

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Encouragement to Christian Effort.

Messrs. Editors,

A series of meetings was commenced in Tremont, Aylesford, on the 9th day of November last. Several ministering Brethren kindly assisted. Many impressive sermons were preached, followed by earnest exhortations, and accompanied with fervent prayer. At times the prospect appeared quite encouraging. Some steadfast believers were greatly quickened, backsliders aroused to a sense of their wanderings, and sinners awakened to a conviction of their perishing condition.

After the meetings had been continued for a considerable length of time, the roads became extremely bad, the nights dark, and often rainy. Ministers were obliged to return to their respective charges, and it seemed necessary to suspend extra services.

As none came forward to profess faith in Christ, the state of things seemed unfavourable; and many felt depressed, from the apprehension that our efforts had been almost wholly in vain.

On Saturday last, however, we were cheered at our conference by having a young woman offer herself to the Church, and give a satisfactory relation of a work of grace, experienced in connexion with our series of meetings. As the Pastor was required to attend a funeral in another locality on the Lord's-day, it was agreed that the baptism should be administered on Thursday, the 14th; and that an extra conference should be held previously on the same day.

When the Church assembled it was ascertained, that the candidate was sick, and consequently unable to attend. This circumstance appeared trying and disheartening. Four others, however, cheerfully availed themselves of the opportunity afforded by this appointment to relate their Christian experience and apply for baptism and membership in the Church. All were received; but one, who had quite recently entertained hope, chose to defer, on account of remaining doubts in reference to his state. Three forthwith yielded obedience to the Saviour's command by being "buried with Him in baptism." The congregation subsequently assembled in Bethel, where a discourse was delivered from Luke xv. 10.—"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." The right hand of fellowship was then given to the persons who had just been baptized, as also to one who, though held in esteem, had not been in connexion with the present Church, but was brought to unite with it through the influence of our late series of meetings.

The weather was remarkably fine, the attendance large and serious, and the season deeply interesting, and highly encouraging.

"Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Yours, in Gospel bonds,

C. TUPPER.

Aylesford, Jan. 15, 1858.

For the Christian Messenger.

LONDON CORRESPONDENCE.

[From our Special Correspondent.]

London, Jan. 1, 1858.

MR. SPURGEON AT WORK.

MR. EDITOR,

Paul became "all things to all men," that he might win some. Mr. Spurgeon wants a Tabernacle—the men will come of themselves: all he wants is, somewhere to put them. A Tabernacle, therefore, must be had; somehow or other, and Mr. Spurgeon does not seem to care much about the pulpit orthodoxy which only attains such objects by routine and established precedents. As singular out of the pulpit as in it, he works for his Tabernacle in any way that brings money and that is not dishonourable. Perhaps it is this rough-and-ready, no-nonsense element of his character that produces much of his success. It was said of Dr. Johnson,—"It is of no use arguing with him; if his pistol miss fire, he knocks you down with the butt-end." So with Mr. Spurgeon—hard knocks come thick and fast, where least expected, and all in a novel, unexpected way, that vanquishes people by its surprise and audacity, as much as by its inherent force. Money is wanted; somebody must have it, somebody must give. So, Mr. Spurgeon first writes an almanack, for the fund—next, Mr. Spurgeon's friends (who are legion) get up a bazaar, at the Surrey Music Hall, and, charging a good round sum for ad-

mission, get him to lecture in the afternoon of each day.

As money is nothing to those who will hear the reverend gentleman; and as they pay for it on Sundays, why should they not in the week—having, in addition, the variety of a more general address from him, and all the exquisite pleasure (to ladies, at least) of "shopping," without being obliged to buy, as they would at Swan & Edgar's? At all events, the Bazaar is now open, at the Surrey Gardens Music Hall, which is far more appropriate for such a purpose than for exclusive religious worship. It will continue for a week, and the prices be varied to suit all classes.

The hall is beautifully fitted up, and the stalls are well supplied with articles of almost every description, which were principally manufactured by ladies, and no doubt presented to the committee of management for the purposes for which the fancy fair was established. The stalls were presided over (on the first day) by ladies of the highest respectability; the principal one, erected on the platform, being occupied by Mrs. Spurgeon. The company was rather numerous, and very select, although there were but few distinguished visitors among them. Sir John Burgoyne and his daughter took a lively interest in the undertaking, and purchased articles from the various stalls with great liberality.

In the course of the afternoon Mr. Spurgeon delivered a lecture in the refreshment-room attached to the Music Hall. On ascending the platform, Mr. Spurgeon said he had been so used to preach, that when he appeared before his audience in the form of a lecturer he feared he must remain silent, unless they gave him a text.

Finding no one prepared to oblige him, he said he would give them one that was very acceptable to him, and he believed it would be to them. It was:—

"This religion that can give,
Sweetest pleasure while we live.
This religion will supply
Solid comfort when we die."

He would take for the subject of his lecture the pleasures that might be enjoyed by Christian people. He then proceeded to analyse the various amusements in which people found enjoyment, and contended that the Almighty did not require his beloved children to make themselves perpetually wretched in order to be acceptable in His sight; but there was a distinction and a wide difference between the dissipation of the intemperate and the rational enjoyment to which he had alluded. Religion never was intended to make our pleasures less, and he agreed with the clergyman who wrote a book called "How to make the best of both worlds," who maintained that, to make the best of this world, was the best and the truest way to obtain the world to come. Principles, however, might be pressed too far; for while some would not allow any pleasures which the Scriptures prohibited, others would not allow those which they permitted. He would not pause to consider them in detail; but they all struck him as being excessively insipid and absurd. There were some who found pleasure in parties; but he had been to these parties, and they were the most uninteresting things that could be imagined, and if the persons who composed them had seen their conversation in print, they would have been astonished at the ridiculous figure they cut in them. The fact was, that if people fancied there was pleasure in such amusement, they enjoyed it, but the pleasures of the Christian were of a far deeper and more solid description, and such that would last long after the circumstances which had given rise to them had ceased. He argued that the pleasures of the world were only pleasures because they were called so, but that the Christian required no such persuasion to enable him to enjoy himself in this world. He objected to games of chance as a waste of time, but he would not object to games of skill, for they were both instructive and amusing. The names of Palmer and Cook had been brought prominently before the public, and their life had been of that character that not even the sanction of the name of the Earl of Derby could make their occupation respectable, or their practices religious. Religion never was designed to make their pleasures less; and though it took away some of them, it gave them others far more lasting and gratifying. He then drew various contrasts between the different modes of enjoyment followed by various people, and argued that the greatest amount of gratification, and the most lasting that a Christian could receive, would proceed from the good he had been able to afford to his fellow-creatures in distress. They were the pleasures that angels might envy, and to which they all ought to aspire. He continued by exhorting the audience to contribute liberally to

the funds for building the tabernacle they wished to erect. He was not often a beggar, but on this occasion he was. He thanked those who had come there to assist them, for, though they had £5,200 towards the fund, the building would cost £20,000 and they had to make up the difference. He concluded by exhorting the ladies to patronise the bazaar to as large an extent as they could themselves, or induce their husbands to do so for them.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Bible in Common Schools.

Messrs. Editors,

It appears that the brief and conciliatory article published by me on this subject, (C. M. Dec. 30th,) has called forth strictures from an anonymous writer in *The Morning Chronicle* of Jan. 7th, over the signature of "Biblos."

It was not my intention, nor is it now, to enter the arena of political strife. I am not seeking office, emolument, or power; nor do I desire to see any person in the possession of any of these to the detriment of godliness, morality, or the general welfare. In my opinion, however, the discussion of this subject belongs much more properly to Christian Ministers than to political wranglers; of whom numbers are notoriously destitute of any real regard for the Bible. It is obviously unnecessary for the former to wade through all the bickerings of the latter, in order to arrive at just conclusions on this subject. Nay, a judgment formed on calm and unprejudiced investigation, is far more likely to be correct, than one resulting from the perusal of exciting communications.

It will require a stronger argument than the assertion that my remarks are "rank nonsense," to convince me, or any other impartial man who understands the nature of the liberty of conscience, that it belongs to any civil government to determine, by penal enactment, either where the Bible shall be used by the people, or where it shall not be. No one who has attentively read Church History, or the History of England, can need to be informed, that every law requiring uniformity in religious matters on points wherein men may conscientiously differ, has been followed by persecution or oppression. This is the natural and necessary result of every such enactment.

Men can hardly pretend, that they regard it as their duty to break the Sabbath, or to blaspheme. Coercion may therefore be employed in these cases, to restrain the vicious from injuring the well-disposed. But, while some men, including Biblos and myself, deem it right to have the Bible used in schools, others as conscientiously, however erroneous, believe it to be wrong. The universal principle, of course applicable to this case, is, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them likewise." If, then, we wish to have liberty to follow the dictates of our consciences in this matter, the golden rule requires us to concede the same to them. "Why," says Paul, "is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?"

Let it be supposed, for illustration, that the Pedobaptists, who are a great majority in this Province, deeming it requisite, and highly important, that all children should be baptized, demand the enactment of a law, for the spiritual welfare of the rising generation, to exclude all who do not have their children professedly baptized from any participation in the provincial funds. Would not every Baptist, nay, every man of intelligence and candour, oppose the passing of such a law, as being oppressive? But upon what ground could such opposition be based, after the passage of a law of a similar nature in reference to those who do not believe it to be right to have the Scriptures used in schools?

If, as Biblos suggests, there be reason to fear that a law will be obtained to exclude the Bible from common schools, this consideration furnishes a decisive argument in favour of my view. Let this whole matter be viewed and treated in its true light, as not being a proper subject of legislation, and no such enactment can ever be obtained. No demonstration can be clearer. The pressing of the measure proposed by Biblos is manifestly the most direct way to produce, by reaction, the result which he professes to deprecate.

He avows his agreement with me in desiring to "have Bibles in schools," and in being "opposed to all coercion in this matter." But he would have "money voted from the public funds to schools using Bibles," but withheld from all those in which they are not used.

To many persons this may appear plausible; but a regard for equity constrains me to say frankly, I am not "prepared to take that stand." Were my reviewer to take his "stand" with

me on the golden rule cited above, and to view the subject without any blinding influences to obscure his vision, he would undoubtedly regard such a course as coercive and oppressive. If there be any denomination, or class of people, exempt from contributing to "the public funds," from such people they may be withheld; but all contributors, whatever may be their religious views, have an undeniable right to share in them. If the people's money be expended for the promotion of general education, none can be justly excluded from participating therein on account of any peculiarity of sentiment. Let such a course be once commenced, and where is it to end? As I have shewn, it may be next applied to the Baptists, or to any body of people that may be in the minority.

Biblos states elsewhere, that he "would not coerce any man, or body of men," that he "asks for no coercive measures," but would "adopt" (not *united*—a misprint—but) mild persuasive measures," and "as one of the most potent of persuasives" he would have aid granted to those schools only in which the Bible is used.

This is such a statement of the case as might be expected from a crafty lawyer; but the fallacy of it may be easily illustrated. Would it not be a "coercive measure" to say to a child, "If you do not read the Bible you shall be whipped?" Would such a course be "a most potent persuasive" to induce him to study the Bible with alacrity and profit? Is there any essential difference between levying a fine for non-compliance with any requisition, and withholding the same amount, when due, for the same cause? It can hardly be denied, that it would be "coercive" to compel the inhabitants of a district to pay a certain sum yearly—say fifteen pounds—for not having the Bible used in their school. But this is precisely what the law proposed would do; for it undeniably would oblige them to pay that sum additional to a competent teacher.

B's "bit of a casuist" can easily "answer" his enquiry why the "one condition" which he wishes introduced in order to secure a share of the allowance for schools, "may not be added" to those specified, namely, having a "licensed teacher," "a good substantial school-house," &c. The latter do not touch the conscience, but the former does.

My reference to the late Dr. Inglis obviously regarded the proper way of using the Bible in schools in which it was used, and that only. The view expressed by him, with which mine accords, is approved by Biblos, who remarks, "That is exactly what I say."

It is manifestly a misrepresentation to charge "a conclave of Bishops and Priests," in unqualified terms, with having "denounced the Bible as reprobate." Did they thus "denounce" the Latin Vulgate, or the English Douay Version? That they would say harsh things against Protestant versions, and especially against the Common English Version, and the Translators of it, is not to be doubted. If, however, Biblos had not cautiously, but very unfairly, concealed his real name, he is doubtless aware, that it would be easy to show from his published communications, that he has done the same thing himself, and so given them his decided countenance therein.

Though much inconvenience and confusion would naturally ensue from the use of those different Versions in the same school, he seems remarkably accommodating on this point. He would leave it to the option of the different denominations, or parties, what Version should be read by their children in school. Why, then, does he not go one step farther, and leave it to their option, or judgement of what is right, whether any Version shall be so used or not?

Protestants often complain of Roman Catholics for depriving others of equal rights on account of religious sentiments or practices. Let us, then, set them a better example.

My views with regard to them, and the course which I pursue and recommend towards them, are precisely the same that they have always been. I have never read or heard of an instance by which one of them was ever converted by calling him ugly names, upbraiding him with the misdeeds of any of his predecessors, compelling him to read the Bible, or depriving him of any common rights, but many of them, as is well known, have been won by kindness. "He that winneth souls is wise."

Yours in gospel bonds,

C. TUPPER.

Aylesford, Jan. 19th, 1858.

A western editor, on hearing it remarked that persons in a drowning condition suddenly recollected all the transactions of their lives, wished that a few of his subscribers would take a bathing in deep water.