

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

THE WEEKLY OFFERING.

YARMOUTH, July 24th, 1871.

Dear Brother,

I was pleased in the account of the Central Association to notice the favorable mention of "Weekly Offerings." The plan suggested was, I think, admirable.— Indeed, it was the exact plan we had adopted, and we find it succeeds even better than we anticipated. We are only raising our Minister's and sexton's salaries, with other incidental expenses, in this way, as yet; but we hope soon to include all monies raised by the church and congregation for religious purposes.

Our plan is to scatter through the seats a sufficient number of small envelopes printed on the back,—Temple Church Fund.

The Minister, for a few Sabbaths, states from the pulpit the object of these envelopes, making such remarks in favour of the system as he deems advisable.

All who are willing to contribute anything are requested to take an envelope weekly, write their name upon it, enclose their contribution and drop it into the collection next Sabbath. The Treasurer can keep a list of the names, and each week note the amount in weekly columns, from each contributor. Then at the end of each quarter and year, sum the amount of all, and each contributor.

The benefits of such a system are numerous. Many would give in this way, whom collectors never would think of asking.— The poor widow, who "cast in her two mites." Many others who would refuse to sign if called upon.

Many by giving a little weekly, can give more in the year, than they would think themselves able to sign or perhaps could give in quarterly or annual payments. But the system corresponds most nearly, as I conceive, with the Scriptural idea of giving:

In regard to the principle of giving,— "Every man according as he purpoeth in his heart, so let him give. Not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."

In respect to the amount,— "As God hath prospered him."

As regards the time,— "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by, &c."

Thus we come to notice another important feature in reference to religious offerings. The Bible connects religious offerings with religious worship. The whole Jewish economy was a system of worshipping God in connection with pecuniary offerings. His anger was kindled when they were withheld, and his mercies moved when they were contributed. "Ye have robbed me and are cursed." "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse—and prove me now herewith—if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, &c."

When the wise men worshiped the infant Saviour, "they presented unto him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh." When Zaccheus came down to receive Jesus, his first act of devotion was to give of his property to the claims of righteousness and humanity.

After the day of Pentecost, when the people embraced christianity, and consecrated themselves to Christ's service, among their first exercises of devotion, was the offering of their worldly property: "And with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of Jesus; and great grace was upon them all—for as many as had possessions of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices and laid them down at the Apostles' feet."

The prophets speak of the coming glories of Christ's kingdom, saying, "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts; yea all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him." "And he shall live; and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba; prayer shall be made for him continually and daily shall he be praised." Thus the "gold giving," and the "praying" and "praising," are brought along in the same account. The Bible indeed, connects religious worship with religious offerings, and it tends to a morbid and diseased Christianity, to disconnect them. "What God hath joined together let not man put asunder."

Indeed, we need to give under the influence of religious devotion, in order to give according to our ability and indebtedness,

and we need to worship under the influence of giving, in order to relieve our devotions of the encumbrance of earthliness and love of possession. And this suggests one more reflection: We do not give because God cannot carry on his cause without our offerings; "If I were hungry I would not tell thee." But God requires us to give, for our discipline. To weaken our love, and loosen our hold of the world; and to interest our hearts in the cause of God, by investing in it.

This must be done by frequent giving. No christian would do his praying, speaking, and other acts of worship, once in three or four months, or annually. Such services would not prove a necessary discipline. So also in religious offerings. May it not be that the double crust of worldliness and selfishness, has grown thick upon the church, by the neglect of God's method, giving frequently, in connection with, and in the spirit of religious worship. "Now concerning the collection for saints," whether in the provinces or in Burmah, to furnish them food, or the Bible—"as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye."

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."

W. H. PORTER.

For the Christian Messenger.

ANNAPOLIS ROYAL.

Dear Brother,—

At a Public Meeting of Baptist friends held in Annapolis Town on the 20th inst. Rev. Isa. Wallace, Chairman; Mr. J. S. Britain, Secretary. The following resolutions were unanimously adopted:—

1. That Messrs. F. C. Snow, Lawrence Hall and Thos. S. Whitman be appointed a Committee to select and purchase a site for a Baptist Meeting-house in the Town of Annapolis.

2. That the net proceeds of the recent Bazaar be placed in the Annapolis Agency of the Union Bank of Halifax to the credit of the above named committee, to be drawn when necessary for the purchase of said site, or for commencing the building.

3. That a vote of thanks be tendered to the Ladies of the Annapolis Baptist Sewing Circle for their noble and successful exertions to raise money for the proposed place of worship.

4. That this meeting also express their grateful acknowledgements to Bro. J. L. Britain for his untiring efforts to secure this desired object,—the erection of a Baptist Meeting-house in Annapolis Royal.

I may add that our prospects for building a House for God, organizing a Baptist Church, and saving souls instrumentally, in Annapolis Town are still brightening.

On the Sabbath after our Bazaar it was my privilege to preach in the beautiful bower in which the Bazaar was held, to about 500 people.

I have had the pleasure of baptising on two interesting occasions since I last reported to you and hope to be similarly employed next Lord's day.

Yours truly,

ISA. WALLACE.

Lower Granville, 22nd July, 1841.

P.S.—I have concluded to accept the invitation to Yarmouth, and trust the Lord may speedily send to the dear people whom I leave a faithful pastor. I shall leave if all be well, on Monday next.

I. W.

For the Christian Messenger.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM BURMAH.

LETTER FROM MISS NORRIS.

The Women's Aid Missionary Societies will be interested in reading the following just received by the Secretary of the N. S. Central Board:—

HENTHADA, May 17th, 1871.

My dear Mrs. Selden,—

It seems to me long since I wrote you, but I have been much pressed for time. May I write you a letter then from which you will take the trouble to make extracts for our dear sisters who are perhaps waiting to know farther the results of this venture they have made.

As to progress, I think I make some, and yet I am sometimes very faint and weak in my attempts at the language. I find it easier to converse on religious matters than on any other. I find it hard to acquire a vocabulary of every-day wants. You may be pleased to know I have conducted my first prayer-meeting in Karen—a little group of Karen women, Mrs. Smith, Miss DeWolfe

and myself were the company. The meetings are under Mrs. Smith's charge but she requested me this time to lead, and I took this opportunity of praying with them for the first time in their own tongue. I assure the Lord helped me or I could not have done it. I have a class in Sabbath School, and a class in Arithmetic every day, as the children understand no English at all, it is an advantage to me, to teach them and a very great pleasure. Day by day I grow a little I suppose, but it is a slow process to learn a language like this, word by word, sentence by sentence. Very different from a book-knowledge of any language.

The time of unintelligible sermons is past too, I begin to understand connectedly what I hear from the pulpit. Light dawns in the words I see and hear from every direction. It is much more difficult to understand the people in their every day language as they come to call on "the new mamma," than to understand what I have some clue to, as exhortations, prayers, &c. But I suppose I need not say that, manifestly true always.

The rains have begun and we all rejoice in this it is much easier, to do one's duty under a temperate atmosphere than with the thermometer over 100° as it was usually every day before the rains began.

Every thing seems so refreshed and is looking up with heart again, after so long drooping. The people feel the influence as well and are roused to apply themselves to what they are given to do. Our school has its full compliment and more, while many applicants have to be dismissed for want of room, yet the school has not yet been a week in session there are about ninety here—and plenty of opportunities of talking Karen to my heart's content. If only the blessed Spirit from on high might be manifested in His presence with us, bringing in those yet without the fold, and developing in all the germ of usefulness, folded in their hearts so that these might go forth strong in the Lord to His help against the mighty, against wickedness in high places here. I have a class of ten boys in Sabbath School, if only these grew up to be able workers for the Master, it were a noble thing. May I not ask the prayers of those interested at home, on their behalf.

I do believe prayer has been answered for me, why should it not for them also. So much has been done for this people, they are in a position to do so much for themselves; when I look upon them and see the fruits of a few years' labor my heart aches for the regions beyond, where thick darkness is resting, the border land of the utter darkness forever, into which souls hourly pass. How can we sit still holding the light which could dispel all the shadows, and bring them out at last to perfect day. God has a work here, a farther work for Nova Scotia, she may fail, but she need not. God help us all, that waiting for His counsel, but following quickly His guidance, we may accomplish His purposes for the heathen, and win honors for His name. The time is short. With much love to the dear friends in Halifax.

Believe me,

Yours very affectionately,

C. M. NORRIS.

THE WORK IN BURMAH.

The Burmah Baptist Missionary Convention celebrated its fifth anniversary Nov. 9th, 1870, in the Karen chapel, Toungoo. The American Missionaries reported by the Committee on the Roll were Rev. Messrs. E. A. Stevens, E. O. Stevens, James R. Haswell, Cross, Crawley, Carpenter, Colburn, Smith, Bunker, Cushing, Jameson, and George, numbering 12; Ordained native preachers, 9; unordained native preachers, 51; lay delegates, 46. Other Baptists in attendance: American missionaries, 11; natives, 330.

Rev. Mr. Rand of Maulmain, telegraphed:—"Karen give Convention, rupees 110. New chapel, Tah Krai, 1500."

After animated discussion it was resolved that all of our preachers, laymen and women, be earnestly recommended to make at least one effort, weekly, for the conversion of their heathen neighbors; also, that our native Pastors and Churches be exhorted to baptize only those who give good evidence of a change of heart, and to receive back excluded members only after clear proof of return to God by repentance; that all preachers connected with this Convention endeavor to visit every Church and every house in their field, and give plain and thorough religious instruction to the people; and that they introduce such helps to discipline as they think the Scriptures require.

The annual sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. Carpenter, from the text: "Therefore

I endure all things for the elect's sake." The Committee of Management state that this year has not been distinguished from other years either in advancement or decline; the growth has been gradual but steady and healthy; a few whom they thought to be Christians have gone back to the world.— They have made some advance in sending the Gospel to tribes hitherto ignorant of the good news. More laborers are needed in almost every department of the mission work. Several of the missionaries have been obliged to leave the work on account of enfeebled health, while a few have returned invigorated to resume their labors; others have died; those mentioned are Th'rah Dumoo, Brethren Van Meter, Beecher, Thomas, and Douglass. These were connected with the Basein Mission. There has been accession to the ministry of a promising class from the Rangoon Theological Seminary. The heathen seem to have an increased desire to educate their sons in Christian schools, to listen to faithful preaching, and to read religious books. A few have rejected Buddhism without openly embracing Christianity. Two influential men travelled four day's journey to reach our last association, and urge the disciples to send them a teacher.

Great results are expected from the schools. The natives will go to hear the children sing and recite, when they cannot be prevailed upon to go into the chapel; and the people say "the heathen hear more Gospel preached by the children than you could persuade them to hear in the chapel for years."

The reports from the various districts give a total for the year, of 1,088 baptised; 278 excluded; 195 restored; 508 deaths; present number of Christians 19,846; nominal christians 6,750; pupils in schools 6,167; religious contributions 27,927 rupees; expended for schools, books, etc., 13,983 rupees; number of Churches 416; number of ordained native preachers 78; number of unordained do. 393.

THE BIBLE REVISIONISTS

are progressing, on the whole, satisfactorily, with the contemplated revision of the Old and the New Testament Scriptures. Fears, however, are entertained that the Dissenters have been sold, and that the Episcopalians have got it all their own way. A rule, it is believed, has been drawn up to the following effect: When there is a difference in opinion between Churchmen and Dissenters as to the translation of a word, the present rendering is to be adopted. It is obvious that bishop and not overseer, Easter and not pasover, ordained (Acts xiv. 23) and not choose; baptized and not immersed, will be preferred. Thus "interested disingenuous interpolations" will continue "to cloud the light which Scripture might have thrown on ecclesiastical questions," and the concealment of the identity of the apostolic presbyter and bishop will act as a trap to catch the unwary readers. King James would not have *episcopos* translated, because that would tell everybody that there was no bishop in the New Testament. The bishops among the Bible revisionists will not, we fear, translate *pascha*, passover, but Easter; while our Independent and Presbyterian friends will agree to leave *baptize* untranslated; and the new version will have the sanction of Baptists of note. It is remarkable that, in Acts xx. 28, we have overseer instead of bishop. Was James afraid to let it be known that there were several bishops in the church of Ephesus? Was he afraid to let it be known that elders and bishops were originally apostolically synonymous?

A CONFERENCE ON PSALMODY.

attended by conductors of Congregational psalmody and other friends of the cause, took place recently in the large hall of the Free Church Normal School, Glasgow.— The chairman said that, with a view to promote psalmody, it was desirable that three things should be secured: (1) A good text-book or collection of psalm tunes; (2) highly efficient and well-trained conductors of psalmody; and (3) congregations trained so as to appreciate the services of these conductors. With reference to the first point, the question would have to be considered whether there should be a revision of the Scottish Psalmody, or a new book altogether. As to the advancement of psalmody and skill in singing amongst congregations, the chairman said that steps were being taken by the Assembly Committee to get congregations to make applications to have classes formed and taught in psalmody. It has also been proposed to certify by diploma the attainments of highly cultivated conductors.

Doubtless, in conducting psalmody in

Scotland, great improvement has been made. There are simpler tunes now than were sung a few years ago, and more appropriate. We have often heard light jaunty airs sung to,— "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned;" and a slow melancholy tune to,— "To render thanks unto the Lord it is a comely thing." In the former case it was as unnatural as dancing on a grave; in the latter, as weeping at the birth of an heir to an inheritance. An ancient orator, on being asked what was essentially necessary in order to be an eloquent speaker, replied. To be a good man. In like manner, no one can attain to perfection in sacred music till he loves the Lord and breathes His spirit.— Glasgow Cor. of National Baptist.

NEGRO PREACHERS.

ORIGINAL SIN.

At a point on the Rockingham turnpike in Greene county there is a rude booth or tabernacle of boughs laid upon fence rails to form a shelter from the sun, beneath which are a number of poles and logs used as benches for the people, and facing them a rude stand for the preachers.

Ashby McGuire was one of these preachers, and was very justly esteemed among them as a faithful and fearless servant of his Master. His integrity rendered him unpopular where he lived, and he was, therefore, always ready for distant excursions to districts where his presence was hailed as a treat to those who enjoyed his wit and were instructed by his stores of Biblical wisdom. His mode of travel was to set out with a staff in one hand and in the other a small bundle that contained an extra shirt, handkerchief, and cravat. With these he would often be absent on a tour of two months, and several hundred miles.

On the occasion that I wish to detail, his subject was "Original sin," and his text was,

"The fathers have eaten sour grapes; the children's teeth are set on edge."

"Out wid dat idea of yours, you child of Belial; out wid him! For I sees him in your eye, and dar be one here in de midst of dis solemn assembly dat sees him in your black heart.

"O merciful God? dar is a man in dis presence dat says in his heart dat de Lord done gone damned him to de fires of hell, cause his protogonitor de great Adam stole de fruit of his Master's garden. [Here there arose a general noise of approbation, and the old men and women "hallelujah;" and the preacher gave an emphatic "amen."] Dat is it what I am arter; I so jist got dat ar sarprint by its tail, and pulled him out of his hole, whar he hided hissel, whensoever he hears de foot falls of de sarvants of de Lord; and when as we goes by, why you see, he jist comes out of his hiding-place agin, and am ready to pisen de little children wid his venom.

"Brudderin! let us kill dat ar venomous beast, and preserve his skin, dat de memory of dis day's service be mongt de discomfittments of dat redeeming grace dat says, 'Out of de mouth of de babe, and from de broken bable of de breast child, de Lord will still de enemy and de avenger, dat de praise and de glory mought be his own.'"

"Day tell me dar is a land a great way off, and dar was in dat land a long time ago, a certain Welchman, named Pelagian. Now dis old Welchman, he done gone travel a great way to put his fist in de face of a man in Africa, dat whar day say we cum from, and his name was Gus, or Gustin; and he sees, 'I dar you to fight me on dat ar subject.'"

"Now I reckon dat are Pelagian cum to Africa cause he knowed dat wur a sore subject wid de black man's ancestry, dat ar riginal sin of Father Ham, whose sour grapes set our teeth on edge. Howsum-ever jist give me time and I will show you dat he did not know nudin about it.

"In de fust place, what am aboriginal sin? Dis Welchman mistook it. He tinks dat it be de transgressum of de law; and dat am de pint, when his unjercum-cised heart put him, on de wrong track. It am no sich circumstance. Cause how can a breast child transgress the law, when it knows no law? And how can the Africans, in dat ar land we cum from, how can the hendens transgress laws dat is not revealed to dem sort of people?

"And if dey has laws written on the fleshy tables of dar hearts, dat circumstance would not be aboriginal sin; it would be wilful sin, which is a fact not to our present purpose. What is it? Why it is no transgressum of no sort whatum-ever. It is like a rattlesnake dat Jim