

The Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

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Poetry.

The Sunrise never failed us yet.

Upon the sadness of the sea
The sunset broods regretfully;
From the far, lonely spaces, slow
Withdraws the wistful afterglow.

So out of life the splendor dies;
So darken all the happy skies;
So gathers twilight, cold and stern;
But overhead the planets burn.

And up the east another day
Shall chase the bitter dark away;
What though our eyes with tears be wet?
The sunrise never failed us yet.

The blush of dawn may yet restore
Our light and hope and joy once more,
Sad soul, take comfort, nor forget
That sunrise never failed us yet.

Scribner for June.

Religious.

What is Ritualism?

We hear much about it. If the people unite in repeating the Lord's Prayer, that is "ritualism." If a bouquet of flowers is placed on the pulpit, there also is "ritualism." And so on with almost everything that hath not been thus heretofore.

Now ritualism consists not in the use of ceremonies, but in the way these are looked upon. Take the case of two baptisms. In a certain Baptist congregation the font is prepared with much care. The minister and candidates are robed in a particular manner. The organ plays, the people sing, passages of Scripture are chanted or repeated, and every attempt is made to add impressiveness to the scene. The whole ceremony is indeed quite an elaborate one. The Roman Catholic nurse hastily catches up a goblet or wash-basin of water, fills a drop or two in the child's face, mumbling the name of the Trinity, and the "baptism" is complete. Here is certainly a simple and unornate ceremonial. But this instead of the former and more stately, is the ritualistic baptism. For the more elaborate proceeding is regarded as, after all, mere form, while to the latter is attributed an inherent potency, a supernatural efficacy. Ritualism consists not in a free use of rites, but in an overvaluation of them.

That ceremonies have their use, is seen in the fact that the observance of certain ceremonies is divinely enjoined. Nor need we confine ourselves to those ceremonies which are commanded in the Bible, any more than to those forms of prayer which are set down in Scripture, or with the Scotch Presbyterians to those songs of worship which are found in the inspired volume. Our Baptist churches have several ceremonies for whose observance there is on Scriptural precept or even precedent. One such is the right hand of fellowship to persons joining the church. And if one congregation sees fit to adopt certain ceremonies which the others do not follow, it is not necessarily any more "ritualistic" than they. Whatever ceremonies we think will conduce to the devotional spirit—those ceremonies we may freely use.

Ceremonies have their use. Ritualism is their abuse. For rites, like other useful things, our fallen human nature is apt to pervert. Instead of cherishing the form for the sake of the spirit, men are prone to put the form in the place of the spirit. Thus the repetition of certain forms of prayer will be considered as constituting true prayer. Men will even sacrifice the spirit for the sake of the form. Thus the Pharisees trampled on the principle of the Sabbath rest—a merciful institution—by forbidding Jesus to do works of mercy on the Sabbath. Again, rites which merely symbolize certain spiritual facts come to be regarded as accomplishing those facts. Thus baptism, which is a symbol of regeneration, is regarded by multitudes as effecting regeneration. The phases of ritualism are multifarious. But let us remem-

ber that to the spirit of ritualism we are liable whose ceremonies are few and simple, as well as those churches whose ritual is elaborate and ornate.

Let us not then condemn ceremonies as such. But let us guard against ascribing to them a worth and power which they do not possess.—*Examiner & Chronicle.*

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

From Mrs. Armstrong to the W. M. A. S. Central Board.

KIMEDY, April 27th, 1877.

My dear Mrs. Selden,—

I forward you herewith an account of my expenditure of W. A. S. funds up to the close of last year. This is in order to agree with the accounts of the Foreign Mission Board which are now made up to that time. During the last four months the greater part of the balance which appears in your favor has been expended.

The funds we have received, I have before acknowledged,—\$100 for School, \$50 for Nau-nau and my share of the Mission Band money, for which you sent me an order on Mr. Sanford. The \$100 for schools has been sufficient up to the present. The \$50 for Nau-nau would have paid her to Dec. 30th, 1876, had she not had travelling expenses and other extras, on account of sickness to provide for, as it was it fell 20 rupees short. We have paid her each month however, and hope sometime soon your next remittance for her will come to hand.

From March to November of last year no school-work was undertaken, owing to our removal first to Calingapatam, afterwards to Kimedy, where houses had to be erected before any work could be done.

In November we began a school on the verandah, which after our return from Bimlipatam was transferred to a small house two miles distant, under the care of the teacher who lives there in the vicinity of the children. It was too far for teacher and children to come twice a day. I visit it once or twice a week. There is now a daily attendance of about 20 boys and 7 girls, the latter are learning to sew nicely, and they all are making gratifying progress in reading. They are all Oriya children, the teacher speaks both Oriya and Telugu. As the parents wished them to be in school every day. (they know no Sabbath) I have made arrangements for them to begin a Sabbath School next Sabbath morning. (the last in April). They already have some knowledge of the Bible, and can sing three or four christian hymns.

On the 27th February we opened another school on the verandah, with 20 pupils; this has been increased to 50, though the average attendance now is about 35, owing partially to the intense heat, as some of the pupils have some distance to come. This school is composed of Telugu children only. I open the school every morning with a Bible story and prayer. They have singing at the close of the school morning and evening. Many of them come to a Sabbath School we began a few weeks ago, and we hope in God's good time, now, perhaps or later to see the good seed bear fruit in their hearts.

In October a little girl 4 years old was brought to me, whom nobody wanted. I took her, and have provided for her from the money sent by the Mission Bands. Unless some other provision is made for her, I shall continue to support her from that fund. She is not a good child, nor a particularly interesting one, but she is active, shrewd, and somewhat better than she was when she first came. The little children who love Jesus themselves, must pray that she may love Jesus too. The \$1100 appropriated for building funds, Mr. Armstrong has or will account for to the Foreign Mission Board.

This year has been a year of small things, of beginnings; during the ensuing year we look for growth and progress.

Our expenses henceforward in school

matters will necessarily be greater than they have been. Beside the two schools now at work, we are making arrangements for a girls' school to begin on the 1st June. At that time also we have promised to undertake the superintendence of a school of 30 boys, whose teacher wishes to come under mission school rule.

The Lord is surely filling our hands with work; if only we can be faithful and fulfil all His will in the matter we may well be thankful. These schools will we hope be partially self-supporting. The Inspector of schools, who at first seemed much opposed to us, has visited us twice and wishes us to place our schools under his examination, that so we may receive grants for them from Government. I do not know how this matter will turn, but as we use what books we please, and teach what we please, the examination can I think do us no harm. We have a legal right to Government aid which is extended to other mission schools conducted on the same system. The only difficulty is that Inspector and inspected are all heathen, and can hardly fail to be prejudiced. Yet whatever they give us will be so much help to which we have a perfect claim.

According to the present prospect we shall need for the remaining months of 1877, \$100 more than we have now on hand. Was not a second \$100 voted to us? We have heard nothing farther of it.

In addition to the school work I see an opening for Zenana work which may prove a useful field of labor. I have access now to two houses where the women gather to hear me read; as I have time I do not doubt others will be shown to me.

O my sister, pray, pray for us, that light from heaven may enlighten this darkness, and that souls may be saved. Believe me as ever,

Yours sincerely,
H. M. N. ARMSTRONG.

FROM Teloogoo Land.—The following is taken out of a brief business letter from Rev. Mr. Clough to the Mission Rooms. It is much in little, and will attract attention. Mr. Clough writes, under date of April 4, 1877, "Things are fearful here I assure you. Rain has however fallen in sufficient quantities to avert the water famine which was greatly feared by government, and by us all. Of course there can be no crop sown until July, but grain can be imported, and water could not. I baptized one hundred and four on the 9th of March. I am now at work on the East Coast Canal, and have my tent, and camp, and home, most of the time ten miles from Oujole. I have got a contract to dig out about three and one-half miles of the canal, and I am gathering the Christians from near and from afar. If they come (and they will) they can live (D.V.) There is no famine in my camp. I have got the contract on such terms, and the government is so kind to us, that two-thirds of my fears are gone. About one thousand coolies are at work now. More particulars hereafter."

This government contract will furnish Mr. Clough a double opportunity for carrying forward his work as a missionary. He can labor for both the temporal and spiritual welfare of the natives whom he employs.—*Missionary Magazine.*

TRANSLATION OF A LETTER FROM A SHAN PREACHER.—"I, Tungla, a Shan preacher now in Bhamo, write this letter to all the disciples in America. O, disciples, whom I love very much! Because there are very many Shans in Bhamo, and because there is no missionary teacher here to preach to them, I write this friendly letter to let you know how things are. It is exceedingly necessary that you select and send a teacher to Bhamo, because the Shans of Bhamo, who are very numerous, do not know the Gospel; they worship false gods. There is need that a teacher be sent this year, for we cannot occupy two places at once; in order that the religion of Jesus Christ may

increase, please send a Shan teacher quickly. The Scriptures say, if they hear not the news how can they believe? If there are no preachers how can they hear the news? Because the Scriptures speak thus, and there is only one teacher for my nation, and he cannot go (literally pervade) everywhere; please pity us, and send us one more teacher for Bhamo. There is much that is hopeful in this place, O, disciples in America.

TUNGLA.

1877 January the 14th day.

ORIGINAL ESSAY.

Whitewash Morally Considered.

READ BY A MEMBER OF THE GRADUATING CLASS AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE HORTON COLLEGIATE ACADEMY ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6TH, 1877.

There are so many sides to some questions, that one hardly knows which to consider, and though whitewash is so exceedingly thin, yet there are a variety of sides to it.

A superficial glance might lead us to extol whitewash and deem it very necessary and beneficial. Its chief aim is to please the eye, and divert the attention from a close inspection of the underlying material. It preserves the surface it covers, and adds a charm to the landscape.

But when viewed from another standpoint, we perceive its imperfections. Its tendency to be easily effaced renders it necessary that we should be constantly adding a new coating, or the rough interior will be exposed. Deformity generally lurks under its fair covering, and if fine fabrics are brought in contact they are soiled.

There are a variety of mixtures that constitute whitewash when morally considered, but all having the same end and object—namely to smooth over the blemishes of human character on that side that is worn next the world.

There is the very generally existing political whitewash; the more select and carefully applied religious whitewash; the wide spread educational whitewash; the cream-laid delicately perfumed society whitewash; and the good substantial family whitewash.

What shall we do with it? is the cry of some honest-minded individual who has but recently become a member of a "Board," or political party.

What shall we do without it? is the interrogative answer thundered at him from some long standing officer, or "honorary member." If our novice ventures to ask whether a course of straight forward truthfulness that would not fear the light might not be better, he is frowned down upon, deluged with ambiguous explanations, and alas, we fear, not re-elected. Thus it follows that those who would work for the interest of the public at large are often excluded from office.

The elements of self-interest and party feeling are so strong in political circles, that if a blemish appears on the character of a statesman, he is still upheld by his friends, misdoings, smoothly coated over, and even made to seem like acts of justice by those whose interests are at stake if he is deposed. And thus "the truth is sold to serve the hour."

There is another species of this wide spread covering that consists in making a religious profession, and living a moral outside life, observing the forms of worship, attending religious meetings and appearing very much interested in the cause, while the heart is not right in the sight of God. He says of such "ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess." And again; compares them to the "whited sepulchres" which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but are "within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." Religious Whitewash when carefully used may be of some benefit in a worldly sense. A man may the more easily obtain an office, or be raised in the esteem of society, but when judged by the discernment of our very thoughts it

avails us nothing. God cannot be deceived however thick and brilliant the coating.

There is often much more pretence made at an education than there is real knowledge acquired. A young man studies some Classics, a little Philosophy, and less Mathematics, and thus by a thin coating of information with regard to advanced branches, they whitewash a very dilapidated foundation. A young lady is sent to a fashionable boarding school, where she is taught some music and drawing, a little French and a few more accomplishments; though why they are thus called we do not know, since their possession really accomplishes so little. With her ill-dressed mind thus decked out, she is introduced into society, and it is whispered around that she is highly educated. But if these unsubstantial acquirements be subjected to the severe tests of life and experience, they are about as readily effaced as is the material with which we would compare them.

But life is short. There is much knowledge to be acquired. No one can have a thorough understanding of all branches. It is only by devoting his whole life to a certain pursuit that one man is able to explore fully any field of study, even then the cold hand of death is apt to interrupt his researches. Is it not therefore better that we should get only a superficial knowledge of many things, than to confine ourselves to one particular subject? It has been wisely said:—"Let us endeavour to know something of everything, and everything of something." Our aim in study is not only to acquire a knowledge of certain facts, and learn by rote the rules laid down by others; we would learn to think for ourselves, would train the intellect to collect its own materials, and the judgment to form its own opinions. So shall we polish the native substance of the mental structure, not gloss it over with a superficial layer.

Social and family whitewash is used for a variety of purposes. It may hide personal dislikes, or cover opinions, which would give offence. It conceals from the world's gaze the skeletons ghastly and grim, whose spectral forms haunt every heart and every home. Shall we condemn this phase of our subject? Does it not closely resemble the charity that covereth a multitude of sins?

But this much we would ask. If we use whitewash on our own family or on our own social circle, let us apply it to our neighbours also.

Does a small dark spot appear on their character, is it well to nudge the next person we meet, direct his attention to it, and affirm we have always known it was there?

Let us rather dip our brush and apply a good coating of whitewash, with as liberal a hand as though it had been on our own inclosure. An hours sunshine might cover the dark spot.

Whitewash! Imagine the world without it.

What walls, gray with time, and mildew, against which no one would have the heart to train a rose, or plant a flower, would offend the eye of taste! What rents, and patches, and misfits would appear in human character in its various phases and positions! What grimy spectres of self, self, self.

But there comes a time when whitewash can avail nothing, when it is neither pleasing to the eye nor consoling to the heart.

"In the breaking gulfs of sorrow
When the helpless feet stretch out,
And learn in the depths of darkness
The solidest footing to doubt."

Then comes the time when the tinsel dims, the brass cankers, and the iron rusts.

The human soul, clad in trailing folds of sable, must have the real and the true, the pure gold proved in the furnace of centuries, with the impress of the Great God's fingers still upon it.

The cry for truth has gone up from the earth ever since our first parents discovered that the world's first touch of whitewash:—"Thou shalt not surely die," did not in any way avail them.

We read of an Eastern King who