

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

United States Correspondence.

FATHER CHINIQUE IN BOSTON.

MR. EDITOR,

Boston has recently been favoured with a visit from the far-famed celebrity,—Father Chinique; and having enjoyed the pleasure of hearing one of his lectures, I, perhaps, cannot do better than to devote the present article to some account of it.

The place of meeting being Park Street Church, I made my way thither a half an hour before the time, and was surprised to find that every entrance to that large building was literally crowded with a dense mass of human beings extending as far as the middle of the street in front. After considerable effort I succeeded in pressing my way through the crowd into the interior of the building; where being, perhaps, more selfish than polite I monopolized the first convenient seat that offered itself.

After appropriate devotional exercises, the speaker arose in a graceful and dignified manner, placing his hands upon the desk, and looking slowly around upon the audience till every eye was fixed upon him. He commenced with some interesting reminiscences of his own history; alluding in a most touching manner to the wonderful wisdom and goodness of God as manifested to him throughout his entire career. He referred to the deep impressions made upon his mind by a careful perusal of the Bible in very early life. The seeds of a sound evangelical faith were then deposited in his mind, and so firmly rooted that all the mysticisms of popish legends into which he was subsequently initiated were incapable of obliterating them. Watered with the dew of the Divine blessing it expanded with a steady growth, till under this process of gradual enlightenment he was led to the prosecution of a course of independent enquiry into the great subject of *Bible religion*. God, in the mean time, was preparing the way for his final deliverance. Being firmly attached to the dogmas of *Catholicism* it was long before his confidence in it as a system could be shaken. It was not, therefore, till his mind had been more enlightened, and heart sufficiently strengthened to oppose the tyranny of his ecclesiastical superiors that they were permitted to impose upon him those intolerable burdens which led him to a serious and protracted struggle with them, and to his ultimate abandonment of the *Holy Mother Church*, followed by about *ten thousand* of his oppressed and benighted countrymen. Now, that he had renounced his allegiance to Rome, and had embraced the religion of the Saviour, so far as his knowledge of truth would permit him, he imagined that his sore struggles were at an end, that his enemies were conquered, and that the raptures of freedom would go on increasing forever. So great was his joy that he thought it hardly possible that the shadow of a doubt could ever mar the bright and pleasing visions of soul. With a fertile soil, a healthy climate, an industrious people, a free Government, and the multitudinous blessings of a benignant Providence scattered everywhere around him, he never dreamt that adversity could cast its shadow upon his path. But he was soon to learn from bitter experience how evanescent are all earthly prospects, and that even the raptures of pardon and life are mingled with temptation and dismay. His enemies came in upon him like a flood, assailing him with the weapons of falsehood and slander, endeavouring to undermine his reputation, and to alienate his people from him by destroying their confidence in his fidelity. Failing in this they next imposed upon him a series of expensive law-suits, thus depriving him of his earthly possessions, and involving him in extreme pecuniary embarrassment. In the midst of this succession of calamities he fell down before God with a heart filled with anxiety and grief imploring interposition in behalf of his suffering people. But Heaven, itself, seemed unpropitious; for a storm was already gathering around them which soon burst in streams of devastation upon the soil. The fields blooming with luxuriant vegetation were withered down to desolation and ruin, and the people deprived of the last resource were reduced to a condition of famishing necessity. This deplorable state of things continues to the present time with little prospect of a change for the better. Several affecting incidents of the suffering of the poor people were related by Father Chinique, one only of which I have space to notice. The day before he left home he was called to see a young man who had a wife and three children in a state of actual starvation, having nothing to eat for several days.

He had in his pocket a ten dollar bill which had been sent to him, by an unknown friend, a day or two before. This he gave to the young man to relieve the present wants of his family. His father, a man of considerable wealth, called on him the previous day, and told him that he was prepared to make him and his family comfortable provided he would renounce his Protestant errors, and return to the bosom of the Catholic church, otherwise he would not give him a cent. The son, with streaming eyes, looked first at his starving children; and then at the pale and emaciated form of his wife, and said "Father, I love my wife and children with the tenderest affection, and would make any reasonable sacrifice to promote their temporal happiness; but I love my God and my Bible more. I cannot reproach the cause of my blessed Redeemer; He loves me,—He has saved me, and I cannot,—I will not deny Him." His father, in a violent rage, poured upon him a shower of curses, and left the house.

THE JOHN BROWN TRAGEDY.

Perhaps ere this you have received intelligence of the famous John Brown tragedy, which perhaps has created more general excitement throughout the United States than any similar event that has transpired for many years. The following statements, I gather chiefly from Boston papers. John Brown,—a name rendered famous by resistance to tyranny in Kansas, a name of terror in Virginia, a name of which history is to take cognizance in the future is no more. He has gone the way of the felon, with the spirit and fortitude of a saint. As he was first known to the public, so he continued to the last terrible moment, indomitable, calm, self-denying, conscientious, given wholly up to one great cause. This clouded his reason, and wholly led him astray. He violated the laws of his country and for an ideal good, struck at the common security of all the good which is to be derived from our precious institutions. Hence by the law, his life was forfeited to the State of Virginia, and the only pertinent consideration which could intervene was, whether at the time of his offence he had that rational control of his faculties which is the basis of legal responsibility. For our part, now that the last scene of his life is to be added to what was previously known of his career, we think John Brown was clearly a monomaniac on the subject of his duty and power to emancipate the slaves of this country. He solemnly believed in his mission in this respect—or rather the idea of the mission possessed him entirely and led him on as if by a decree of fate. The wildness of the whole scheme, the absurd governmental project, the humanity of Brown throughout the fight, his heroic bearing on trial, and all we know of his conversation since,—everything comports, and comports alone, with this theory of qualified insanity. Looking at the acts of John Brown from one point of view—and we must not forget that it is the only Virginia standpoint—he has deservedly paid the penalty of his outrages against the laws of Virginia and the peace of its community. Looking at the terror which he has carried to numerous happy firesides, conjuring up at every unusual noise all the horrors of a St. Domingo rebellion—the awakening of the worst passions in the hearts of the black race—the rigorous treatment of the innocent slaves which will result from his raid—we cannot regard John Brown entirely in the light of a martyr. Grant that his object—the freedom of the slave and the extinction of slavery—was a noble one. The end did not sanctify the means. We have nothing but condemnation and abhorrence for those religious zealots who have sought to extend Christianity by the sword and to extinguish heresy by the rack, the pillory and fire. With equal abhorrence should we condemn the crimes of those who seek to anticipate the certain extinction of slavery with bloodshed and slaughter.

But while we must be earnest and outspoken in condemnation of the crime, there have been few instances where life has been forfeited to the offended majesty of the law in which the tears of pity could so conscientiously be shed for the offender. It is impossible to contemplate the spectacle of that brave old man yielding up his life upon the scaffold, firm to the last in his mistaken convictions of duty, without feeling that he was no ordinary criminal. What was a crime before the law, and in the judgment of the community, was to him a right act in a righteous cause. John Brown had in him much of the ascetic, and unbending spirit of the Covenanters and Puritans. He had a sturdy honesty and simplicity, firmness and courage, which commanded the admiration even of those who were clamorous for the punishment of his offences. What a pity that this admiration of

noble qualities did not draw with it the sweet influences of mercy and charity. Virginia could well have afforded to have been magnanimous. No community ever suffered by commuting the death penalty of political offenders. So thought Washington at the time of the whisky rebellion. Upon this idea Governor John Hancock of Massachusetts acted in dealing with those who were implicated in Shay's rebellion. The English government commuted the sentences of the Chartist, and pardoned the leaders of the last rebellion in Ireland. Virginia might well have imitated these examples of mercy. The death of John Brown was not necessary to the security of her community, and it will only intensify the feeling of hatred to an institution which called for such a sacrifice in its support. An outraged community has demanded "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," forgetting that the same dispensation which sanctions the one taught that vengeance belongeth to the Lord. The day will come, when the fair soil of Virginia shall be no longer cursed with the blight of slavery, that the execution of John Brown and its attendant scenes, which now seem just and proper in the eyes of her people will be regarded as a blot upon the escutcheon of the State. May God hasten that day and make the crimes for which sturdy John Brown has sacrificed his life no longer possible.

Such are the feelings which prevail to a great extent in this part of the country in reference to Brown's execution, and the circumstances connected therewith. Thousands of those, however, who sympathized fully with him in his raid into Virginia met in the different public Halls on Friday evening Dec. 2, being the day of the execution, and expended all their oratorical calibre in loud and clamorous denunciations of the proceedings of Governor Wise and his Constitutional advisers, throughout the whole affair, pronouncing them a palpable outrage upon all justice, civilization and humanity.

In one of those meetings, held in Tremont Temple the Rev. Mr. Pierpont closed his speech with an original effusion, with which, also, I shall close this article:—

"Brown, though a prisoner and in chains to day,
Holds the whole South half speechless with dismay;
But when to-morrow's sun in blood goes down,
It will breathe free, no longer fearing Brown.
Yet o'er it white-winged peace shall never brood,
Stained as it will be by the old hero's blood;
For though the man be numbered with the dead,
Not so the cause for which the MARTYR bled.
Peace her white wings has folded o'er his breast,
To-morrow they shall bear him to his rest."

I am, Mr. Editor,

Very truly yours,

J. C. HURD.

Boston, Dec. 1859.

For the Christian Messenger.

Acadia Lyceum.

Debate.—DO GHOSTS EXIST?

MR. EDITOR,

Dear Sir,—Pursuant to public notice, the Acadia Lyceum held the first of a Series of public entertainments, on Tuesday evening 6th inst., in the character of a Debate, in the Academy Hall.

There was a large and respectable audience, consisting of the elite of Wolfville, and the neighbouring district. A large portion was of the fair sex, whose presence no doubt enhanced the excellence of the performance, by the animation it infused into the speakers.

The debate commenced at seven o'clock, the President announcing the subject, *Do such things as ghosts really exist?* The debate was commenced by an able speech from Mr. F. H. Rand, who took the affirmative side of the question. It was kept up with great spirit till a late hour. Great interest was manifested by the audience. While one would stand up, bringing forth argument after argument in favour of the existence of ghosts, there would be an almost deathly silence. The falling of a pin might be heard. One could almost fancy he saw an apparition standing before him. On the other hand when those who took the negative plied their subtle logic and weighty arguments, against the existence of those pale mysterious visitors, the people one and all appeared to breathe more freely, and settle back in their places again. The speakers appeared to have an almost complete command of the feelings of their audience, swaying them to one side or the other, as the speakers on either side occupied the floor.

This might have been owing, in a great measure to the nature of the question, but more to the masterly manner, in which it was handled. The affair reflected great credit upon those who took part in it, and upon the efforts they are making to cultivate the art of public speaking.

Your obt. Servant,

ONE PRESENT.

Wolfville, Dec. 8th, 1859.

For the Christian Messenger.

Letter from Rev. A. W. Barss.

DEAR BROTHER,

If you think the following items of intelligence worthy of a place in your valued paper they are at your disposal.

A MELANCHOLY OCCURRENCE, AND A WARNING TO MOOSE-HUNTERS.

About nine weeks ago a party of three men by the names of Hardy, Davis and Mullens, went out at Jordan River on a Moose hunting excursion. When they had called one they concluded to try for another, the plan adopted for the accomplishment of their purpose appears to have been for one to remain stationary to call, while the others went in opposite directions in order to have the more chances of a shot when the animal approached, but unfortunately Hardy was discovered by Davis moving in the dark in a different direction from what he expected and supposing him to be a moose, fired, and put the ball through his body causing his death in about three moments. Thus suddenly and unexpectedly was poor Alexander Hardy summoned into the spirit-world, leaving a wife and two helpless babes, with a large circle of other relations to mourn his untimely end.

It was my lot to be in the neighbourhood when this sad accident occurred, and spent a part of the following day with the mourners. It was a house of mourning such as I never before witnessed, and while trying to direct those afflicted souls to Jesus Christ with their grief it seemed that God would sanctify the dispensation to the good of souls.

A PRAYER MEETING AT JORDAN RIVER.

After the funeral services of Alexander Hardy were over a prayer meeting was appointed at the house of the mourning relatives in the evening. A large number attended, and the Lords power was felt by many, it was a precious meeting. Some of the mourners were enabled to rejoice in the comforting influence of the Holy Spirit and others were made to feel the need of an immediate preparation to meet death. At the close of the meeting a number requested to be prayed for, who seemed truly penitent.

A BAPTISM IN THE JORDAN RIVER.

The following day after the meeting referred to above, duty called me away from the place but four weeks after I visited it again, when five willing converts requested to be baptised in Apostolic order. Accordingly on Sabbath morning we went out to the river side and on a profession of their faith, I went down with them into the water and baptised them in the name of the sacred Trinity. One of the candidates was the wife of our esteemed Brother Samuel Harlow. It may well be said of him that that day his cup was full of joy and running over. It was a blessed day to many throughout. At a meeting in the evening several anxious souls desired to be prayed for. I hope there will be more to request Baptism on my next visit to the place. The thoughtful reader cannot help observing in the above the overruling providence of God.

He moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform,
He plants his footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.

A. W. BARSS.

Locke's Island, Dec. 8th, 1859.

Religious Intelligence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Revival at Beaver River.

DEAR BROTHER,

As Brother Harris gave you an account of the opening of our New Meeting House, I will begin where he left off.

Brother Cogswell remained with us one week, holding Meetings every day with a good degree of interest, after which he left for Barrington, and I trust many prayers went with him, at which place he remained four weeks. While Brother Cogswell was at Barrington Brother Stubbart and Brother Randall preached for us to good acceptance. May the Lord reward them for their labours of love. When Brother Cogswell returned, on his way home, the people here held to him so that he could not pass on, and consented to remain one week. He commenced holding meetings twice a day which continued for sixteen days with great interest, baptizing almost daily; backsliders returned with confession and believers rejoiced in the hope of the glory of God, whilst young converts pressed towards the Kingdom of our God, with a desire to follow the Saviour. To our unspeakable joy he led fifty-eight willing souls down Jordan's bank to receive the ordinance of Baptism, who with five he baptized on his way to Barrington, and two added by letter; in all, make sixty-five added to the church. The oldest of these is 78 years of age, and the youngest 10 years. I thank God that five of