

hymn!" he exclaimed, "I have not thought of it for years. How many times has it called me home again, when I had gone out angry at my father, resolved never to go back." And it had come to call him to be reconciled to his Father above, and to return from his long wandering through the paths of sin. It was the remembrance of his mother's voice that melted his heart, and brought him to the feet of Jesus. Only a few days afterwards he was borne through the "pearly gates" to meet that mother in the city of her God!

This incident came to my knowledge a few years ago, and often since that time, when I have been singing to the children, and some light, trivial song has come to my lips, have I changed it for "Jerusalem." And when the children ask me why I sing "Jerusalem" I tell them of the wandering boy, and how he was brought home to God. What a precious, sacred privilege it is to sing to the little ones this and other dear old hymns! The music and the words will go with them through life, and no one knows how holy their influences may be. Let us then be careful what words we sing, lest after we are gone one of these, our little ones, should be a wanderer. If so, and the remembrance of mother's voice and mother's hymn, should lead him back to home and heaven, what an eternity of rejoicing would be ours!

Home Missions.

For the Christian Messenger.

The following communications were received by the Secretary, during the month, and read at the late meeting of the Missionary Board in Halifax.

NEW ANNAN AND TATMAGOUCHE BAY.
To R. N. Beckwith, Secretary of the N. S. Home Mission Board.

DEAR BROTHER,—Having performed the mission of twelve weeks assigned me at New Annan and Head of Tatmagouche Bay, it becomes my duty to furnish the Board with a report through you.

The church at the former place I found in a weak condition, but ready to receive the Gospel, and cheerfully contribute to its support. Only a few male members remain, but they are hoping and praying for better days.

At the Head of the Bay the church is in a better condition, and is growing slowly but surely, both in numbers and strength. When I left that part of the field some believers were waiting for an opportunity to join the church, which, it is hoped, will soon be granted by the Lord of the harvest. I regret that I had to leave the field and work, for a week or two, to visit Bridgetown, in order to see my beloved sister in her last illness. But the lesson thus gained of the power of Christ to sustain and comfort the soul in adversity, and the necessity of working earnestly and vigorously while the day lasts, was, I trust, profitable to me. But the entire twelve weeks of labor have now been completed, and I have reason to thank God and take courage. The congregations have been large and attentive, and tokens of the presence of God and the power of the Holy Spirit were not wanting. I have to acknowledge the kindness and sympathy of the people during my labors here.

The field on which I have been laboring is an important one, and our people and friends are anxious to have more preaching and are willing to do what they can to support a minister located among them. But they require help from the Board, either at Halifax or Yarmouth. The late storm damaged the grain crops, especially at the Head of the Bay; nevertheless the people there and in New Annan contributed liberally of their means to support the Mission. It is to be hoped that some arrangements will be made by the Board to supply this field with more preaching, and if possible a stated ministry. I was glad to have the Rev. E. B. Corey preach for me on two different occasions at the Bay. Brother Edward Manroe, a promising young man, also rendered valuable assistance in the meetings.

Travelled 617 miles. Preached 39 sermons. Attended 15 Conference and Prayer meetings. Made 107 family visits. Travelling expenses \$7.50. Collected for the Missions \$80.03.

Yours truly,
J. J. ARMSTRONG.

New Annan, Sept. 19th.

MARGAREE AND MABOU, C. B.

Dear Brother Beckwith,—

I come to you again with a brief report of my missionary labor this summer in Margaree and Mabou, C. B.

I am sorry to say that the churches in those two places are still without a pastor. This is not on account of any unwillingness on their part to do their utmost toward the support of one, but because there seems to be no man whose services as such can be obtained.

In each of those places there is a finished meeting house of sufficient capacity to accommodate all who are in the habit of attending our meetings, and in Margaree there is a parsonage conveniently situated and finished except plastering. In this place the meetings on the Sabbath are regularly maintained during the year, and through the Summer months a Sabbath School is conducted.

I received a hearty welcome upon my arrival, and during my stay became the recipient of many tokens of extreme kindness. The people did not seem to attend the meetings with a view to criticize my early attempts to proclaim the gospel, but rather to encourage me by their marked attention.

This field of labor is made more interesting by a large number of intelligent young people who are regular attendants at religious services, and some of whom are already volunteers in the army of Christ. From other denominations I received many expressions of sympathy and respect.

This is a field that should be cared for by those who may hereafter be identified with the oversight of our Home Missionary operations. Other denominations are regarding their interests here with a care which evinces a determination to sustain their cause, and surely the Baptist interest here, which for strength, is second to none other, will not be allowed to wane for the want of support.

I attended 23 Prayer, Conference and other religious meetings, four of which were "Foreign Missionary Concerts."—Travelled 450 miles. Made 176 family visits. Collected \$56.73 for the Foreign Mission, and \$96.56 for the Home Mission. Yours fraternally,
A. J. STEVENS.

Wolfville, Sept. 27th, 1873.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY.

R. N. Beckwith, Esq.

DEAR BROTHER,—I have been laboring during the last quarter in the following places:—Mount Pleasant, Centerville, Greshore, Six Mile River, Wallace, Grey's Road, Windmill, Westchester, East Branch and Millville. In the last named place we held a few special meetings, that resulted in reviving those who had grown cold, and the conversion of sinners. Here we had the pleasure of baptizing believers. I feel very much encouraged in my mission work in this County.

The Lord has graciously smiled upon us and owned our labors. In the prosecution of my work I have tried to preach Christ faithfully, tenderly and lovingly and I am anxiously looking for a bountiful harvest.

The statistics of my labors are as follows: Time spent, twelve weeks. Preached 41 sermons. Attended 14 Prayer and Conference meetings. Made 100 family visits. Baptized 4 believers. Distributed 100 pages of tracts. Travelled 475 miles. Collected \$40.75.

Yours truly,
E. B. COREY.

Little River, Sept. 8th, 1873.

MISSION TO ISAAC'S HARBOR.

To R. N. Beckwith, Esq.

DEAR BROTHER,—On my arrival here I found the people anxiously awaiting the arrival of their expected missionary. As they are not able to support a minister themselves, they are left almost entirely destitute of the preaching of the Gospel except as they are supplied by the Home Missionary Board. I found the little flock here very much scattered for the want of a shepherd. Conference meetings had been discontinued. But there are a number of faithful followers of Christ who are endeavoring to hold on their way, hoping for better days. The first effort was to establish a weekly prayer meeting and reorganize the Conference meeting. Although there were but few to attend at first, yet I hope the effort was blessed. During my stay here the Sunday School was greatly enlarged, more efficiently worked and a greater degree of interest manifested. The preaching meetings were well attended, the house being generally crowded with attentive listeners. It has been my object to preach Christ, not only in the pulpit but from house to house, and I have felt encouraged to go on laboring in his cause. Wherever I went I was not only received with kind wishes and regards, but encouraged by their willingness to sustain the

mission by generous contributions on its behalf, as may be seen by my report of the mission.

I also visited Seal Harbor, Island Harbor and Coddle Harbor. Though there is much reason to lament the low state of religion in these places, and the absence of any effort to sustain religious meetings, yet I have found a few faithful, who anxiously look forward to, and hail with joy the visits of the christian minister along their much neglected shores. The inhabitants of all these places have lost very heavily by the storm on the 24th ult. The church in course of construction at Isaac's Harbor was blown down. This they feel worse than all their private losses; but though they are cast down they are not disheartened. Pious resolves were being made by some to appropriate a certain portion of their earnings towards its reconstruction; and I trust that ere long it will be re-erected and completed. This will be a heavy undertaking for them, as upon those who have already contributed, largely, the burden will again fall. Do not instances such as this call upon christians in more favored localities, where, in the providence of God they have been preserved from the ravages of the storm, for an expression of their heartfelt gratitude, by acts of substantial kindness to those who have been thus afflicted? I may say that on my way home I spent two days very pleasantly at Maria Joseph. This is a fishing settlement about 20 miles from Isaac's Harbor. I preached here to a very attentive congregation. Though there are no Baptists in this place yet the people expressed their regret that I could not remain longer and preach. Collected for the mission \$75.69.

A. J. DAVISON.

Portauquique, Sept. 19th, 1873.

GUYSBORO COUNTY.

DEAR BROTHER,—

I have spent 11 weeks in the service of the Nova Scotia Home Mission Board at Guysboro Town, Manchester and vicinity. On my arrival at the above places I found little bands of christians gathering for prayer every Sabbath morning and one evening during each week. During my short stay the congregations were large and attentive. Our meetings were seasons not soon to be forgotten. We do not know what is to be the result of our labors at this place, but certainly there is a most encouraging prospect and a great opening for preaching. Whithersoever I went I was kindly received, and the more I travel among my fellow beings the more I am convinced that the arm of Jehovah alone can do the work. Who can fathom the depravity of fallen men? Oh! that we had more faith to plead with God that his work might extend till all shall know the truth as it is in Jesus. No marked quickening of the few professors of religion residing there can I report positively. Although several have expressed themselves as refreshed by the services, and your missionary has at times certainly enjoyed such while attempting to preach Christ to professors as well as non-professors. This field is one of great interest, and I leave hoping that God may send a man among the people to break the bread of life. Collected for the Mission \$49.24.

I remain yours truly,
C. H. MARTELL.

Guysboro, Sept. 1st, 1873.

COW BAY AND GLACE BAY.

R. N. Beckwith, Esq., Secretary of H. M. Board.

DEAR BROTHER,—Inclosed you will find the report of twelve weeks missionary labor performed at Cow Bay, Little Glace Bay, and adjacent places.

This is a very interesting field for Missionary enterprise. At Cow Bay I found a small but united church maintaining prayer meetings and a Sabbath School, and preached to a large and very attentive congregation.

Little Glace Bay is an interesting section of the field. A small band of believers maintain a Sabbath School, and Prayer Meetings in the absence of preaching services.

New Mines, about nine miles from Sydney is a place of importance, both as a mining district and in a Missionary point of view. All these are mining settlements, they are growing and will continue to grow in material wealth and population, with the development of the coal trade, which is rapidly increasing. It is to be hoped that so promising a field for Missionary enterprise will not be neglected. "The harvest is great, the laborers few." Collected for the Mission \$76.15.

Yours very truly,
S. McC. BLACK.

MIRA, HOMEVILLE & C W BAY, C. B.

R. N. Beckwith.

DEAR BROTHER,—Something more may be desired concerning the mission, than the mere figures which I have given.

Mira and Homeville, C. B., where I spent ten of the twelve weeks appointed by the Board in connection with Cow Bay, form the field in which Rev. E. C. Spinney labored for several years, with an ardour that might be considered, perhaps was, a correct exponent of his real success. Then the church numbered, as I have learned, over a hundred members, and was united and earnest. From the last year of Mr. Spinney's pastorate—however until now, there have been many changes. Some of the members have moved away, some are dead. From all causes, at least fifty of the then active ones cannot now be found. The church remained without a pastor, without regular meetings, perhaps lost a measure of its interest, perhaps did not entirely preserve its unity.

In this case, I felt, I feel, that the only assuaging balm, is the influence of the ever Blessed Spirit. The one who alone can bring together again in lasting close and loving oneness, the straying sheep of a broken fold is the Blessed Saviour, the Good Shepherd. The people recognize this and earnestly desire a revival of pure religion that they may all forget in a new rising of the Son of Righteousness upon them, the troubles that made night of the past. An earnest missionary should be continually upon the ground. In the three places, plenty of work could be found, a large part of his support could be gathered. Earnest christian labor from house to house, is what is needed, what is desired. I cannot but be thankful that I was just where I was, and that God may send another, under whose labours the church may invite and live and grow is my prayer.

Yours sincerely,

W. A. NEWCOMBE.

Newton Theological Institute, Newton Centre Mass., Sep. 22, 1873.

For the Christian Messenger.

ITEMS FROM YARMOUTH—MISSIONARY UNION.

The Board of this Society met at this place to-day. This was a postponed meeting, in consequence of the absence of both corresponding and recording secretaries.

The correspondence, showed a good deal of work to be done or doing. The Board being only in its incipency, its measures can in a great degree be only formative, its missionary Agent being now in the field, travelling in the Eastern part of the province at present.

Interesting reports were read from several stations, under the appointment of the Board.

A new church edifice is in course of erection at Sheburne and not far away an old one is being resuscitated. The missionary at this station Rev. E. N. Archibald, is earnestly and effectively laboring, and meets with good success.

Destitute and weak churches, newly formed interests, and general mission work are in extenso before the Board. To supply all demands is the question—to this the Board is addressing itself with laudable zeal, and must defer for a week the work that could not be reached by two sessions held to-day.

I mentioned the absence of the recording Secretary, Rev. W. H. Porter filled this office. He left about ten days ago, for his new pastorate, which is Brantford, Ontario. To the First Baptist Church in this place our brother received a very cordial and unanimous call. He has accepted it. Did he do right? some ask, doubtfully. He thought he did. Providential leadings he thought to be in that direction, he feared it would be wrong to disregard them. Brother Porter's removal was generally regretted, especially so by the Temple church in this place, of which he had been for two years pastor and where his labors had been much blessed. It was his privilege and happiness to lead into the baptismal waters, a willing disciple, on the morning of the day he left. Many good wishes and prayers followed him. May they all be realized.

Other churches in the vicinity are also without pastors. Brother Wallace's acceptance of the mission agency left the churches served by him without a pastor, but it is likely they will be all soon supplied. "Old Zion" church stands steadfast with its Pastor, amid the surrounding changes. He has just returned from a few weeks vacation, and has entered with vigor, on his work both church and denominational.

DELTA.

Oct. 13th, 1873.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

NOTES OF TRAVEL.

XII.

SUPERSTITION AND IRRELIGION—LIFE AND THE JUDGMENT—THE MIRROR OF FATE—BONZES—BUDDHISM AND ROMANISM—CHINESE DIETARY—NO COINS—THE FOUR BOOKS—FOREIGN QUARTERS.

The Chinese prove the compatibility of excessive superstition with gross irreligion. Temples and idols, altars and shrines, prayer-vendors and religious fortune tellers are innumerable. Every house has its private altar, and incense burns unceasingly. The Chinese heart seems constantly on the qui vive to propitiate some demon—and the conscience forever about to intercept some unseen messenger of evil. And yet a more godless people—a people more utterly and hopelessly indifferent to the great problems of God and eternity is not to be found.

The religion of China is hybrid—the product of the union of at least four originally distinct systems,—Tanism, Manichaeism, Confucianism, and Buddhism. A superficial view would leave the impression that the religious element is more vigorous here than among other heathen nations. It is not the first instance where an ostentatious Ritual has existed together with the religious life enfeebled to the last degree of imbecility. Chinese temples are substantial and gorgeous beyond anything known in Burmah; but Burman Buddhism is virile and effective beyond the best types of that religion to be found in China.

The commingling of so many diverse systems has produced curiosities of religion not common in other heathen lands. In one large temple are found a series of idols graduated in size to accord with the various ages of the worshippers. In the same temple is a gloomy hall filled with pictorial, and has relief representations of life and of the judgement. The former is a hill, scarcely less than perpendicular, up whose ascent men and women are represented toiling painfully. The majority stumble and fall into the abyss that yawns below. In the judgement scene, the Arbitrator sits calmly regarding a mirror in which is revealed the whole life with all the deeds of each individual to be judged, and according to the silent but unerring testimony of the mirror, the persons judged are dragged away to torment, or led to the regions of Bliss—the latter represented by sensuous delights, and the former by terrific and revolting figures of physical agony and torture.

The Bonzes—priests—clad in flowing robes of yellow and purple silk, and wearing that peculiar style of head covering which reminds one of College days chant together from a Ritual. The tone is monotonous but not unmusical. As one watches the religious performance,—the bowings, prostrations and genuflections; and marks the tansure, the robes, and the rosaries,—the incense, pictures, candles and altars,—the mind becomes busy with the curious resemblances—too numerous and too sharply defined to be mere coincidences—between Buddhism and Romanism.

Although the Chinese dietary is familiar with sundry preparations of rats, cats, and fat puppies, yet they are no mean adepts in much that concerns the culinary art. They are connoisseurs in fish, and know the importance of having that article of consumption as fresh as possible. The fish are kept alive until required and for this purpose portable tanks are used, and are to be found in every part of the city.

The shopkeepers of Canton, and indeed, throughout the whole Empire, regard with suspicion all silver and gold coins. The national shrewdness seems to have appreciated from the first the extraordinary facility and temptation offered by a currency for counterfeiting and adulteration—and refuses to believe that any mortal can resist such a challenge to his imitative propensity. Everything is sold by weight, and all payments are made in the same way. If a yard of silk is wanted the tradesman will gravely weigh it, and when a Mexican dollar is given in payment, he will weigh that too; and if there is any change to be returned, that, too, must be weighed out in crumbs of silver, wrapped carefully in paper, and handed to the buyer with a bow of most polished politeness. The "Four Books," or Chinese classics are the standard for admission to all government offices, and the emoluments are distributed according to the proficiency of the candidates. Periodically the capital of each Province is crowded with literati