

CORRESPONDENCE.

For the Christian Messenger.

Some Homely Truth.

"And Pharaoh called unto Moses and said, Go ye, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed." The lives of many professing Christians at the present time bear witness to the truth, that the race of Pharaohs is not yet extinct, though centuries have passed away since these words were uttered. Pharaoh and his host have been drowned in the Red Sea; the Hebrews have been a great nation, and have fallen from the pedestal of their might and power; and urged on by the rushing tide of time other nations have become famous in the world's history, and again in their turn have bowed to dust and decay, but God's mandate is as binding to us to-day as it was ages ago to the tyrant Pharaoh. God says, "let my people go that they may serve me," and also, "let them take their flocks and herds with them, let them serve me with their substance, not without it." Pharaoh says "No, the people may go, but I will keep back the flocks and herds."

And how are we obeying God? We consecrate all to His service—except the flocks and herds. These we leave in the land of Egypt. We make a profession of religion, and in the presence of God, the holy angels, and the Church, we promise to live according to his commandments; and then, folding our hands in selfish ease, we conclude that we have set sail for Zion and nothing more is required of us. We are punctual hearers of the word, but give as little as possible for its support; we attend missionary concerts, and step out quietly before the boxes are passed; we go to prayer-meeting, and speak and pray fervently, very often as loudly as though God and the whole congregation were deaf, but with our protestations of love to God there runs the under current of love for money. The disease takes various forms, but under whatever type it appears, it is the same malignant malady.

Perhaps we rather like to see our names figuring as, Spread Eagle, Eq., five hundred dollars, or the Honorable Loud Braggart, one thousand dollars, and therefore always subscribe munificently where it is certain our names will appear in public print, and verily we have our reward as our Saviour said long ago of those who did their alms before men. But unfortunately there is a "behind the scene" to this magnificent outside show. We employ hundreds of homeless girls and women in our large shops and manufactories and pay them such mean, despicable wages, that if we had any sense of justice we would blush at the very thought of the profit we make from their hard labor. We chuckle over our ill-gotten gains, and congratulate ourselves on our good luck, while friendless girls give up the struggle for an honest life, and helplessly, despairingly, drift down to destruction. In that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, will not the ruin of these unfortunate ones be laid to the charge of those who refused to pay a full equivalent to them for their work? It will as sure as there is a God in Heaven. As Jesus saw the people casting their gifts into the treasury, there came a certain poor widow who cast in two mites. A small gift, and her name did not head a subscription list, yet He who cannot lie tells us that she gave more than they all. And why? Because she gave in the right spirit, and got her two mites honestly.

As to publicity in honoring God with our substance, it is often unavoidable, and sometimes may do good in the way of example, but let us be careful to be consistent. Let us feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and pay our debts with as much delight as we would in having our name heralded as the founder of this, that, or the other Institution of science, literature, or benevolence.

There are thousands of ways of showing that we are willing to serve God if we can leave the flocks and herds behind, or in other words that our purses are not consecrated to Him, and that we are trying to solve the problem of serving God and Mammon. As the sexton of a church said to me not long since, "People talk a great deal about consecrating all to God, but it is plagues hard to get any money out of them."

To get a cent from some church mem-

bers, for any good purpose is to use a familiar phrase "like pulling teeth." They seem to think that those who perform the unpleasant task of presenting to them the matter of giving in the light of duty, have entered into a conspiracy to rob and plunder for their own pleasure. No thought of any rights that God may have enters into to their hearts; but how to get rid of the subject is the one idea, and if they are ashamed to refuse point blank, they will sometimes grudgingly throw down a few dollars, as an easy way of putting an end to an unpleasant topic. I once heard of a prominent man in a certain church making a remark like this, "They are always begging for—College and to get rid of them I gave a thousand dollars, and had done with it." "They" who? Why those who felt a deep interest in the prosperity of the College, as he, being a member of the church, for which said College was the nursery of the ministry, should have had in common with them.

Why is it that God does not strike us dead for our iniquitous doings? Because he is long suffering, is the only answer. We ride in our handsome carriages; wear diamonds and costly apparel; frequent Long Branch, Saratoga, or Newport as the whim may seize us; but grudge a dollar to support the gospel at home, send it abroad, or help those who have all they can do to live, and who when they do their utmost barely exist.

We cheat our washerwoman, don't start; it is an ugly word I know, but no other one will do; we hire rooms and expect to beat down the price of our landlady to as near nothing as possible; we speak in prayer-meeting of our great desire to please God, and at the same time owe the man who sits next us five hundred dollars which we are never ready to pay, and yet we are good pious Christians, and we close our eyes devoutly and thank God we are not as other men. I hope we are not, or rather I hope some other men are not as we are.

I hope there are those professing the religion of Jesus who are not like the picture which I have drawn. What does the bible say? "Owe no man anything," and "upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him." Is this done? Do we set aside one twentieth, tenth, or fifth, or whatever the part may be, as the Lord has prospered us, and say, "That is not mine, it belongs to God?"

And are we sure that it is clean money, that it is not defiled by extortion, by the little mean dirty tricks of trade, or by the starvation and destruction of the helpless. If so then may we expect our service to be acceptable in the sight of God, but not otherwise.

Moreover this sort of thing does not pay. It may seem to be a profitable speculation for a time in this world, looking at it in a mere worldly sense, but there is an end to all this, and the scales of justice will balance evenly at the last. Men may rob God, and rob their fellowmen with seeming impunity, but "It is not all of life to live, nor all of death to die," and woe to us, if at last it is said, "Thou in thy lifetime had thy good things." Dear friends don't let us act absurdly. Faith without works is dead. St. James says, "show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." It is of no use to pray "Thy kingdom come," and, "May the knowledge of God cover the earth, as the waters cover the face of deep," if we by our own act hinder our prayers from being answered. I once read a story of a little boy whose father used, at family worship, to pray that God would feed the hungry. One morning a poor unfortunate neighbour, having a family of small children, came to the door and asked the man for some food for his children. He gave him nothing but, on going to the barn shortly after, what was his astonishment to find his little son filling a bag with wheat for the poor woman. "What are you doing?" he cried. "Why father," said the child, "this morning you prayed that God would feed the hungry, and I thought this was the right way for your prayer to be answered." The boy acted consistently, and we would all do well to imitate his example.

"The Lord loveth a cheerful giver" therefore let us live up to our professions and prayers, if we expect the welcome plaudit, "Well done."

L. E. W.  
Boston, Oct. 11th, 1876.

For the Christian Messenger.

A Letter from Russia.

A TRIP TO THE BATTLE FIELDS OF THE CRIMEA.

A stranger arriving in Russia, in order to travel must first obtain a passport. To get this you must first go the captain of the port. This we did, but the captain of the port said it was not his duty, we must go to the harbor-master. The harbor-master said it was the duty of the captain of the port. Backward and forward we travelled but they are almost as afraid to give a pass as if we were going ourselves to besiege the Crimea, which in fact we did in part to obtain some bullets and balls, which the Russians have piled in heaps of thousands of tons, gathered from battle fields, and are now melting at the foundries. Finally, the captain of the port concluded it was the duty of the Civil Governor and gave us a letter to that officer. Concluding we had enough of this work, armed with this letter, we commenced our journey, and as no one ever asked for it, it proved as good as a pass would have done. From Odessa we take the Russian steamboat to Sebastopol, and had a splendid opportunity of observing Russian customs and seeing people of different nations that travel in Southern Russia. These steamers are very fine, better than the Portland line of steamers from Boston to St. John.

There are three classes, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, the first class occupy the different decks in the stern of the boat; the second the same decks forward and the third the middle of the ship below the upper deck, or, in smaller boats, confined altogether to upper deck forward. These different classes are separated by railings running across the vessel and are not supposed to have any communication with each other. The first class live in high style, waiters in white gloves, white ties, &c. It is an odd sight to observe the quarters of the third class, there are long rows of what look the most like butcher's stalls of anything we have now in remembrance, extending along both sides of the vessel, and about seven feet wide. Here the Russians spread their quilts, sleep, do their cooking in small cans, and live whilst on board. Men, women and children stretched along these shelves, they are mostly soldiers, or servants of the lowest classes. The state rooms are very large, all having from three to six berths. It would be interesting to know the different nationalities represented on board. Jews with black caps and long black coats, Turks with red caps and wool pants, Tartars dressed somewhat like the Turks, and always wearing a cap of fur.

Here are Russian noblemen and their ladies, Russian Generals, Poles, Italians, French, a curious throng, and we are the only Canadians on board, and in fact the only persons who could speak English. At 8 o'clock in the morning, the Russians drink several cups of tea or coffee, sipping it with a spoon and spending nearly an hour at the table. Dinner from 11 to 1 is the only meal of the day. There are from 6 to 8 courses, and about 10 minutes between each course. As for the dishes some of them are very good others, you must ask no questions. At 8 P. M. the cups, tea, and coffee, are again brought on. Russians are very fond of such drinks as well as stronger stimulants. One day and night pass away and we enter the harbor of Sebastopol, memorable for the length of the siege it endured against the French and English. On the left of the entrance there are yet standing immense forts and earthworks, now dismantled, which were never taken, the Russians, after Sebastopol, which stands on the south side, was taken, passing over a bridge of boats, and remaining in tents here, until the treaty of Paris was signed. Here there is also a very large graveyard of the Russians, with a large pyramidal monument in the centre with a church inside. Further up the harbor on the right stands Sebastopol itself. Entering the town we pass through street after street with nothing but ruins on every side, save here and there a new building on the foundation or amidst the ruins of the old dwellings. Climbing bushes are to be seen running along the walls of rooms where splendid pictures no doubt once were hung, and through the floors small trees are springing up which once resounded with the feet of merry Russians as they cir-

led in the dance. Passing round the head of the harbor, we climb the Malakoff a lofty hill, midst trenches, mines, earthworks, stone walls and fortifications of the besiegers and besieged. The taking of this place by the French, decided the fate of Sebastopol, in a few days afterwards it surrendered. From here we cross a deep ravine, covered with grave stones, and climb another hill similar to the Malakoff, called the Redan which the English attacked, but, for want of more forces, in vain. Below the hills are the ruins of Russian barracks, the sides of which and facing the enemy are all shattered with shot and shell, the holes in the wall are, of course, yet to be seen. We return to town, and upon another day with guide and driver we go on a drive to Balaklava, St. George's Monastery and the various battle fields. Ascending the heights behind Sebastopol, we have before us a level dreary waste, extending for hundreds of miles—the Steppes of Russia. The first sight that meets our eyes are the white tents of a portion of the Russian army. The Russians gather here to drill every year at this season. Suddenly a great cloud of dust rises along the road before us, and we are compelled to turn aside, an advancing host approaches nearer and nearer, Generals mounted upon their prancing war-horses, precede the van, soon there follows a charge of the different batteries all along the line of us. Away in the distance, companies of soldiers are seen hurrying across the plain as if to reinforce a weakened army. In another, rifle pits are being dug, and earthworks are being thrown up. It lacks but the thunder of artillery from opposing hosts and falling foes, to change the scene into all the awful realities of war. As the batteries pass one after another directly in front of us, we have an excellent opportunity of observing their composition. In each battery there are four field pieces, a field piece being composed of a cannon and carriage, each field piece is drawn by either four or six horses, according to the size, and preceded by a soldier on horseback, and on the left horse in each span was a rider. From this appearance of wars yet to come, we pass on to view the sad results of war in days gone by.

From pyramidal monuments to pyramidal monuments erected on the scenes of the fiercest conflicts, from cemetery to cemetery of English, French and Russians, we proceed, in one place a heap of earth and a wooden cross, or a block of stone to mark the resting place of a fallen soldier. In another, a handsome marble slab to tell that this is raised by the British army, in memory of some great General, or to a large number of soldiers, who fell in such and such a conflict, that they belonged to such and such a company; we have now reached the highest part of the Steppes, the head quarters of the British army, directly in front of us there is a slight descent, terminating in a low plain or valley, to the right of this valley there is a long narrow ridge, separating it from the slope to the sea, and the larger valley of Balaklava, to the left of the valley there is a hill standing out alone. At the opposite side of the valley from the stand there are the ruins of a Russian redoubt. This is the valley of death, and down the valley between the ridge and the hill towards the Russian redoubt was made the ever memorable charge of the Light Brigade. We descend the hill and linger long in the valley or wander on the heights where Cossack and Russian reeled from the sabre stroke.

Perhaps the reader would bear with us were we to give a more extended description of the valley and hills of earthworks and trenches or write of reflections on the battle field itself, but there are yet other historic places to visit, and we must hurry on. We now cross the ridge and descend into the valley of Balaklava, we look in vain for town or village, on either side rise hills and in front a huge rent in the mountains which opens out upon the sea, soon we come to a tranquil basin, and in a nook at the base of the hills to Balaklava, here in olden times pirates made their home, and during the Crimean war it was the port of supply for the British army. Between us and the sea there are lofty heights and upon their tops the ruins of immense forts and towers. Leaving the drosky in the village below the guide leads the way through ravines and up the hills to these ancient

ruins, to defend which fortifications were made by the Genoese when they had colonies along the coast. We ascend a tower, have a splendid view of the sea which proved so disastrous to the English fleet on 14th Nov. 1854. We inscribe our name amidst many Russian characters, and descend the hill into the village below, enter an inn kept by one of the Greek descendants who are now the principal inhabitants of this place. We partake of a cup of tea upon a low wooden chair at a very low table, and then turn our faces toward the setting sun. From New York to Balaklava over ocean, sea and land, we have been approaching the East. Now it is a pleasant thought to us to know that each mile we travel brings us so much nearer to the land of the Acadians, "Home, sweet home."

From Balaklava we proceed to St. George's Monastery, hung as if by enchantment on the edge of a cliff several hundred feet above the level of the sea. From there to the ruins of the classic town of Kherson where St. Vladimir, who founded the Greek church in Russia, was baptized. And back again to Sebastopol, and another day we visited Inkerman and other places of historic interest. But we will trespass no more on your space, but draw this hastily written letter to a close, hoping that ere this shall appear in your valuable paper, we shall be homeward bound.

Respectfully,  
BENJAMIN.  
Odessa, Aug. 24th, 1876.

We last week copied, without note or comment, the substance of a reply to "non-sectarian," by "One of the Governors" of Dalhousie College. As another letter on the subject appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* last week, we do the writer but justice by giving it insertion for our readers' perusal:

The Synod and Dalhousie College.  
To the Editor of the *Morning Chronicle*.

SIR,— I observe, in your issue of the 11th inst., that "one of the governors," has most skillfully and successfully "dodged the question" discussed in my former letter, and is willing that the case shall go by default. This may account for the generous offer he has made me. I appreciate it, let me say, most heartily. Indeed, his wondrous kindness has quite overpowered me; and this, with the fact that I returned to the city yesterday evening only, after an absence since Tuesday last, must account for my delay in making public acknowledgment. In effect, he says, "Be a good boy, and say nothing further about Dalhousie and the Presbyterians and I will make you a governor" (!)

A little consideration would have shown your correspondent the unwisdom of making such an offer to me, for how is it possible for me to accept it? In the first place, I am non-sectarian in the matter of public education. My friend should have thought of this before tempting me so sorely. I do not believe in "Church and State," and, accordingly, when I see one denomination, to the exclusion of all others, uniting with the State in the support and control of one of the public institutions of the country, I must stand aloof and make my solemn protest. Yes, I refer to Dalhousie College, undoubtedly. When John Smith and Peter Jones associate themselves in the support and control of any commercial enterprise they, at once, make known the fact to the world in an open and manly way, and their business becomes known to the public by the name, style and firm of "Smith & Jones." So, when the Presbyterian denomination consented to join hands with the State, and, together, to assume the exclusive support and control of Dalhousie College, as they did in 1875, it would have been most seemly to have inscribed, "Church and State," in large letters, on the door-posts of their university. As everybody knows, the government of Dalhousie is one-fifth Presbyterian and four-fifths State and so must continue until new legislation is effected, but the benefits accruing from the compact are reaped by the denominational partner almost exclusively. The position of the Presbyterians in this matter is in strange contrast to their resolution on the subject of public education, passed at the meeting of Synod, referred to in my former letter. They would have it appear that they are opposed to Church-and-Stateism in the work of education. To be called