say how soon the good impulse dies. He postponed the observance of his vow until next day. He slept over it, and in the morning he concluded that the small piece of gold had perhaps had nothing to do with the matter, and that God himself had probably had nothing to do with the matter; that it just came in the course of events—cattle are always liable to get mired; he must take his chance with others, and so he concluded to keep his hold on the small piece of gold. It was not quite easy after all to do this. It cost him a pang. A pretty loud voice was heard calling out to him that so long as he kept it back God would take away his property and he would be a serious loser. But he was deaf to the admonition.

And so the time came for attending the Association, and he went, and they had "a good time," and he enjoyed himself well, and came home, and lo! the bears had been among his sheep and had killed several of the fattest and best. This was enough. He determined to keep the piece of gold no longer. "I took it," said he

"to brother Parker, and told him to do what he liked with it."

I need not make any lengthened comments on this incident. Most assuredly the excellent brother after having been led in his own meditations and prayers to devote five dollars to the cause of benevolence, should have paid the whole sum promptly, uninfluenced by the indifference or parsimony of his brethren. And he should have paid over the part "fraudulently" kept back, as soon as he was prompted to do so on learning the loss of the steer. Such a course is always safe, always right, and brings a blessing with it; the contrary course is always unwise, and dangerous. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

One more story and I draw to a close. Some years ago in one of our apple bearing districts, a brother who had a young orchard was persuaded by his wife and children to set apart a particular tree as the "Missionary tree," all that grew on it to be devoted to the cause of Missions. The tree for several years bore a few apples, and they were devoted according to the plan. But one year it bore a large crop, and apples were high; three barrels were filled from that tree, and the family were desirous that they should go to the cause of Missions as usual. But the worthy brother at the head of the household thought this would be too large a sacrifice. The fact was he could not afford to give so much. So he decided. He would, he said, contribute something to the Mission cause when the time came round, but three whole barrels of apples! and when apples were bringing such a high price! why this was unreasonable and absurd. This settled the case. The sun went down; night drew her sable veil around the dwelling place, and balmy sleep with dowy fingers pressed gently down the eyelids of the weary laborers, and the three barrels of apples were left out in the orchard to the care of providence, standing under the spreading branches of the parent tree. What was the surprise of all concerned when on looking out in the morning it was discovered that the three barrels had "taken wings" and were gone, and along with the three barrels from the Missionary tree, a good many more from the other trees had gone also. It was evident that they had not gone without hands, but who the thief was they never ascertained.

But now comes the question would they not have been stolen all the same, had they been appropriated to the cause of Missions, as a thank offering to the Lord, according to the design formed in thus setting apart this tree? I will not take it upon me to affirm positively whether they would or would not. My decided conviction is, however, that they would not! But suppose they had been, would not the feelings of all concerned have been very different from what they were as the case stood? Could the good brother have felt the same chagrin and vexation at the loss of a whole handful of dollars, which he now felt? Would conscience have whispered mayhap other parties also more than whispered, "It serves you just right! Those apples were not yours; they were the Lord's, and you undertook to rob God (Mal. iii. 8), and got robbed yourself for your pains. IT SERVES YOU RIGHT?"

No indeed! I am bold to believe that the faith that would under the circumstances have freely, cheerfully and thankfully handed over all the produce of that Missionary Tree, to the cause of God, would have been a blessed wall of fire around the premises, over which no thief could have climbed! And further, the unbelief and worldliness that could think for a moment of "robbing God" called for prompt and stern rebuke.

I would say to all who have orchards, consecrate every tree to the Lord, and in addition set apart not one, but one in every ten to be wholly his. Let your faith be real—"UNFEIGNED FAITH," not sham—sham faith is like sham money, much worse than nothing,—and then sacredly carry out your resolution, and deal honestly with God, and with yourself and with all others. Let all others do the same with their sources of income, whatever they may be, "And prove me herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing and there shall not be room enough to receive it; and I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he will not destroy the fruits of your ground, neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS." Mal. iii. 10. 11.

This beautiful passage of Scripture was intended to be understood strictly and literally by the Jews. It is sadly perverted when it is limited to certain acts—such as

praying and speaking in meeting, as is often done, I am sorry to say. Let Christians embrace it and act upon it in all its extent of meaning, and let them see if the Ever Blessed Jehovah is not even now as fond of blessing his people as he ever was. There are not a few who are in these days endeavoring to take Him at His word, and all such are able to testify to his faithfulness and loving-kindness. Let the reader do so. I cannot wish you a richer blessing. "Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, DO ALL to the glory of God."

S. T. RAND.

May 6.

For the Christian Messenger.

JAMAICA CORRESPONDENCE.

BELMONT, CLARENDON, May 5th, 1871.

DEAR BROTHER SELDEN:

Truly you have borne this trial of your patience,—my "Jamaica Correspondence,"—with heroic fortitude. May I not now congratulate you on your speedy deliverance.

Yet with no ordinary feelings do I address this last letter from Jamaica to you.

What a volume of experience has the past year afforded us. Trials of faith before unknown, blessings and deliverances otherwise never experienced. On the whole, the year has been to us singular in blessing. Nor can we reasonably hope that any succeeding year can be more happy. Thus, on the verge of our departure, while we crave the blessing of that "God who hath fed us all our life-long unto this day," and "the angel who hath redeemed us from all evil," in our future in connection with his cause; we would also at the same time raise our Ebenezer, "Hitherto, GOD HATH HELPED US." Sufficient in relation to the past, have been our communications. Not until we finally cease from self, and rise to the full fellowship of perfect charity, shall we rehearse with unmixed pleasure and profit, the full details of life's experiences;

"There on a green and flowery mount,
Our willing souls shall sit;
And with transporting joy recount
The labors of our feet."

How often during the past year, have we been forcibly reminded of the 107th Ps. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and his wonderful works to the children of men."

"And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go unto a city of habitation."

"Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord."

Well, here at Belmont, amid the picturesque and romantic scenery of the Clarendon mountains, we have taken up our residence for the May season; the owners, now residing at their other estate, Clarendon Park, had unexpectedly, unasked, and gratuitously offered us the use of this pleasant residence. And as the Missionary House at Four Paths was dilapidated and leaky, and indeed none of our Missionary Houses were tenable for the wet season, we were not reluctant to accept so kind and generous an offer, even though by ladies of another denomination, and to us entire strangers.

A ride of eight miles in two hours, brings us to the zigzag path by which we climb the rocky steep to Belmont. We came up yesterday. During the night and to-day, "the clouds have poured out water; the skies sent out a sound." The rainy season seems to have really set in, so that we deem our move most timely, and ourselves most fortunate.

The manner of our coming was rather novel and interesting. The road being utterly impassable for wheels, Mrs. Porter and myself rode on horseback, while the children and movables were carried in the arms and on the heads and shoulders of the natives. Twenty-six young men and women belonging to the Thompsonstown church, including the nineteen whom I had baptized the Sabbath previous, came down, 12 miles the night before, so as to move in the cool morning, truly if rocks had speech and memory those limestone cliffs along the way, would bear abundant testimony, that our journey was not a melancholy one. We reached in good spirits and condition, before the sun had become too hot. To-day we have time and matter for observation.

Looking down the almost perpendicular steep in front, beneath us stand the old slave chapel and the coffee and sugar house, surrounded by a garden, luxuriant with tropical vegetation; while beyond the grazing herds and wooded hills, the broad Savanna, dotted with light green

patches of sugar cane, stretches away to the glassy margin of the ocean. A spy glass brings three ships just now within calling distance, and discovers men and women carrying their bundles of cane to the sugar works. Behind us, and on either side Jamaica lifts her many crowns of tangled forest.

Wide and diversified as these natural scenes may be, yet wider and more diversified are the historic scenes that they suggest. Here in this very dwelling, as representative of the slave-holding power, the slave owner once looked down upon his herds of driven men. Here from his seat of tyrannizing power, he looked down too, upon the ministry,—especially the Baptist—his natural and necessary antagonist—with anger and disdain.

"How is the oppressor ceased." The Baptist Minister is now welcomed freely to occupy the halls of him who once despised and persecuted him. And from these jealousies, where once the master eyed his toiling slaves, the minister now sees the trophies of his great moral victory, in requited toil. Indeed, throughout Jamaica, many of the properties of the slave owners are now occupied, and even owned by their despised antagonists—Baptist ministers. Thus as the eye looks out from Belmont, on the long level of Savanna, and the mountain piles, and reflects on the long level of oppression, and the upheavals of society that followed; and then as these are all embraced and blended in the general scene, spanned by the arches of one common sky, how the mind rises and expands with the grand prospect, when "every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill shall be made low. And the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."—Enough. Not until within a day or two have we really seen the open door.

We expect to leave now, in the next New York boat, about the 5th of June.

The churches here will be greatly grieved at our leaving; and indeed if the path of duty did not seem so clear, I could not bear to leave them. Nearly a thousand members will be left without a pastor. Oh, that I could only see a faithful minister to succeed me. Then would I be truly happy in the thought of shortly grasping your friendly hand again.

Yours truly,
W. H. PORTER.

For the Christian Messenger.

THE INDEPENDENT ORDER OF GOOD TEMPLARS.

The annual meeting of the R. W. G. Lodge of Independent Order of Good Templars, took place at Baltimore, Maryland, on the 23rd, 24th and 25th of May. Delegates were present from forty Grand Lodges including, England, Scotland, Canada and Nova Scotia and the meetings were characterized by the greatest enthusiasm. The most noticeable feature in the officers' reports was the extraordinary spread of the Order in Europe during the past year. Scotland contains 50,000 Templars and the City of Glasgow 118 Lodges. England, so slow to move, has a Grand Lodge of near 200 Lodges. Ireland a Grand Lodge of 80 Subordinate Lodges, and rapidly increasing. Wales has ere this more than the required number of Temples to organize a Grand Lodge. A Deputy has been commissioned to introduce the Order into Russia, Germany and Holland. Total increase during the year 50,000; present membership 400,000; funds in hand for the coming year \$4,000. The welcome meeting given by the Templars of Baltimore was attended by over 3000 persons and the National courtesy of the Americans was evidenced by the loud and continued applause which greeted any allusion to Queen Victoria. Speeches were made by representatives from each state, Rev. George Hinds, representing England, John T. Bulmer, Nova Scotia, and Rev. William Scott, Canada. The officers for the coming year are:

- Rev. John Russell, R. W. G. Templar, Michigan.
 - John Hickman, R. W. G. Counsellor, Kentucky.
 - Miss Anna Raymond, R. W. G. Vice, New Jersey.
 - J. A. Spooer, R. W. G. Secretary, Ohio.
 - Rev. George Hinds, R. W. G. Chaplain, England.
 - John Campbell, R. W. G. Treasurer, Missouri.
- Next place of meeting, Madison, Wisconsin.—Com.

TELOGOO SCRIPTURES.

We have received an appeal from the Treasurer of the American Bible Union, Dr. Armitage, and the Secretaries Dr. Wyckoff, and M. Sanford, on behalf of the Holy Scriptures in Talinga, the language of the Telogooos, with a request for publication.

Although the other portions of Canada have made these people their special work, yet there are some points of the information given which will deeply interest our readers:—

One of the earliest translations of the New Testament into the languages of the heathen was that of Wm. Carey, the pioneer Baptist Missionary, in the Talinga tongue, the speech of the Telogooos. A small edition was issued.

Provision was made by the American and Foreign Bible Society, at an early period of its history, for the reprinting of this version of God's word by the most eminent translator of the age. Several appropriations for this purpose were made, and the money was paid into the treasury of the American Baptist Missionary Convention. Through some misunderstanding, the money was employed in the purchase and circulation of a version made by other parties. From that time till the present, the Baptist missionaries among the Telogooos have been dependent upon versions which they have never regarded as faithful to the original. Their complaints and remonstrances on the subject have often been heard in conversation, or read in private letters, with painful interest. The calls for aid in other directions have absorbed the means contributed for Bible operations.

Within the last two years, the missionaries and the friends in America with whom they correspond have renewed their entreaties for aid, and addressed them with great earnestness to the American Bible Union. One of the missionaries, Bro. McLauren, writes, that the only versions to which the Baptist missionaries have access are disfigured with manifest faults. Carey's was made at a time when the language was but slightly studied by missionaries, and the translator was dependent upon native scholars who did not understand the Greek. The version in use translates BAPTIZO by a word signifying to wash, and describes the administrator and the subjects of baptism as going down near to the water, and going up from the vicinity of the water.

A letter from Rev. L. Jewett states that Messrs. Clough, Timpany, McLauren, Ballard, have appointed him reviser of the Telogoo New Testament according to the principles of the American Bible Union. He says:—We have prayed for converts; they have come in by the hundred. We now ask the Lord, and our brethren, too, for a pure version of the New Testament to give them. The native preachers and brethren, with their wives, made long journeys on foot to meet in Nellore this month, to form an Association for the promotion of the cause of Christ in this land. It did my soul good to look upon their noble faces, hear them preach, talk, pray, and take upon themselves burdens, I felt truly the burden rolling off from my shoulders on to them. True, I had to preach the opening sermon, and Bro. Clough was obliged to take the chair. Canakiah declined being chairman, saying, wisely I think: "Let me see how you do this year, then I will not decline next year." Next year our native brethren will fill the chair, preach the sermon, write the circular letter, be secretaries, and all that.

Rev. J. V. Murdock, D. D., Corresponding Secretary of the American Baptist Missionary Union, gives the following testimony to the qualifications of Bro. Jewett as a missionary translator:

"I am in receipt of a letter this morning from Mr. Jewett, of the Telogoo Mission, a part of which I hasten to communicate to you. We have long felt that we must bring out a revised edition of the Telogoo New Testament ourselves. As a beginning, two brothers (Clough and Timpany) requested me to bring out Matthew revised with a short commentary."

"Although I had received no reply to my request for funds, Bros. Clough, Timpany, and McLauren urge me to go forward."

Dr. Murdock also adds the following: "I did not know of the application of Mr. Jewett for funds to print his revision of Matthew, when I wrote you on the 19th inst. Mr. Jewett is thoroughly competent, Prof. Hovey assures me, to revise the New Testament, and is, moreover, a thorough Hebraist. Here is an opportunity for your Society to provide for a work of revision that is much needed, and that must be done."