

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger. Denominational Printing.

At the seventh session of the Convention of 1880, a committee was appointed to take into consideration the advisability of printing the Minutes of the different Associations in the Year Book...

The committee was re-appointed and reported again at the meeting of the Convention in 1881, but the report was recommitted to come up again as soon as practicable.

As this question is therefore before the denomination, it may be well to call attention to it.

THE ADVANTAGES.

In favour of the adoption of the course proposed the following advantages may be mentioned.

1. It will help to make the different Provinces and Associations better acquainted with one another. Each member who receives a copy of the Year Book will then have not only the Minutes of the Convention and the Minutes of the Association to which he belongs...

2. It will make our members better acquainted with the Missionary and Educational enterprises of the Body. By this plan about 6000 copies of the enlarged Year Book can be published for about what it now costs for 3000 copies of the Year Book and the Minutes of the Associations.

COST.

A leading objection against the scheme is that it would greatly increase the cost of publication. Well let us see. The cost of publishing the Minutes of the seven Associations for 1881, was about \$325.00. I do not know the cost of the Year Book for 1881, but supposing it to be the same as 1880, we have \$291.15 more, or a total of \$616.15.

From the offer of a reliable firm that has been placed in my hands I

have no doubt they could be published considerably less than the above figures and thus be less expensive than the present mode.

NOT AN EXPERIMENT.

Some may object that this mode of publishing the Minutes is an untried plan. It is with us, but several of the States of the neighbouring union have for several years published their Minutes on this plan.

THE NEXT STEP.

Since the Convention has been the first to move in this matter the Associations may take it for granted that it is ready to publish their Minutes along with its own so soon as they are willing to have it done.

A. COHOON. Hebron, May 2nd, 1882.

For the Christian Messenger. Letter from France. PARIS, April 10, 1882.

The weather here has undergone a complete change. A day or two ago we were in June; to-day showers of sleet and rain are falling, and a cutting north-west wind has driven all but the most venturesome within doors.

In the last lesson, we left Jesus and his disciples in the boat on the lake, crossing from the west to the east side. He landed at Bethsaida, the scene of the miracle here recorded, and from thence returned to the scene of this miracle as alone told by Mark, and is most graphically presented.

The increased population is instigated as one reason why, under unfavorable circumstances, the demand exceeds the supply; but this is scarcely a serious argument. For one thing the use of private pumps and cisterns has been not only and systematically discouraged in the interest of the monopoly.

The clever French critic, M. Theodore Bentzon, has just published a thoughtful book entitled "Literature et Moeurs étrangères," in which he takes Walt Whitman mercilessly to task for what he considers his bad taste and coarseness of poetic ideal.

On of the most pleasurable features of the Paris season, namely, the Concours Hippique, or Horse Show, at the Palais de l'Industrie will shortly be opened with its accustomed brilliancy.

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1882.

SECOND QUARTER.

Lesson VIII.—MAY 21, 1882.

SEEING AND CONFESSING THE CHRIST. Mark viii. 22-33.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"—Matt. xvi. 16.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vss. 27-29.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

M. The Lesson, Mark viii. 22-33.

T. Parallel in Matthew, Matt. xvi. 13-28.

W. Martha's Confession, John xi. 20-27.

T. The Way of Salvation, Acts ii. 29-40.

F. The Test of Fatal Error, 1 John ii. 21-24; iv. 1-6.

S. Faith and Eternal Life, 1 John chap. v.

S. How Christian Sight is Preserved, 2 Peter i. 1-11.

BLINDNESS REMOVED.

LESSON OUTLINE.—Bodily Sight Restored, Va. 22-26. II. The Person of Christ Revealed, Va. 27-30. III. The Work of Christ Revealed, Va. 31-33.

QUESTIONS.—Va. 22-26.—Describe this miracle.

Vs. 27-30.—To what region did Jesus retire? What had he fully proved himself to be? What was the result? What confession did Peter make for the apostles? What is the first great article of the Christian faith? Can any one be a Christian without believing it? What is the result of believing it with all the heart?

Vs. 31-33.—What did Jesus now begin to teach? Had he hinted it before? (Matt. x. 38; xii. 40). How did he teach it now? What did Peter presume to do? What part was he now acting? Under whose influence?

Special Subjects.—The gradual restoration of sight. Parallel in Christian experience. Examine carefully references on vs. 29. This great truth the centre of Christianity; of personal religion; the test of fatal error. Errors of Christians from a worldly heart. Christians blindly serving Satan.

In the last lesson, we left Jesus and his disciples in the boat on the lake, crossing from the west to the east side. He landed at Bethsaida, the scene of the miracle here recorded, and from thence returned to the scene of this miracle as alone told by Mark, and is most graphically presented.

NOTES.—I. Blind Eyes Opened, (Vs. 22-26).

Vs. 22, 23.—He cometh. New Version, they come. Bethsaida, (House of Fish). A fishing town on the northern coast of the lake, at the entrance of the river. It was the early home of Philip, and of Peter and Andrew, (John i. 44). They bring a blind man, as the paralytic's (ii. 3) brought him. This was not one born blind, as in John ix. 1; for he knew the shape of trees, (vs. 24); but one blind by disease or accident. To touch him. Prescribing the manner of the cure, and assuming that a touch was necessary. Took the blind man by the hand. Literal fulfilment of Isaiah (xlii. 16). An act of sympathy and grace, and calculated to win the blind man's confidence, and to awaken expectation. Led him out of the town, to avoid the excitement which a public cure would arouse. Spit on his eyes, etc. Jesus was confined to no one method of cure, this may have been needed to excite faith in the man.

Vs. 24.—He looked up. Putting his sight to the test. Men as trees, walking. His visual knowledge of the difference between men and trees, intimates previous sight. Why not the perfect cure instantaneously? That has been the law in other cases. 1. The Lord is master of methods, and uses variety in his way of working. 2. His law of healing was: "Be it unto you according to your faith." This man's faith may have been vague, at first; and an indistinct faith brought an indistinct vision. 3. The reply of the man, in its naturalness, is an internal evidence of the truth of the whole story. 4. The process of cure was an efficient teacher of patience, dependence, trust, and hope. He was restored, and saw every man clearly. Our Lord leaves no work unfinished. See Phil. i. 6. The miracle was made perfect. Neither go into the town. As he was not a resident of Bethsaida, there was no need of his return to it. He was to go home at once, and quietly. The first place to tell the wonderful story is in one's own domestic circle. Nor tell it to any in the town. Omitted in New Version, but implied in what precedes.

II. The Grand Confession, (Vs. 27-30).

Vs. 27.—Jesus went out in a northerly direction, along the eastern bank of the Jordan, some thirty miles or more, his disciples attending him. Into the towns He withdrew himself from the populous cities in which he had taught, and which had practically rejected him; and went into a district which he had not before visited, for retirement. Caesarea Philippi, (i. e., Philip's Caesarea). A city in the extreme north of Palestine, rebuilt by Herod Philip, in honor of his patron, Tiberius Cesar. His own name was added to it, to distinguish it from the Caesarea on the Mediterranean. Whom do men say, etc. He would prepare the minds of his disciples for the closing events of his career, by developing their knowledge of his true character as the Messiah. It was a time of defection from his ranks, (John vi. 66-70), and he would test their spiritual perceptions and their faith.

Vs. 28.—Three answers are given to what common fame asserted about Jesus. 1. John the Baptist. So said the guilty conscience of Herod Antipas, (vi. 16), and there were many to echo this ghostly alarm of royalty. 2. Elias, or Elijah; basing this opinion upon Mal. iv. 5. But Jesus declared that John the Baptist was that Elijah of prophecy, (Matt. xi. 14). 3. One of the prophets. Matthew, (xvi. 14), records Jeremiah's name as specially mentioned. Only here and there one saw in Jesus the promised Messiah. Even the masses healed and taught by him, thought of him as no one greater than the herald of the Messiah.

Vs. 29, 30.—Whom say ye? As the "men" in vs. 27 is emphatic, so is the "ye" here, in contrast. "But ye—who say ye that I am?" Thou art the Christ. The question, addressed to all, is answered by the impulsive spokesman of the Twelve. Men had given their opinions; the disciples present to us knowledge. Peter says, not "We think thou art," but "thou art." Not the herald of another, not a prophet risen from the dead, but the long-expected Messiah. Charged. The same word as in iii. 12, and intimating charged under pain of his disapprobation. Tell no man of him. They were neither prepared at this time to preach this advanced truth, nor were the people ready to hear it.

III. The Shadow of the Cross, (Vs. 31-33).

Vs. 31, 32.—This confession of Christ as the Messiah, and Son of God, began to teach them that the Son of man must suffer many things. This was taught in the Old Testament Scriptures; but the interpretations of the day had glossed over the fact. Be rejected. One of the "many things"; but distinctly foretold. See Isaiah liii. 3. Elders. Chief priests. . . Scribes. The three classes of the Sanhedrim Killed the extreme point of the "many things"; yet between the "rejected" and this, what humiliation. Rise again. One of Christ's distinct prophecies of his resurrection, but not understood by his disciples, (ix. 10). Openly. Frankly and plainly. Hitherto such teachings had been by implication, and indirectly rebuke him. It would also seem as if our Lord's commendation of him, (Matt. xvi. 17), had ministered to his self-consequence, instead of his humility. It is not well to try to be wiser than the Master.

Vs. 32.—Looked. Under Mark's graphic touch, we can almost see the look of sorrow and sternness with which he regarded Peter. Rebuked Peter. Christ regarded the wounds of a friend, and especially of the wisest and best of all friends. Get thee behind me, Satan. The very words used to the Tempter in the wilderness, (Matt. iv. 10), and appropriately used here; for it was the same Tempter speaking through Peter's lips. Thou savorest not the things that be of God, etc. Sufficient reason for the severe rebuke.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

I. Seeing Christ.—Once a man was brought to Jesus; and, although he stood so close that Jesus could touch him, still the man could not see Jesus. What was the matter? Yes, he was blind. I will read what Jesus did. What did Jesus ask? Listen to this strange answer. Read vs. 24. The man saw, but he did not see plainly yet. He could not tell whether he saw men, or trees, moving.

What do you suppose Jesus did then? Read vs. 25, 26.

And now Jesus wanted to be alone with his disciples. He wanted to go further off into the country with them, to teach them; for it was getting near the time for Jesus to die.

II. Confessing Christ.—Jesus and his disciples talked together, as they walked along the dusty road. Jesus asked them

this question: "Whom do men say that I am?" Read vs. 28.

"Thou art the Christ"—Now tell the children that, as they walked on, Jesus tried to explain to his disciples, that very soon he would be put to death. They thought he could save us without dying. Peter even took Jesus, and began to find fault with him for talking so. He told Jesus that he must not talk about dying. Jesus was pleased with Peter when he said: "Thou art the Christ"; but now, he was not pleased with Peter.

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Temperance.

Who gets the Money.

HOW JIM'S WIFE BECAME MOST TOO DRESSY, ANYWAY!

The Reckable tells a good story of a plain, common-sense merchant of that town, who had voted for license for years. He was a good, honest-hearted fellow, and, like many other business men, thought one or two licensed hotels were really necessary for the prosperity of the village. He never did anything by halves, and accordingly the hotel-keepers found in him an ardent supporter.

A year or two ago an incident occurred that opened his eyes. It happened in this wise; He sold a stove for \$18 to a drinking man; the drinker was not worth anything, but agreed to pay for the stove in installments of \$1 per month. At the end of the year, the merchant had not received even the first payment. He was easy with his debtor; for he knew that although he had been earning good wages the whole year, the money had not been expended for clothes, as the family of his drinking customer were poorly clad, and the man himself had only one suit, and that almost in rags. He concluded to watch, and see what the trouble was.

Two weeks before the time in question the drinking man had gone five miles out of town to do a job of work at \$3 per day. The merchant knew this, and was waiting for his return, thinking he might get a part payment on the stove sold a year before, if not the whole amount. Just before dark his debtor made his appearance. The merchant knew that the man who had employed him was a man of means, and that it was "Hold on, J—, I want to speak to you. You remember the stove? You were to pay \$1 each month; over a year has gone by, and you have not made the first payment yet; and have been at work for W—; can't you pay me half—\$5 anyway?"

"I am sorry I can't but I have not got money to do it. I have only enough to pay one little bill, which is a positive necessity, and which I cannot put off."

The merchant was not satisfied. He looked up from his perplexity just in time to see his debtor go into a hotel (one of the necessary (?) places for the prosperity of the village).

His going into that hotel aroused the curiosity of our merchant. He said to himself,

"I will just walk over to the hotel and see what is going on."

He entered the hall, where he could get a good view of the bar, and heard the following:—

The debtor said, "Well, landlord, what is my bill! I can pay you up now."

"Your bill may be larger than you think; you have not paid up for some time. Ah? it is a little more than I thought—\$21.50."

"As much as that? It can't be. I don't know what my wife will say. I had promised to buy a new bonnet for her and the girl. Twenty one fifty? Well, well, I suppose you have kept it right. You wouldn't wrong a poor man who works hard for his money?"

"No, no. I wouldn't do that. It's all right. I never take a poor man's money without an equivalent."

(Oh, no! they never do, these sweet lambs who sell rum.)

The landlord added: "Your wife and daughter must not expect to dress as well as those who have a larger income. I think your wife is most too dressy, anyway, Jim. Have another drink."

The merchant saw the man who had "only enough to pay one little bill, which was a positive necessity," take out of his pocket the money he had earned, count out the \$21.50, and hand it regretfully to the landlord.

The merchant went out of the hotel a wiser and a sadder man. He forthwith went to his desk, took down a bundle of unpaid accounts, and commenced to figure up the worthless accounts, that had accumulated in the ten years of his business life.

He found the sum total to be \$1,324.78. Of this sum he found that all but

\$114.10 was against men who had been ruined by drink. His eyes were opened.

Three months after this came the usual town meeting. The hotel-keeper was busy at the polls, working for the election of an excise commissioner who would continue his legal right to sell.

He approached our merchant, whose eyes had been opened, and offered him a ticket.

"Can't vote that ticket," said the merchant.

"Why? I always supposed you were one of my strong supporters."

"So I was until three months ago, when I was shown very plainly what you were doing. You are no better than a thief!"

"What do you mean by this?"

"Do you remember the night Jim paid you \$21.50 for whiskey he had drunk at your bar?"

"Yes, I remember it; and what of it?"

"I will tell you what of it." Nearly two years ago I trusted him for a stove worth \$18. He agreed to pay \$1 per month. I have not received a cent. The night he paid you \$21.50 I asked him for a part payment on the stove. He said he had no money for me. I saw him go to your hotel, and I followed him. I saw him pay you that amount. It was my money. I sold him the stove to keep him and his family warm, to cook their meals, and if it had not been for your bar, I would have got my pay. I find in ten years I have paid your bar, more than \$1,200. Men can't pay me, because they throw away all they earn at your bar. Now you ask me to vote to continue you in your business of robbery. Sir, in the future I shall fight your business as strongly as I have defended it in the past."

This conversation at the polls drew a large crowd, who eagerly listened. The merchant went on to explain the matter to them in dead earnest, as he was always known to be about everything; and the result was the almost unanimous election of a no license commissioner.

Of course the hotel-keeper and his friends raved over their defeat. But they afterward were obliged to admit that the argument given by the merchant was irresistible, and, as sensible men, they yielded to the inevitable; and the bar at that town was from that time abandoned. Our merchant soon after got his money for the stove, together with a note from Jim's wife, stating that they had so much money nowadays that they had no more getting to be most

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