

Correspondence.

CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY.

THE CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, CONVENED AT TRYON, JULY 8TH, 1871. TO THE CHURCHES OF WHICH IT IS COMPOSED.

(Published by Special Request.)

Dear Brethren,—

True religion does not consist in the mere reception of stereotyped doctrinal views, nor yet in ecstatic feelings, causing individuals to soar aloft, regardless of practical duties. Though the security of the believer is guaranteed beyond all doubt, yet side by side with his exalted privileges run his active duties. In the teaching of scripture the doctrines of grace blend in beautiful harmony with sanctified zeal and active service in the cause of God. If we have faith we are to shew it by our works.

The moment a soul receives converting grace its condition changes, so does its disposition. Not only is the guilty sinner forgiven and accepted as an heir of God, he also becomes His willing servant. The principle then implanted by the Holy Ghost is the capital with which he begins his stewardship. Faithfulness unto death is the strict requirement of his Lord. The general directions given to all His servants are: "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth on teaching; or he that exhorteth on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do with simplicity; he that ruleth with diligence; he that sheweth mercy with cheerfulness." Our Lord has so constituted the gospel organization as to afford all his followers employment suited to the diversity of their gifts and the variety of their attainments. Every one has his course to run. As each planet has its proper orbit in which to move around the sun and exercises a beneficial influence upon all other bodies in the planetary system, so every believer has his sphere, and wields an influence for good upon others to the extent to which he himself is influenced by his great primary—the Son of Righteousness. No peculiarity of circumstances or conformation of character can exonerate us from discharging our individual responsibilities. The emphatic language of Christ is, "He that is not with me is against me, he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."

The divine arrangement gives rise to no spiritual monopoly, it recognizes no privileged class with an exclusive prerogative to make known the gospel of salvation to perishing souls. Overlooking this fact has given rise to an unwarrantable distinction between laity and clergy, and contributed largely to the worldliness and inefficiency of many churches.

What we now sorely need is a fuller development of the talents of the individual members of our churches. We fear that a large proportion of our strength is unemployed for God. Unproductive capital is attended with two great evils: Christ is defrauded of that reasonable service due him; and his unfaithful steward deprives himself of the benefits resulting from the proper employment of his talents, and incurs the displeasure of his Lord.—Alas! how many unfaithful servants and poverty-stricken starvelings there are in our churches. Too many seem satisfied to remain in that infantile condition in which they were when they came forward to obey our Lord's first command to believers. They are of no use to the church. God may well say to them, "Ye have robbed me." No stroke of active service is ever performed by them for Christ. Whatever good resolutions they may have had, have ebbed and flowed, and left nothing but their broken fragments on the strand. Let us not judge harshly, however, the breath of life may yet be in them, though it is painfully evident that they do not present the characteristic manifestation of divine life—Godly activity. Their spiritual lanness has, doubtless, been caused by their inactivity, and their inactivity in many instances by the mistaken notion that they could do all their work for God by proxy. No church member has a right to turn over to his pastor what is his own special work, he needs to do it as much as the cause of God needs it done. As one must eat and digest his own food in order to sustain nature, so to maintain health and vigor of soul the Christian must perform his own spiritual labor. As dyspepsia, Nature's health officer, stationed at the avenues of excess and the pouches of indolence, by aching brow and

depressed spirits, warns the deluded victim of approaching ill-health, so should spiritual dyspepsia, the prominent symptoms of which are excessive love of worldly amusements, want of relish for "the sincere milk of the word," and disinclination to labor for God, warn us of the danger of losing the joys of salvation.

The gospel awakens in all who are the subjects of its renovating power, a sympathy which prompts to earnest energetic efforts for the conversion of others. The young convert in the fervency of his first love is apt to regard this zeal as evidence of a call to devote himself to the work of the ministry, while the cold formal professor is inclined to look upon it as a preaching fever peculiar to the early stage of christian experience. Although we by no means consider this ardor for the conversion of souls as constituting full evidence of a divine call to the ministry, yet far be it from us to regard it as the mere effervescence of the youthful mind. Nor is this zeal only peculiar to the young. It is rather the normal emotion of the renewed heart, an emotion which ought not to be allowed to evaporate in empty wishes, nor in the display of still emptier forms. In the prudential arrangements of divine grace ample provision is made for the maintenance and development of this missionary spirit on the part of every child of God.

Let us hearken, brethren, to the question put by Christ to idlers: "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" Let us give heed to his command: "Go ye also into the vineyard." Why have we been put into the vineyard? To work of course. If a man is not called or qualified to preach the gospel publicly, is all the earnestness, all the persuasive power, and the hunger for souls which he may possess to run to waste? By no means. In the winding up of God's revelation to man, a commission is given to every one who has tasted that the Lord is gracious, to labor in bringing others to the fountain at which he himself has slaked his thirst: "Let him that heareth say come." Let him tell "the good tidings of great joy" wherever the opportunity occurs, whether in the social circle or in the prayer-meeting; by the wayside or the fireside; in the sick-room or in whatever place God may bring souls within his reach.

With what success the principle of "Christian Activity" can thus be carried out by believers in the various walks of life; let the labors of the Priscillas and Aquillas, of Onesiphorus, of Lydia and of "faithful Persis," answer. Let the lives of Robert Raikes, of Kate Ferguson, and of Harlan Page, answer. Let the large measure of the divine blessing attending the warm-hearted exhortations and fervent prayers of pious mechanics and business men in the Fulton Street Prayer-meetings answer. The whole tenor of scripture teaching goes to show that it was the design of the Founder of Christianity to propagate its principles by the contact of individual minds. Brethren are we working with this fact in view. We owe our all to God. That we have been spiritually quickened is owing to the gracious operations of His Spirit; that we have been pardoned is through the efficacy of the blood of Jesus Christ His son; that we have been so long spared is on account of the prevailing intercession of our Redeemer. Should not, therefore, the intense desire of our heart be to glorify God while we are in this body. The controlling constraining determination of every believer should be:

"All for the Master, all without reserve, All to the utmost of our manhood's might, Each pulse, each throb of heart and thrill of nerve, Each hour of busy day and silent night."

None need complain of want of opportunities for labouring. Love can with unerring instinct discover eligible openings for the performance of her modest work. He who has the happy faculty of breaking truth up into small morsels for children's mouths, will naturally find his way into the Sabbath School. There after the royal example of David he will say: "Come ye children hearken unto me and I will teach you the fear of the Lord." How delightful to tell the dear little children of "That good Shepherd of old"; to invite them to him who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me." He whose heart beats in loving sympathy with that of Jesus will, like him, be moved with compassion at the very sight of human suffering, and will find highest pleasure in relieving the distressed. He who has a talent for making money will give away bountifully, knowing that "God loves the cheerful giver." "Giving we receive and blessing we are blessed." Did the ocean restrain its evaporation it would gain nothing thereby, for the moisture rising from its surface distils upon the earth and

is carried back in streams to the ocean whence it came. He who saves for self is sure to lose; he who loses for Christ's sake is sure to gain. "Honor the Lord with thy substance and the first fruits of all thine increase, then shall thy barns be filled with plenty and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." There is an activity which is caused by disease, feverish excitement resulting only in spasmodic actions and fitful exertions. Let holiness be the basis of our activity. Let love bring forth the sacred nard with which to anoint our Saviour's feet. Let the fragrance arising from a broken heart perfume every sacrifice. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed shall doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him."

Thus impelled by sanctified self interest, zeal for the conversion of souls, and love to Him who stooped

From the highest throne in glory To the cross of deepest woe,

be it ours to enjoy as much of Christ as renewed heart can receive, and to exhibit as much of him as grace can enable us to reveal.

LETTER FROM PARIS.

BY REV. DR. RANDOLPH.

PARIS, June 14th, 1871.

One prominent desire, cherished with but little hope I confess, during the whole of my sojourn in Europe, has at length been gratified, and I am now in Paris. We arrived here in safety on Thursday last, the 8th inst. Many persons in Geneva tried to dissuade us from the undertaking, and even on the day we started I was assured that it would be impossible. There were, however, no obstacles in the way. A gentlemanly examination of my passport at the French frontier was all that was required in regard to our persons, and the custom-house examination of baggage did not begin to compare with the scrutiny which is common with New York officials. It is easier for a traveller to enter Paris to-day than it is for him, at the usual port to enter the United States. The tide of travel has already set in strongly, and in four days of last week it is said there were no less than seventy thousand arrivals by a single line of railway.

But, alas, the Paris which we find is not the Paris of history nor of our imagination. The streets are beginning to be full of people, it is true, and many of the shops and cafes are putting on an attractive appearance. But nearly all the people have a look of sadness. I have not seen what might be called a brilliant, dashing man or woman since I have been here, and I never before in one week saw so many women dressed in deep mourning. Of business activity there appears, as yet, to be almost none. Only at the Bourse, or Exchange, have I seen anything that looked like activity. There, there is life, and when I was standing, the other day, among the hundreds who throng that busy place, I was reminded of the scenes which are witnessed every day at the New York Stock Exchange and in the Chicago Board of Trade.

But walking or riding through the city even a stranger is oppressed with sadness. The buildings which have, in part, constituted the glory of Paris, and with which even the children of America are familiar, now lift their blackened walls and seem to call for pity. The Tuileries, the Palais Royal, the Palais D'Orsay, the Ministère des Finances, and the Hotel de Ville are all in ruins. The Corps Legislatif, the Palais de Justice, and the Palais de Legion d'Honneur have fared but little better. Nor was the destruction confined to royal palaces alone. Perhaps the Communists did not set fire to any others, but the Versailles troops in their efforts to dislodge the rebels were obliged to throw shot and shell indiscriminately among friends and foes. In some portions of the city the destruction is fearful. There are whole rows of houses in which there does not seem to be a pane of glass left. And although glass may at first seem a small item in the general destruction, yet it is not so. It is estimated that the loss in this one thing amounts to a million pounds sterling, or, in round numbers, to five millions of dollars. The most elegant buildings,—dwellings and stores,—have been entirely demolished. Others still standing are shattered from top to bottom. In some instances they have been riddled with shot and shell till they are completely honey-combed. One building, near the hotel from which I am now writing, has more than four hundred and fifty bullet marks upon it, each tearing off the surface for a space not smaller than a man's hand.

Of course it is impossible to tell what is

the actual money value of the things thus wickedly destroyed. It has been estimated, however, that the buildings ruined were worth in American currency, \$100,000,000; that the works of art and furniture which perished were worth \$60,000,000; and merchandize, \$10,000,000 or \$12,000,000 more. If to this be added the loss from the suspension of almost all kinds of industry, the disarrangement of all commercial transactions, and the removal from the city of nearly half a million of its inhabitants, some idea can be formed of the disasters which have followed an unprovoked war, and a foolish and fendish rebellion.

Outside the city the damage is scarcely less appalling. At St. Cloud, long the favorite retreat, as well it might be, of royalty, there seems to be scarcely a house left. I am no lover of royalty, and no special admirer of either the Napoleons, but I confess to a feeling of sadness as I walked round the place which they both loved so well, and saw nothing but ruin, ruin everywhere.

The churches in the city, as a general thing suffered but little. The Commune robbed the richest of them, but did not burn them, though it is thought they meant to do so. Most of those standing in prominent positions are more or less damaged. The only one seriously injured, so far as I have been able to learn, is a Protestant church, the roof and tower of which were torn to pieces by shells, though its destruction was not intended.

The priests, as you know, were the special objects of the Commune's hatred. Believing, however, that the Versailles government regarded the priests with special favor, the Communists seized seventy of them, as hostages and afterwards shot them all. Forty-eight of these unfortunate men were massacred at one time, on the 24th of May. Among them was the Archbishop of Paris, who was buried the day before I reached the city. He was a kind-hearted man, I am told, but blindly devoted to the Papal power, and wanting in independent energy of character. This was shown by the fact that he at first opposed the doctrine of Papal infallibility, and yet subsequently issued a decree enforcing the dogma on his clergy.

Next to the Archbishop, the most prominent of the massacred priests, I suppose, was the Abbe Deguerry, curate of the beautiful Madeleine. His funeral took place in his own church, the next day after I reached here. I was present and witnessed the profound sorrow with which the solemn pageant was attended.

You will be pleased to learn that our devoted Baptist Pastor, Rev. Mr. Lepoids, is safe. An hour at his house was one of the most delightful I have had in Paris. He tells me that many of his brethren were exposed to great danger, but not one of them was fatally injured.

I had a most agreeable interview the other evening with the Protestant "Pastor Fisch," whose visit to Philadelphia, a few years since, will be remembered by many of your readers. I found him well, although he has grown decidedly gray since I saw him ten years ago. Exposed to great peril, escaped unharmed. More than twenty barricades were thrown across the streets near his dwelling, each of which required a prodigious effort on the part of the army before it could be opened, and no less than thirteen shells burst upon his house; yet amid it all, God mercifully preserved him.

But after all this tale of woe, and almost indefinitely more which might be written, let no one suppose that Paris is destroyed. There is still a population here of more than a million and a half, making it much the largest city, except London, that I have ever seen. And after passing through a year of such misfortune as no other city has ever known,—after suffering the miseries of a foreign war and the ruin of a mad and furious rebellion. Paris is still the most beautiful, by far the most beautiful city in the world. As I ride along its Boulevards and gaze upon its magnificent buildings, I am in doubt whether the genius of man will ever produce any thing more splendid. Paris only needs a good and stable government to regain the most of what it has lost, and to start again upon a career of affluence and glory.

But what is the Government to be? Ah, that is a question which no man is yet wise enough to answer. With one exception, parties are as numerous to-day as they have been at any time. The Commune only has disappeared. That, probably, is defunct forever. But the Commune out of the way, all is still in confusion. Opinions differ widely in regard to the present government.

On Saturday evening an intelligent and patriotic Frenchman spoke to me in high terms of M. Thiers and the wisdom of his administration. On Monday morning another Frenchman, perhaps equally intelligent and patriotic, denounced M. Thiers as a scheming and tricky politician. And these two gentlemen, I suppose, fairly indicate the state of feeling which prevails to-day in Paris. The general impression, however, if I mistake not, is that a return to monarchy is inevitable. The marvellous vote in the Assembly, of 484 to 103, by which the disabilities of the Bourbons were removed, seems to indicate it. Another election, on the 2d of July, will probably increase the number of the Legitimists in the National Assembly, and it is not at all unlikely that before the summer is over the Comte de Chambord, grandson of Charles X, will be crowned as Henry V. This Prince, who is between 50 and 60 years of age, it is said has never shown any ability or genius of any kind. He is simply the grandson of an expelled king, a bigoted Catholic, a Bourbon of the Bourbons. And I do not wonder that the friends of civil and religious liberty, not only here but throughout Europe, are dejected in the prospect of having such a monarch on the throne of France.

WARREN RANDOLPH.

—National Baptist.

LETTER FROM SALT LAKE CITY.

(From the Correspondent of the New York Methodist.)

SALT LAKE CITY, June 19th, 1871.

Salt Lake was laid out for a city of magnificent distances. It lies four-square, running four miles each way. Each street is a broad avenue, mostly shaded by trees, and watered by a stream of purest crystal snow-water, which comes leaping down from the mountain in an inexhaustible current. This is the most notable, as it is the most beautiful feature in the appearance of the town, is cold as ice, and running down through rudely-cut channels formed on both sides of the streets, furnishes an abundant supply for all purposes of man and beast.

There is nothing else remarkable about the town, unless it is the turtle back Tabernacle, and the signs which appear on the fronts of the stores of the Saints—thus: "Holiness to the Lord!" Zion's Co-operative Mercantile Institution." This on dry-goods and whiskey stores alike. An inside view of Mormon life cannot be written in a letter, and the startling facts would scarcely be believed in a Christian community, though a man declare them. I shall attempt only a statement concerning some features which appear on the surface of society in Utah. The Mormon Church is already divided by several factions, which together threaten seriously to diminish Brigham Young's influence, though by no means adding to the cause of truth. For it is apparent none of these "Apostates," as Brigham often in bitter speech calls them, are disposed to adopt Christianity as their faith.

THE BIG TENT.

The coming of the members of the National Association, with their big tent, has been looked for with great interest by this community for several months. Brigham manifested his interest by pointed allusions in his public addresses in his Tabernacle and at Ogden. It was plain that he was not at ease in his mind; though with his usual craft, he professed to be indifferent, going so far as to advise "our young people to attend the Camp-Meeting, and not be uneasy at any strange physical manifestations which they might for the first time witness." The meeting was advertised to open on Friday, June 9th, but did not begin until Sunday, 11th, owing to a delay of the freight-train in which the tent was brought. The services were opened with a sermon by Rev. J. S. Inskip, on "What Shall I do to be saved?" followed in the afternoon by Rev. W. McDonald, on "The Evidences of a True Faith," evening, by Rev. W. H. Boote, on "Thou art Weighed in the Balances, and Found Wanting." All these discourses were evidently intended for the undermining of Mormon doctrines, without, however, any offensive reference to the peculiarities of that Church.

The heat was so intense as to render it impossible to continue the meetings morning and afternoon in the tent. The announcement was made that inquiry meetings would be held at the residence of Rev. Mr. Pierce, and preaching at the Tabernacle in the evenings. The inquiry meetings were quite successful. A number of promi-