

the altar, on which they placed their offerings of pennies and postal currency. Suddenly the preacher called out "Stop—stop dat singing."

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

THOUGHTS FOR THE TIMES.

No. IV.

SALVATION BY SACRAMENTS.

I am credibly informed that it was asserted the other day in an Episcopal pulpit, and by Episcopal lips, that all persons who were baptized in infancy, and afterwards confirmed, were sure of salvation.

The readers of the Christian Messenger may not require to be instructed on this point. They know that as sin is a "transgression of the law," and therefore a personal act, so salvation is indissolubly connected with "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ."

But although the readers of the Messenger, generally, are well instructed in these matters, it is desirable, after apostolic example, to "stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance" (2 Pet. iii. 1), bearing in mind, also, that attempts are constantly made to "beguile unstable souls," and that error is easily made attractive.

Man is sadly prone to endeavour to mar God's work, or to substitute something of his own for the divine provisions. He cannot deny the fact that he is a sinner, he will stoutly maintain that he can save himself. He revolts at the idea of obligation, even to God. And there is nothing that he is fonder of than the notion that he can effect his own deliverance by some material act, something done or something suffered—by any thing rather than by the grace of the Most High.

It is a pagan absurdity. We need not heap together quotations from heathen writers. Every student of the Greek and Roman classics is familiar with passages which show what efficacy was ascribed to the performance of ceremonies. When the Roman sprinkled himself with the lustral water on entering the temple, he dreamed that purification was obtained by it. The efficacy of the water of the Ganges, the sacred river of the Hindus is proclaimed by the tens of thousands who resort to it every year, to bathe in it and thus wash away their sins, or to drown themselves in it and thereby attain high dignity in heaven.

It is a Popish dogma. Not that it was unknown among professing Christians before Popery existed. It was in fact one of the earliest heresies. A misapprehension of the true meaning of Scripture expressions, combined with the tendency just now alluded to—reliance on the outward and the human, led to the inculcation of tenets which were afterwards embodied in creeds, and regarded as symbols of orthodoxy. Popery was the culmination, and salvation by sacraments is the very life-blood of Popery, not only because it feeds the self-righteousness which cleaves to our fallen nature, but especially because it exalts the priesthood, by whom the sacraments are

administered, and nurtures the pride of office and place. "In the sacraments," says the Catechism of the Council of Trent, "exists the power of the Omnipotent, effectuating that which the elements cannot of themselves accomplish," and the priest, "the minister of the sacrament, be he good or bad, validly consecrates and confers the sacraments," the same document declares, "provided he make use of the matter and form instituted by Christ, and always observed in the catholic church, and intends to do what the church does in their administration;" the said priest "representing, in the discharge of his sacred functions, not his own, but the person of Christ" (pp. 150, 155). Baptism, as Rome teaches, "remits original sin and actual guilt, however enormous; remits all the punishment due to sin, bestows invaluable privileges, such as justification and adoption; produces abundance of virtues; unites the soul to Christ; seals it with an ineffaceable character; and opens the portals of heaven."

It is an antichristian error. It is scarcely possible to conceive of any religious theory of the New Testament. The Jews were sacramentalists, and expected seats in heaven in reward for their punctilious performance of Mosaic rites. The Gentile proclivities have been already spoken of. In opposition to all this stands christianity. What is personal religion, according to the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles? It is faith—humility—holiness—and love. It is "not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xiv. 17). It is to "worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. iii. 3). It is the effect of truth understood—truth received—truth felt—and truth fruitful—all by the influence of the Holy Spirit, enlightening, renewing, sanctifying. To maintain that a man is a christian because he was sprinkled or plunged in infancy, and afterwards confirmed, is to contradict the word of the Lord, and to introduce "another gospel."

It is a soul-destroying heresy. Some years ago the Rev. Thomas Binney, an eminent minister among the congregationalists, gave great offence to the sacerdotal party and some others by publicly avowing his belief that the Church of England "destroys more souls than it saves." It was a sharp sentence, provokingly short, and seemingly severe. But the meaning was plain. Mr. Binney was well acquainted with many excellent ministers of the gospel in the Church of England, and with many devoted christians, members of that church. But he looked at its constitution and ritual. He saw that every child baptized by a Church of England minister was taught that in baptism as he or she was made "a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven;" that from that time he or she was treated as a Christian—confirmed—admitted to the communion—and at length buried as a "dear brother" or "sister"—although during all those years there was no evidence of repentance and faith. Instead of that, the individual trusted in the connection with the church, commencing in infancy, and kept up all the life long participation in the outward ceremonies, while of spiritual religion, the religion of the heart, there was utter destitution.

Mr. Binney felt assured that tens of thousands pass into eternity every year in that hopeless state, resting on a sandy foundation, and cherishing false confidence. Whether his assertion was arithmetically correct or not, is altogether incapable of proof. But whatever may be the number of souls who are thus defrauded of the heavenly inheritance, it is a melancholy reflection that the ecclesiastical formulas, and often the direct teachings of ministers of the church, cherish hopes which are unwarranted by Scripture, and cannot but issue in everlasting disappointment. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. iii. 11).

This ruinous heresy, the doctrine of salvation by sacraments is held, as has been shown, by the Roman Church. It is held by the Greek Church. The Lutheran Church is not free from it. That it is a device of the devil, to poison the stream at its source, and to train up human beings in expectations which can only terminate in misery—and that it is successful to a fearful extent, dragging down to destruction untold myriads, the records of our race do unmistakably testify.

Fearful is the responsibility of the ministers of christianity—priests they boast themselves to be—who assuage the pains and quell the fears of those who submit to their instructions, by the administration of this deadly opiate. We know not the secrets of the unseen world, nor in what manner departed spirits communicate with each other. But we are warranted by many passages of Scripture in believing that some method of intercourse prevails. Amidst the wailings of the lost may possibly be heard the utterances of bitter reproach, addressed to their former teachers—whether present or absent we need not curiously enquire:—"We were anxious about our safety, and sought your counsel. You referred us to our baptism, in which, you said, we were regenerated: you quieted our scruples by assurances that abstinence from gross immorality after baptism gave us the right to be considered good christians; and when in our last sickness we trembled at the review of unfruitful lives, you absolved us from all our sins, by the assumption of 'authority committed' to you, and lulled us to sleep by the sacrament of the dying. We believed you—trusted you—and here we are!"

SENEX.

For the Christian Messenger.

LETTER FROM REV. W. GEORGE.

WOLFFVILLE, July 5, 1873.

Mr. Editor,—

The accompanying extracts from a letter recently received from Rev. W. George, will, I think, be interesting to your readers. Yours sincerely,

ARTHUR R. R. CRAWLEY.

"The work is progressing, several are waiting baptism here in Henthada, and Ko At writes encouragingly from his field; six or eight, he says, have asked for baptism. I am going there in a few days, (D. V.) The church here are doing their best to support their pastor. They give one-twentieth of their income for that purpose, without doing less for other things. I did not think of your plan of borrowing money for the preachers. After many fears and some prayer, thought it better to stop paying them, and now believe God overruled it for good. It will shut the mouths of people who feared Henthada preachers were hirelings only, and give the men a chance to exercise faith in God, instead of in the Nova Scotia Missionary Board. I have set on foot some arrangements that bid fair to develop the spirit of benevolence in Burman Christians.

Tha Dway is a very sick man. He can not teach this rains, I fear—if he could the school would support him. Already four fine young men from Mongyee have come in, paying eight annas per month. The school will be self supporting hereafter, and I must take Moung Hpo and carry it on this rains. A great deal has been said of the giving by the Karens for the support of the gospel and in order to make a big total all they do for schools, all the books they purchase are put in. Again, every Rupee the Karens expend for schools is put in. Now, it costs a Burman as much to feed his child at home while attending school, as it costs a Karen to feed his child while in school in Bassein, Henthada or Rangoon, and if the total was footed up would show to us good advantage. Remind the christians at home of this,—and farther that the increase of the Burman Church is from the heathen, while the Karens are mostly born into the church."

For the Christian Messenger.

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS TO REV. M. P. FREEMAN.

Dear Brother, Having at your own request accepted your resignation of the pastorate of this church, we wish to present you with some token of the attachment and esteem in which you and Mrs. Freeman are still held by us.

We had fondly hoped that your connection with us would have continued, but in this we are disappointed. We bow to the divine will. In removing from us be assured you have the prayers and best wishes of the Nietaux Church for your future prosperity and success in the great work of preaching the gospel of Christ. We feel that we shall sustain a loss in being deprived of the society of yourself and companion. We are thus left without one to go in and out before us to break to us the bread of life.

Your labors have been most faithful among us. You have sought both by precept and example to lead those with whom you have associated to the cross of Christ. Although you have not met with the full measure of success you anticipated and desired, yet your work has not been in vain. You have seen backsliders returning to their Father's house, and have led a number into the baptismal waters, and have by your ministry contributed to the edification of the church.

In conclusion we would crave the best gifts of heaven for yourself and family, and earnestly hope that you may be the honored instrument of advancing the Redeemer's cause in your contemplated field of labor, and that in the great day when the Lord shall call his ransomed people home, there may be many who shall be stars in your crown of rejoicing.

Signed in behalf of the Church,

S. L. CHIPMAN, C. FELCH, W. M. GATES, Deacons.

REPLY.

Beloved Brethren,—

Your kind expression of esteem comforts us in the prospect of our departure for another field of labor. We have had many tokens of your good will and affection during our residence among you; and the thought of this renders all the more painful the sundering of those ties that have held us together for the last three years. Mrs. Freeman joins with me in an expression of gratitude for the many acts of kindness shown us, and in the earnest desire for your future prosperity. I have tried to do my duty amongst you, but not without the consciousness of much imperfection in my work.

I may be mistaken as to the will of God, but my impression is, that in removing, I am led by the Hand that "leads the blind by a way they know not." The Nietaux Church has not hitherto desired short pastorates, may it still continue in that mind, and be ever blessed with the ministrations of able and faithful men.

Brethren, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all," Amen.

For the Christian Messenger.

IN MEMORIAM.

MRS. SAMUEL ROCKWELL, of Billtown, died on the 2nd inst., in the 83rd year of her age. The deceased was a sister of the late Senator C. R. Bill and Rev. I. E. Bill, Senr., of Saint John, N.B. When quite young she professed faith in Christ, was baptized by the late Rev. Edw. Manning, and united with the Baptist denomination; of which body she continued a beloved and useful member till her death. Of her, as a Christian it could be justly said she was "strong in faith; giving glory to God." Her powers of mind were unusually strong and vigorous till a few weeks before her death. It was amazing to see how readily she would commit long hymns—and portions of Scripture to memory—and how correctly she could retain them after committal. During the last few years of her life, especially, her happiness in Christ, has been almost unbounded—"joy unspeakable" was hers to experience. Seldom does it fall to the lot of man to rejoice in brighter manifestations of the Saviour's presence. And yet, in the mysterious providence of God, the last few weeks of her life were weeks of gloominess and grief. As the old worn-out body began to tumble down, the mind was affected also. Reason tottered and comfort fled. Surely—

"God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform"

Her funeral occasion was improved by her Pastor from Eccl. viii. 12. "Surely, I know it shall be well with them that fear God."—Com.

Religious Intelligence.

SIAM.—Lippencott's Magazine describes the progress of toleration and the decadence of Buddhism in Siam. Though the recent royal edict gives protection to all religions and permits every man to choose for himself in matters of conscience, it can scarcely be said that the two Kings take any real interest in Christianity. They treat Christianity with outward respect, because they esteem it decorous to do so; and the same is true of the Regent and Prime Minister; but none of them even profess any real regard for the worship of the true God. The concessions made thus far indicate progress in civilization, not in piety. The nation as it were swaying off into the frigid regions of scepticism and, influenced by many unworthy representatives of Christian countries, they live only for the luxuries and laxities of the present life. Priestly robes are much less frequently seen on the river and in the streets than formerly; and many of the clergy no longer reside at the temples, but with their families in their own houses; thus relinquishing even the pretence of celibacy, which has hitherto been one of the strongest points of Buddhism, giving it an appearance of sanctity and a hold on the affections of the people that nothing else can do. With this rapidly increasing renunciation of priestly celibacy and the daily diminishing ranks of the clergy, Buddhism seems tottering to ruin. Services at the temples are now held in imitation of English morning and evening prayers; a moral essay is read, at which the body-guards of the King and the Government officers are generally required to be present, and the remainder of the day they are excused from duty.

JAPAN.—The Japanese Envoys, when in England, selected a staff of teachers to conduct an Engineering College at Yeddo. According to Nature the general scheme of the instruction had been devised by one of our eminent engineers, a gentleman whose experience of Continental and British systems of instruction is extensive. The principal of the college, who is also to be the professor of engineering and mechanics, is Mr. Henry Dyer, M. A. B. Sc., who studied at the University of Glasgow, under the late Prof. J. M. Rankine, Sir Wm. Thomson, and their colleagues. Mr. Dyer was a Whitworth Scholar, and his career hitherto has been one of great and well deserved success. He is well qualified to act as principal of the Yeddo Engineering College. Prof. Dyer is to be assisted in his duties in the Japanese College of Engineers by professors of mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, geology, and mineralogy, and by teachers of English, &c. It is intended to institute a geological survey of Japan, and not improbable the active superintendence of that work will devolve upon the gentleman who may ultimately be appointed to the professorship of geology and mineralogy. As an important adjunct to the College, there will be erected a technical workshop, fitted with steam-engine, machine tools, and all the necessary appliances for familiarising the young Japanese engineers with the principles of construction; there will also be a technological museum for the illustration of the progressive stages of various industrial processes from the raw materials to the finished products.

Among the most striking indications of the progress of Western civilization in Japan, is the establishment at Yeddo of six printing offices employing only native workmen. The types employed are of course imported and the works produced are for the most part those used in elementary instruction. The desire on the part of the Japanese for instruction in foreign languages has led to a demand for works of this class, which for the past few months has considerably exceeded the supply. Those Japanese who intend to become printers study the rudiments of the art in the offices of the European journals at Yokohama, and they generally manifest great adroitness in mastering all the details of the trade. Those who do not possess sufficient knowledge of any European language for this work are employed on the Japanese journals, which are published daily, either with native characters or in type cast in Yeddo from our models. One of these establishments is managed by an old Yakouin—a significant fact; for in older times an officer would have considered it beneath him to earn his bread. The articles in these journals consist mostly of extracts from European journals, custom-returns, local news, statistics of the harvests, rates of exchange, &c. All the articles must be submitted to a government censor.