

# The Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

NEW SERIES.  
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WHOLE SERIES.  
Vol. XLIII., No. 2.

## Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

"He marvelled because of their Unbelief." Mark.

The Teacher passed through Gallilee,  
A weary way-worn Man was He:  
And crowds pressed round with eager ear,  
His words of life and light to hear.  
The people heard the joyful sound,  
And spread the tidings all around.

With weary footsteps, on He came  
To the fair fields of Bethlehem,  
His childhood's earliest haunts, and there  
He stands within the house of prayer;  
With yearning heart, and hands outspread,  
He calls for blessings on their head.

His words distilled like falling dew,  
He taught, as He was wont to do—  
Not like the Scribe and Pharisee,  
But one with high authority;  
Yet on that lovely sabbath morn  
They turned away with scoff and scorn.

With sneers and frowns, they turned aside,  
And would not hearken in their pride;  
While He went on His lonely way,  
"Lo! Mary's Son," they taunting say;  
Borne down with sorrow and with grief,  
He marvelled at their unbelief.

Halifax, Dec. 23, 1878.

## Religious.

### MISSIONARY NEWS.

Burmah.

LETTER FROM MR. GEORGE.

ZEEGONG, Oct. 23, 1878.

ENCOURAGING TOKENS.—You will be pleased to hear that four men were baptized yesterday; two of them were from the school, and two were men of maturity, one of them over fifty. There is much to encourage us, notwithstanding our sicknesses and bereavement. The people seem almost ready to turn to Christ in large numbers; the only reason why more do not come is because I have been prevented from doing more for them. Every day's work tells. I hear, every few days, of new cases of interest; and if a good, strong man were here, with a suitable force of preachers, we might see something similar to what is going forward in Teloo-oo-land.

Perhaps it would not be best for the interest of the future church in this district, if I could have things as I wish. External help might produce a weak and dependent church; and the slower yet more scriptural method of growth from within may be what God has in store for Zeegong. At present there are indications of the members awaking to a sense of their privileges and responsibilities. When that day has fully come, your missionaries can pass on to the regions beyond. We have a few who love God's Word, and appreciate preachings; such are growing finely, and will soon be fit to take the prominent positions in the work.

FROM MRS. HASCALL.

MAULMAIN, Oct. 17, 1878.

Several of the day-scholars have seemed somewhat interested in the Christian religion, but none have as yet come out boldly and been baptized. The boarding department is in an encouraging condition. Five of the boys have been baptized during the quarter; and others have wished to go forward in the ordinance, whom we have thought best to advise to wait. Altogether eighteen candidates have been baptized at the Burman chapel during the quarter.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM MR. CLOUGH.

ONGOLE, Oct. 24, 1878.

You will see, then, that the need of two men this fall—as soon as steam

can bring them—for Ongole is *impera-ble*. Do let them come. It is impossible to run the Ongole mission without them. Please remember this. I expect to start out on an evangelistic tour in about fifteen days. I trust that you will, when I return, hear further good news from Ongole. If life and health are spared I think we shall baptize two thousand or more before Jan. 1, 1879.

Crops bid fair to be full average. Suza (an early millet) has been reaped; prices of grain have fallen one-fourth or more. We have had heavy rains of late, and all of us are full of hope.

[Mr. Boggs has no doubt not arrived there before this.—Ed. C. M.]

HEATHEN HOSPITALS.—The "Banner" reports Rev. S. H. Kellogg, D. D., as saying, "In heathen lands I have seen hospitals for diseased monkeys, I have seen hospitals for aged and decrepit cows, but very little attention is bestowed on suffering humanity."

THE BIBLE CHEAPER THAN BAYONETS.—We are told that it costs the United States Government \$2,000,000 a year to support the army that takes care of the 10,000 Apaches; and for its military operations against the different tribes, an average of \$12,000,000 a year for forty years past, a total of \$480,000,000. Is this process to be continued? Are there no elements of character in the civilized portion of this race, which will enable them to civilize their wild brethren? If the Christianity the 70,000 have learned has in it the genuine elements of the gospel, would not a very small fraction of these \$12,000,000 a year enlist able and educated Christian Indians, in sufficient numbers, as teacher, to speedily civilize and Christianize every Indian in the country?

BIBLE TRANSLATIONS.—Since the beginning of modern missions, the Bible has been translated into 212 languages, spoken by 850,000,000 human beings, and distributed at the rate of nearly twelve every minute. All this has been done by missionaries. Thirty-nine of the languages referred to never had a written form until the missionaries created it.

SIAM.—Says "The Advocate of the Missions," "The recent contribution of a thousand dollars, by the King of Siam, to establish a female school in Bangkok, really marks an era in the history of missions. Every thing, indeed, indicates the ripeness of the heathen world for change. Yet this change must come gradually, must come slowly. We must not grow impatient, or precipitate measures. The steady, faithful preaching of the gospel by the missionaries is bearing fruit. Let the church pray for a revival of the missionary spirit."—*Missionary Mag.*

### An interesting Testimony.

There was recently some good work being done by Baptist volunteers amongst the troops engaged in the Kafir war, and by the present mail a South African correspondent sends the following further interesting and unprejudiced testimony contained in an extract from a newspaper published in the colony:—"Sunday in camp was invariably a lazy day. Especially so was this the case as the first experiences of the present war with Kafirs passed away. At the commencement of hostilities, believing in the tradition that our sable foes would never attack an enemy excepting at day break, sun set, or Sunday afternoon, we were at first always on the *qui vive* on the Sabbath-day. Seeing the altered tactics of the Kafirs, however, this day became at length a season of laziness and rest; and Sunday, the 14th of November last, as we lay at Fort Bowker, within three miles of the Bashee, was no exception to this. At the time of which I write there was a large force of some fifteen hundred volunteers and about two thousand Fingoes at Fort Bowker. Gray was there with 'Our Boys,' whose encampment looked quite a formidable

affair, being considerably augmented by the Fort White troop, two companies of the Police, and the brave Queens-town and the Tarkastad volunteers. The camp was prettily situated on the green sward flat where stands the mud fort, hid among a clump of well-developed gum trees, planted by the late Commandant Bowker, during the last war, and surrounded by almost innumerable ancient hills, kopjes, and table lands. On the slope of one of these hills, and overlooking the camp beneath, the Grahamstown Artillery, the Cape-town Contingent, and the Port Elizabeth Rifles were encamped. In spite of scanty and coarse rations, many were the happy hours spent round the camp fires at Port Bowker. The Grahamstown company, it will be remembered, was accompanied by a member of the clerical profession—call him parson, minister, or preacher as you will; soldier you may not designate him since his not infrequent, unfortunate equestrian exhibitions deny to him the right to such a title. He was a jolly good fellow though for all that; and never shall I forget the striking scene presented on the evening of the Sunday already referred to, when the Rev. Mr. Cross held service in the camp. It had been a hot, unpleasant day, but the heat was as often the case in South Africa, had given way to a chilly cold night; and the heavens gathered blackness; the darkness of the sky greatly enhancing the lurid glare of the camp fires and the blazing huts, which patrols had set fire to in all directions. An open air service for religion amongst volunteers on the Bashee is, I apprehend, one of the prettiest and most instructive pictures that pen can depict of the many interesting scenes during the late war. The service of which I would now speak reminds one of the tales told of pioneer Methodism in America, and our gathering on this occasion much resembled a pioneer Methodist camp meeting divested of its turbulent crowd and the religious aquafortis of the exhorters. There needed no bell to summon the worshippers, who assembled in their varied and well-worn uniforms. After the reading of the Scriptures and the singing of Moody and Sankey's 'Sweet By-and-by,' led by the lusty-voiced sons of Salem, amongst whom, in the discoursing of which shone conspicuously Senator Gush, the preacher delivered his tale to an attentive audience. At first, with a trembling voice, the Christian life was portrayed; but, as by degrees the sympathy of the audience was reached, the preacher warned to his subject until his simple earnestness became absolutely electrical; and as the nervousness of the pale young student developed into confidence, the reserve of ritualism gave way before the honest conviction that piety is of more consequence than propriety. The service was soon over, but the effect produced, not only by the sermon, but by example of that young and earnest preacher, who left his home and, through the campaign, proved himself a valiant red-cross knight, will never be lost upon some of those who were present on this occasion; and it must be chronicled as one of the facts of the war of 1877-78, that the only minister of religion who followed the troops in the Gealeka campaign was a member of the Baptist Missionary Society—a disciple of the far-famed Spurgeon.

The Bible in advance of Science.

It is the boast of modern scepticism that the discoveries of science, and the progress of philosophic inquiry will speedily render belief in the Bible as a divine revelation an utter impossibility to all thinking people. Well, have the friends of Bible really anything to fear? Not if actual experience is of greater value than mere assumption in determining probabilities. Scepticism has long attempted the destruction of Christian faith, but it still lives—and flourishes; and in the buttressed wall of the truth in which it trusts there is not yet the slightest breach. The Bible seems to invite the atten-

tion of "Science": for it is by no means scanty in its references to facts—facts in nature, facts in philosophy, facts in the history of nations, facts in the manners and customs of men. What a dangerous field was this had not everything been perfectly honest and secure! What blundering has been discovered in the very best ancient histories; what ignorance have even the greatest ancient philosophers betrayed! But who has convicted of error any of the God-taught men who wrote the Bible?

The Book of Genesis was written ages before the science of Geology was thought of, and not many years since it was loudly proclaimed that the validity of its accounts of the Creation was utterly destroyed by "the testimony of the rocks." It was soon found, however, that the boast was premature. The discoveries of the geologists have only served to shed new light upon the Mosaic narrative, and as now interpreted the truth of that narrative is attested by all the formations of earth, and "graven in the rocks for ever."

What immense advances have been made within a very few years in Natural History. "In my young days," a venerable friend once remarked to us, "Buffon's Natural History was considered quite a standard work; but, alas! how grievously my old mentor has been exposed within these last few years." Now there is a great deal of Natural History in the Bible—very particular references to the habits of animals. Have modern discoveries in this department of knowledge detected any blundering among the sacred writers? No; but every new discovery is giving stronger confirmation to the Scripture statements. Difficulties have been removed from the path of the student by new advances made in natural history; and just as this and every other science advances, the evidences for the truth of revelation will shine with greater brilliancy.

Few sciences exhibit greater evidences of the ever widening range of human discovery than Astronomy. The school-boy of to-day could prove to the great Ptolemy that he was wrong; and that while he imagined he was writing philosophy he was only writing nonsense. But the most accomplished *savant* could not convict the Bible of error, however willing he might be to do it. The allusions to "the starry heavens" in the books of Job and the Psalms,—books written long before anything was known of the Copernican system of Astronomy, reveal not a single flaw upon the closest scrutiny. Not only is there nothing in the Bible inconsistent with the discoveries of modern astronomy, but the Bible takes for granted the whole of them. Does modern astronomy say that there are other worlds besides our own, and that there are, therefore, in all probability, other rational beings besides ourselves? So without any conjecture, says the Bible: "The heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them." It speaks of "angels and principalities and powers"—the sons of God of different orders, peopling different portions of the dominions of the great Lord of all. Does modern astronomy tell us that suns and worlds have been consumed by fire, and that such a fate may very possibly overtake our solar system? The Bible anticipates this discovery, and declares that the thing which science deems possible shall surely come to pass. "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

The friends of the Bible, then, need not fear the advance of science. The progress of human knowledge may leave us far behind. When our heads are grey with age our children may, in many things, become our teachers. The books we used at school may all become antiquated. But the Book shall remain as fresh and young as ever. A new Bible will never be rendered necessary by the results of scientific research. The modern materialist

may imagine in the vanity of his heart, that he has attained a height from which he can look down with contempt on Revelation; but the truly philosophic mind will find in the sublimest walks of science abundant reason to admire the unsearchable treasures of wisdom and knowledge contained in the Book of God.—*Christian Helper.*

### Helpful Hearers.

BY G. W. BROWN.

It has never occurred to multitudes of church-going people that there is such a thing as helping their minister preach. They overlook the fact that in public worship there is a co-partnership between the preacher and his people, and expect the "party of the first part" to "conduct the services," while before him sit those who are little more than spectators, into whose passive minds he is to pour the truth. If, by the sheer force of his utterances, he can compel their attention; or by his unction warm their hearts; well and good! If not, it is very easy to call it a dull sermon, and throw all the blame where perhaps a part of it belongs—on the preacher.

The excellence of a sermon does not depend solely on its preparation; its delivery has much to do with its effectiveness, and that delivery depends largely on the hearing it receives. This is specially true if the sermon be unwritten: "Eloquence" says one "in its highest forms and effects, is a joint product of two factors; of an eloquent speaker and an eloquent hearer." The minister needs inspiration from the people as truly as they need help from him. Many, however, instead of helping, act perpetually as brakes upon his progress; he starts, tries to draw the heavy load, works hard, and as his hour of service wears away has the painful consciousness that he is not accomplishing what he might. *Take off the brakes.* Do not curl up in your pew, casting once in a while a cold uninterested glance at your preacher; while most of the time your eyes are on the floor. I admit there are some men in the pulpit who cannot preach, but give each one a congregation of helpful hearers before you decide finally in his case.

We pass by church sleepers; they may be good men and excellent Christians, certainly they are not helpful hearers, for all the inspiration they give a preacher they might as well be so many posts; yet let them come, they may get some good between their naps. But many whose eyes are open are far from receiving the word with gladness.

In her "recollections of Mary Lyon" Miss Fisk testifies that "she often said to us, 'Young ladies, when I speak to you I depend much more upon the inspiration of your countenances than on my preparation.'" So many a minister has been roused and thrilled by looking out upon the earnest upturned faces of an audience as by a shock from a battery. Helpful hearers are the preacher's allies for whom he looks from Sabbath to Sabbath—whose glances or recognition are inspirations—whose earnest faces reflect the sermon—who, more than they will ever know, help him in declaring the truth. How the faces of such come up before me as I write! The venerable Dr. Tyng is quoted as having said after preaching in a certain church "It takes no brains to preach to such an audience as that. The very look of it is an inspiration and you cannot help but talk." He is a happy minister who surrounded by a body-guard of helpful hearers deals not in

"The cold traffic of unfelt truth."

A GOOD CREATURE.—Rev. Canon Farrar in a recent able speech said: "There is one thing which I do hope total abstinents will do, and that is, listen with a somewhat disdainful smile when they next hear quoted against them the argument in favor of alcohol, 'that every creature of God is good.' I know that alcohol is poison, and I do not see in what respect alcohol