

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger. "Women to the rescue of Woman."

Mr. Editor,— When I read the article in the Christian Messenger of the 5th February under the above caption, and over the signature of "THE WOMEN," my feelings were somewhat similar to those of the late President Lincoln in view of the result of one of the State elections. He said that he felt like the boy who stubbed his toe while going to see his sweetheart. He was too big to cry, and too much hurt to laugh about it. Nevertheless, after the pain occasioned by the severe castigation administered had subsided, I did indulge in a good hearty laugh.

Of course it is a vain curiosity, but I should really like to know how many women it took to write that communication, and where the meeting was held, and how many were present when that wonderfully magnanimous preamble and resolution, which appear at the close, were passed.

What amused me so immensely was that your correspondent brings all the women in Christendom into line of battle against "Reader" in particular, and all the brethren in general, and on they come, brandishing their weapons, declaring war and "no surrender"; and after all, before leaving the field, instead of cutting us to pieces, they yield every point, and even more than is demanded, for they voluntarily give us their coats and cloaks also, without our asking. Bless their dear souls; it is just like them. It is not in their generous natures to hold enmity against their brethren, or withheld from them any favour in their power to bestow.

I cannot, however, by any means school myself into the belief that the sentiment and spirit of the letter referred to can be ascribed with any fairness at all to women in general, much less to the sisterhood of the Christian Church. I do not believe you could find one in five hundred of the gentler sex who would append their signatures. It appears to me more like the production of some strong-minded woman, or weak-minded man, who has had the audacity (shall I say?) to write for all the women in Christendom, taking for granted that they would all endorse the sentiment advanced. Why, Mr. Editor, if I had the least apprehension that this was really the case, I can assure you that, considering "discretion the better part of valor," I should beat a hasty retreat; for with

"Women to right of me, Women to left of me, Women in front of me, And women all round me."

what could I expect but the fate of the "gallant six hundred," or even worse, complete annihilation.

But I am led to ask, "What have I done to bring down such a pitiless storm upon the devoted heads of all the brethren? I merely asked a single question in reference to Scripture authority and Baptist usages, touching "Woman's sphere in the Church," soliciting information from Doctors, Professors, Pastors, and brethren. Perhaps I ought to have added sisters; I humbly beg their pardon. Instead, however, of receiving the light sought after from the desired sources, after I had supposed from the long silence that followed my question with the few accompanying remarks that they had been consigned to the shades of oblivion, I am startled by the appearance of the spicy communication above referred to, giving me such fearful raps over the head from a quarter altogether unexpected. And all my brethren are sharers with me, yourself, Mr. Editor, being the only exception. And the real question at issue still remains unanswered. Your correspondent has thrown no light on the subject, but the aim seems to have been to place man and woman on a perfect equality as to privileges in the church. He or she makes the women to say, "We are his" (Christ's) "body and we have as much right to dictate as they" (the brethren.) Now, I will not dispute their right, but will only ask, is there not at least some significance in the Apostle's declaration that "Adam was first formed, then Eve," 1 Tim. ii. 13. Does Paul mean anything when he says "the head of the

woman is the man," 1 Cor. xi. 3. Or does Peter speak at random when he styles woman the "weaker vessel?" From these and kindred passages it would seem that the All-wise Creator has Himself established a certain relation between man and woman for the highest good of both; a relation in which woman occupies a position—call it subordinate or dependent or whatever you please—which every true woman is more than willing to recognize and acknowledge, and I can see no incompatibility with the existence of this divinely established relation between them, and their perfect "oneness in Christ Jesus." The only question is, does this relation run through every department of life, or is the church an exception? Or, has the church authority to change a relation previously established by the Great Head of the Church? Far be it from me to deprive my sisters in the church of a single privilege. Would it not rather be extending their privileges to relieve them from the responsibilities connected with the drudgery of business and discipline? Talk about drudgery in connection with the sewing circle, the fancy sale, and soliciting aid to build chapels, &c. All these are agreeable pastime in comparison with many of those soul-sickening cases of discipline which sometimes occur, and with which the church is compelled to deal.

Again your correspondent refers to one of our "Articles of Faith and Practice" in which the members of the church are called "saints," and the inference is that all are on a perfect equality, "unless it can be proved that women are not saints." Now, I have no disposition—even if it were possible—to bring any such proof. But I think all will agree with me that no argument is necessary to prove that, while in the body, Christian women are female saints, and as the church of God is composed of male and female, made so by God Himself and fitted to work in harmony, though in different departments of Christian labor, it seems most desirable that each and all his children, whether male or female should acquiesce in those divine arrangements, and be content to move and act in their appropriate sphere, without any infringement on each others rights and privileges.

A good deal of matter contained in the letter under review is left unnoticed, simply because of its irrelevancy to the question with which it professes to deal.

In conclusion, allow me to say to your correspondent, (if a woman,) and to all others of kindred spirit, O women! be merciful to your fellow sojourners the brethren. Don't brand us with despotism and robbing you of your rights, and then kill us with your unbounded generosity. Keep your coats and cloaks for yourselves, and if you do not want them give them to your more needy sisters.

Craving your indulgence, Mr. Editor, while I ask a little space in your columns for the above, and still asking information as to the propriety of females speaking and voting at the business meetings of the church, permit me to subscribe myself.

Yours truly, A READER.

For the Christian Messenger. Bridgetown Items.

The good people of this place have been unusually sociable during the past two or three months. Almost every week of late has witnessed an overflowing social gathering at Bridgetown, Clarence or Wadeville. Two excellent purposes are subserved by these entertainments; old acquaintances are heartily renewed, and funds are raised to pay off our church debts. As a natural result our finances are beginning to present a more satisfactory appearance than they have done for some time past. Our new bell, whose musical tones are duly appreciated by all its hearers, is paid for, and the debt incurred by repairs on the parsonage is pretty nearly liquidated. This is well. But a still better feature of our church history is that the Sunday gatherings are larger and the social services of the week evenings are not only well attended, but warmly sustained.

Rev. P. F. Murray, who has for some time past been residing in this vicinity, seems disposed to forsake the valley of apples and pitch his tent a little nearer

the Atlantic coast. He goes with his family to Milton, Queens Co., and the best wishes of the Bridgetown people follow them to their new home.

Rev. N. Vidito has been kindly remembered by his old friends, and has been made the recipient of a social visit and a suitable donation.

Sickness and disease are at work among us, spreading the pall of death over some homes. The smiles of our people are thus mingled with tears.

March 18, 1879.

For the Christian Messenger. Letter from Ireland.

Dear Editor,—

Our commercial atmosphere during the past year has been of a very depressing character. All the important industries have felt the depression in an increasing degree, and prices have continued to shrink, dragging wages down with them, and obliterating profits. In addition to this, the winter has been one of unusual severity. The like has not been known in Ireland for more than seventy years. We have had one continuous frost and snow for more than three months. This severe weather put a stop to nearly all out-door work, and therefore thousands throughout the country have been idle, consequently there has been much distress.

The royal marriage of the Duke of Connaught with the Princess Louisa Marguerite of Prussia will very soon be consummated. It is said that the great event will take place at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, on the thirteenth day of March. It has been reported that the Duke and Duchess, after their marriage, will take up their residence in Ireland; but since all reports cannot be received as facts, this one will have to lie among the doubtful ones for the present. Should the report prove to be true, it will no doubt give universal satisfaction to the inhabitants of this beautiful sea-girt isle. The Irish people propose to give a national testimonial to the Duke on his marriage, principally on account of his special association with the country; but, unfortunately, the Committee appointed to this work, have not acted as wisely as they might have done in their selection of the piece of plate they have chosen. A piece of plate has been chosen, manufactured nearly thirty years ago, and during that time it is said to have passed through the hands of various owners and dealers, and also to have been rejected, some years ago, by a Committee of Belfast gentlemen, as an unsuitable memorial for a Belfast merchant. The selection of a second-hand candelabrum, and devoid of a single national device, for a national presentation to the Duke, has very much mortified many of Ireland's noble sons. We do not wonder at this mortification; we should rather have wondered were it not so. One of the yesterday evening papers very justly said, "A national presentation, provided by national money, should take the shape of something really national; unless we are prepared to acknowledge before the world that we are as defective in national art as in national spirit." It is very possible another, and a more suitable testimonial, will be presented to the Duke of Connaught by the aggrieved people, with the hope to remove the stigma that has been cast on the country by the perverseness of the Committee in retaining the second-hand piece of plate so strongly disapproved of by the many. For this purpose the Irish Times intimates that a second Committee is about to be formed.

The various Total Abstinence Societies in Ireland are trying to push along their work, but it moves very slowly. Now and then recruits are being obtained, but alas, many of them do not long remain in the ranks. Ireland is a great place for drinking and drunkenness. Our towns are full of grog-shops. They are the great curse of this land. My little daughter, six years of age, says, "Pa, I hate to pass the grog-shops, for they smell so awfully bad." I pray God that she may always hate them; and hate the cursed liquor too. From the report of the Vice-Chairman of the General Prisons Board at Dublin, on the state of the county and borough jails in Ireland for 1877, just printed, we learn that drunkenness is woefully on the increase. From his report we find that during the year 1867 the commitments

for drunkenness to the county and borough jails only numbered 6,645, whereas in 1877 there were no less than 18,837 commitments; and then it must be remembered that this number does not include the commitments to bride-wells. This report tells a very sad tale.

I see by your paper just to hand, that you have received the report of the very sad disaster that has happened to the British troops in South Africa. I am glad to find, however, by a telegram of yesterday from Madeira, that the disaster at Isandula is less serious than it was at first reported to be. It is now estimated that from 250 to 300 of our soldiers were massacred, and not 600 as at first stated. So far as the official correspondence that has been published relating to the affair, there seems little doubt that the Standard was correctly informed when it announced that Sir Bartle Frere made war upon the Zulu king without the consent of the Home Government. If this be really true it is high time that such functionaries were taught a lesson. It is to be hoped that the Home Government will give the matter a thorough honest investigation, and if it is discovered that any of our British authorities are at fault, we sincerely hope they will be brought to judgment. Meanwhile reinforcements to the number of 7,000 soldiers, and all necessary equipments, are being sent out to the field of conflict, not, I hope, for the purpose of revenge, but to quell a turbulent race, and to re-establish peace.

Our Island is being highly honoured just now by a visit of royalty from the Austrian Court. The Empress of Austria is in our midst. It is said that she is passionately fond of the hunt. She is here to enjoy the hunting season, and she had her first day's enjoyment of this Irish sport yesterday.

Your late Governor-General, Lord Dufferin, has been appointed as an Ambassador to Russia. Prior to his departure he was invited to a dinner at the Reform Club. He called on the Premier to explain to him the circumstances under which he had accepted the invitation. The Premier said to him very good naturedly, "I really don't care where you dine; we must all dine somewhere." The banquet was a complete success. Yesterday his Lordship and Lady Dufferin left London for St. Petersburg. The Times remarked, that Lord Dufferin will enter upon his duties as British Ambassador at the Russian Court under the weight of a heavy and anxious responsibility, but not without a hopeful promise of success.

The life of Christianity is not so vigorous amongst us as we could desire. There has been no special religious awakening throughout the country since the great revival of 1859. And yet the church of God is not left without tokens of Divine favour. The Lord still dwells in the midst of His people to save; and His saving power is being manifested in pardoning the iniquities, transgressions and sins of many.

HENRY COCKS, Ballymena, Ireland.

For Christian the Messenger.

Letter from Paris.

(From our correspondent.)

TROUBLES IN FRANCE—LIGHTS AND SHADOWS IN THE YOUNG REPUBLIC—SHALL THE EXILED COMMUNISTS BE ALLOWED TO RETURN?—THE REVIVAL OF THE "MARSEILLAISE."

PARIS, FRANCE, Feb. 25, 1879.

A lurid appearance is gathering over French politics, occasioning uneasiness, if not already alarm. M. Gambetta is earnestly endeavoring to consolidate and strengthen the Republic which he has been so instrumental in forming, but there are among his friends and backers a number of the population who have no regard for moderation, and whose action has for its object a revival of the days of confusion. The President of the Republic, M. Grevy, in an interview which he has had with the Paris Municipality, which had just voted 100,000 francs out of the taxpayers' pockets to provide for the necessities of expatriated Communists, who are to be allowed to return (a vote which was subsequently annulled), said as long as he remained President he would do his utmost to enforce respect for the Republic in all quarters; but great moderation was now necessary. He pointed out that while the populations of the large towns of

France were devoted to the Republic, yet the remainder of the population must be taken into account, and that portion of the population was very sensitive, and would be frightened by anything like excess on the part of those by whom the Democratic Republic was admired and upheld. "Three times already," added M. Grevy, "the Republic had been established, and three times also it had been lost. They should try now to keep it forever, and that could only be done by wisdom, patience and forbearance." There is a spirit alive, however, which may refuse to adopt the wise suggestions of Marshal MacMahon's successor. Already the "Marseillaise" is adopted as the national air of France! M. Gambetta is as emphatic as the new President of the Republic on the necessity for moderation. He rebukes those of his followers who are fiercely desirous of having all their wishes accomplished at once. Replying to a deputation from the electors of Belleville, he said, "My dear fellow citizens, we shall institute a Republic which shall be fruitful and recuperative. We are now in a position to make good our pledges; but how? Why by the assiduous and constant labor which must precede the passing of laws; by an intelligent, practically graduated, and serial arrangement of the various reforms that the country expects. We shall not deal with these reforms in the bulk; but when once we have undertaken one of them we will not let it be dropped before we have inscribed it in our laws, we will not abandon ourselves to the inebriation of success. We shall continue wise; we shall show ourselves men of sense, knowing what is the right thing to do and what is the right time to do it in." But his words are addressed to impatient and reckless men, among others, who demand the impeachment of the Ministry of May 16, and at the same time an amnesty for all the Communists.

The majority of the population of Paris remember with a feeling of horror the period when M. Thiers, the Parliament, and the civil and military authorities abandoned Paris in a moment of panic, and the terrible Commune had its way. The Minister of Justice has declared that a list will be drawn up of persons whom it is judged advisable not to pardon, numbering 1,300 in all, of whom 600 will remain in New Caledonia, and 700 who were condemned by default will not be permitted to re-enter France. This will not satisfy the extreme Republicans, and they contemplate the formation of a more "thorough" Cabinet than the present, by which a complete and unreserved amnesty will be conceded. We are not surprised to read in the papers that "in modern times Paris was never in such a state of alarm about personal safety in the streets. The city seems to be infested with what the journals call 'a band of brigands.' People are attacked and robbed by day and night." The Prefect of Police is organizing energetic measures in reference to these alarms, for which, however, he submits there is not sufficient reason. He has issued a circular wherein the Commissaires are exhorted to use redoubled vigilance. "The publication of false reports of nocturnal outrages," it is urged, "not only throws discredit upon the Government of the Republic, but reflects upon the efficiency of the force, and drives away strangers from this city. The Commissaires are therefore requested to point out all the stories of attacks that have ever taken place in their respective quarters, with a view to exposure and contradiction." The revival of the Marseillaise as the national tune to be played on all occasions of national festivity is, however, calculated rather to augment than diminish the public uneasiness.

The Marseillaise is a fine tune, but the sentiment is not appropriate to the existing condition of things. It is a tune for revolution, when tyrants are to be overthrown and the sovereignty of the people asserted through the slaughter of their foes. "To arms, citizens!" is the burden of the song, "form your battalions, let your fields be soaked in your enemies' blood." There is no sign at present of any such desire in the national mind of France. The case was different in 1793, when nearly all Europe was arrayed against the Republic of that day. "The coalesced kings menace