

That art carries us softly over the grief which it knows not how to assuage. This deem I the greatest of the magic charms,
By which antiquity effects us.

But through these disguises there is ever breaking forth the tone of a complaint that is full of pain. Almost all the Greek poets from Homer, the first, who calls man the most miserable of all beings, to the last, vie with one another in uttering their wail over the misery of human life. As a saying of many wise men we have the following:

*The best thing is never to be born,
Yet if born, speedily to die.*

Pliny the Roman tells us how man alone of all creatures "grieves the day of his birth with cries and tears,"—as if he anticipated all the sorrows which await him. And in addition to these sorrows Pliny tells also of the passions and moral evils generally, which pursue man. "Therefore let each one—he says again—above all comfort his heart with this thought, that the greatest good which nature allows to man, is a timely death, and that the best thing in this is, that each one can procure this for himself." The familiar saying of Menander: whosoever is a favorite of the gods, dies in youth," was in every mouth. This saying was fulfilled in Achilles at the beginning of Grecian history, and in Alexander at its end. Both these characters, in whom, as Hegel very beautifully and cleverly shows, the whole being and life of the Greek people was reflected, wear a mournful aspect. And as with the Greeks, so with all the noble peoples of the old world, especially with the Indians, this feature of sadness is impressed on their countenance.

And yet the true sting is wanting to this lament over the misery of life. Our moral consciousness is more sensitive than that of the ancients. We know, that the chief evil of life is sin.

*Life is not the highest good,
But guilt is the greatest evil.*

And the consciousness of this was not wholly wanting to the old world. The deeper it sank morally, the more positively it gave utterance thereto. "We are all vile," says Seneca. "What one blames another for, will he find again in his own breast. Vile ourselves we live among the vile."

Thus sin is a universal fact, and it is the evil of evils, so that hereby life ceases to be worthy of the name.

However far we go back, we see this power of sin ruling in the history of mankind. It is an old problem of the human mind, whence sin originated. The answer which the Scriptures give is the simplest solution of the same. Sin cannot come from God himself, for He is holy and benevolent. It cannot proceed in some way from the nature of matter or our body, for corporeal and sensuous nature is a creation of God. It can thus only originate from man himself, from an act of his freedom, from a fall from his original purity and nobleness, which we no longer carry within us as an actuality, but only as a kind of pretension thereto, as the evening-red of a departed day, as the remembrance of a lost happiness—a remembrance which runs through the traditions of all nations. Everywhere we find sayings and myths of a happy state at the beginning and of a later loss of the same through the sin of man; almost everywhere, especially in the east, other religious notions rest upon this doctrine.

The Biblical account represents the sin of the first man as the consequence of a temptation which was sprung upon him and brought about his fall. It is hereby apparent that there is a tempting spiritual power outside or independent of man,—a view which assumed at a later time a complete doctrinal form and has a weighty significance in the New Testament. Against no other doctrine, however, is modern knowledge so prejudiced as against this. And very rightly, indeed, may our moral consciousness resist this doctrine, if it is made to serve the interests of superstition or fanaticism, or is abused by being made to shield us from the guilt of sin. And still it is in the interest of humanity to think of man as led astray and not as the inventor and final originator of sin; man is not one with sin, he is not satanic. Were he this, were he even the principle of sin, he could not be redeemed. But blessed be God, he is redeemable, he can be ransomed from his sin. Thus sin proceeds not so much outwardly from within man, as it enters him from without. This diminishes not his guilt, but mitigates only its punishment; sin itself is seen to be more serious as we discover that it is not confined to us inwardly, but rules without us as an objective power in history,

and casts its shadow even to the inner life of the soul.

Many persons have stumbled at this, that the scriptures describe the first sin as an external sensuous event, as an almost childish act, and still connect it with the most serious consequences for the whole history of mankind. But we must not stay by the outer circumstance, but looking through it must perceive its moral effects in the life of the soul. And these are of the deepest incisive significance. Let us think of man in the first blessed harmony of his mind and will with God; as he now becomes perplexed concerning the love of God; as suspicion arises in his breast, so that God in enmity absolutely denies him the good on which the happiness of his future depends; and as he now rejects the commandment of God and takes his future into his own hands, in order himself to shape his future on the line of disobedience to God's commands—and shall we not feel compelled to say the entire inner disposition of his heart to God his Father is changed, he has violated his relation of sonship to God, he has severed himself from God, he has, like the prodigal son, inwardly left his father's house and wandered far from God in a strange land.

What wonder that he has hereby plunged himself into misery. We must not simply look at what is external in the matter—that is the most unessential thing and was occasioned by the childhood-state of the first man; but we must estimate the inner moral significance of the event. Then shall we indeed perceive and confess that its significance is of a very decisive kind; and the nearer we place it at the beginning of history and of the youthful life of mankind, when its complete character was not yet formed, the more decisive does it become. It has the effect of a catastrophe on the life of humanity.

That act at the beginning was fatal for the whole race. For it was the act of the first man, in whom the whole race was represented and comprehended. We all feel that that act concerns us all, that it is not an incidental and insignificant thing, but that we are involved in it, as is always and everywhere the case in actions of representatives for a whole body. And that this act concerns us, we really experience also in its consequences. For we have all to lament and suffer for the same. Who can deny that an evil inclination dwells in us from the beginning, which in many ways involuntarily expresses itself. There is something innocent indeed in a child, even his improprieties have oftentimes in them something almost amiable; but behind all this innocence and amiability there is seen to be a suspicious background. It is an old Greek saying: he who is not thrashed, will not grow up good. And we also say: if we do not control nature, but allow it to grow as it will, the weeds will shoot forth so rankly that the good seed will be entirely choked. We must confess that from the beginning a good deal of weed seed lies in the youthful soil. We all, the further we proceed in our moral development, the more experience this overpowering moral perversity till we come to the feeling, that there is no sin the germ and possibility of which does not lie in ourselves.

For the Christian Messenger.

MR. DENTON says: "The letters and speeches of R. M. King, T. H. Porter, Rev. E. M. Saunders, and others, witness conclusively to hasty and imperfect criticism."—i. e. of the Foreign Missionary Board.

Will Mr. Denton give the part or parts of Rev. E. M. Saunders' letter, in which he finds "the hasty and imperfect criticism?"

ENQUIRER.

For the Christian Messenger.

Reconciliation at Port Lorne, Annapolis Co.

Dear Brother Selden,—

Many of your readers know that difficulties of long standing have existed in the Baptist Church at Port Lorne. Brethren were estranged from each other. The root of bitterness had sprung up, yielding its fruit of anger, unkindness, and all the sad consequences of alienation. But now, through the subduing efficacy of God's grace, harmony is restored, and brethren dwell together in unity.

In compliance with a request from the Church, a Council assembled on Wednesday, Sept. 7th, at Arlington, a section of the Port Lorne Church. There were present all the pastors of Annapolis Co., except one, and delegates from every Church. The first forty

minutes were spent in earnest prayer. All members of the Council seemed to feel that a successful and satisfactory issue could be reached only by both parties confessing their faults, and mutually forgiving one another. This happy result was reached, and harmony restored. The former pastor and brethren of both parties joined hands in fellowship and united in worship.

Several brethren who had been excluded from the fellowship of the Church were restored. A public meeting was held in the evening, and interesting addresses were given by a number of the delegates and others, joy and gladness seemed to be the experience of all. Now the outlook is hopeful. Bro. S. Miller, a licentiate of the Upper Wilnot Church, has been laboring in the field for several months, and will continue a few weeks longer. It is the prayer and hope that blessings of converting power will follow these displays of reconciling grace, and that many will be converted to God.

By order of the Council,
J. H. ROBBINS, Clerk.

The Christian Messenger.

Halifax, N. S., September 14, 1881.

FIFTY YEARS WITH THE BAPTIST MINISTERS AND CHURCHES OF THE MARITIME PROVINCES OF CANADA, by Rev. I. E. Bill, St. John, N. B. pp. 778. Printed by Barnes & Co., St. John. Price \$3.00.

The author of this work has done good service to the denomination by the preparation of this handsome volume. He has shown great industry in securing the information it contains respecting the early history of the body. The effort is deserving of all praise, and is a very proper monument to raise as a standing memorial of a long life spent in the interests of the churches, which will endure for ages after the writer has passed away to brighter realms. The bulk of the facts have appeared in some form or other, in the columns of the CHRISTIAN MESSENGER, but these are available to but few. The putting of them together in a portable volume was a work requiring much patient and persevering labor. His task has been well done, and all our readers who can possibly afford it should endeavor to possess a copy, so that they may have an intelligent acquaintance with the persons engaged in proclaiming the gospel for the last half century, and the steps by which there has been gathered together the large number of Christian communities all over the land.

The following table of contents will show something of what may be learned from Dr. Bill's book:

- CHAPTER I. HENRY ALLINE AND HIS MINISTRY.
- II. DAVID GEORGE AND HIS WORK.
- III. THE PLANTING OF THE EARLY CHURCHES. Sackville, N. B., Horton, Newport, Cornwallis, Chester, Argyle, Halifax, Onslow, etc.
- IV. THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA AND NEW BRUNSWICK.
- V. A NEW EPOCH. The great revival of 1828—29—The formation of the Granville Street Church in Halifax. The rise of our Educational Institutions.
- VI. THE NOVA SCOTIA ASSOCIATION FROM 1829 TO 1850.
- VII. THE EDUCATIONAL POLICY OF THE BAPTISTS FUGHT OUT.
- VIII. PEN AND INK SKETCHES OF THE FATHERS AND THEIR EARLY ASSOCIATES IN THE MINISTRY:—
Edward Manning, Theodore S. Harding, James Manning, Thomas Handley Chipman, Thomas Ansley, John Burton, Joseph Dimock, Harris Harding, Joseph Crandall, James Innis, Elijah Estabrooks, Enoch Towner, James Munro, Peter Crandall, John Craig, David Nutter, Israel Potter, Lathrop Hammond, Saml. McCully, David Harris, Edmund Reis, William Chipman, George Dimock, Nathan Cleaveland.
- IX. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.
Hon. J. W. Johnston, Hon. W. B. Kinnear, Rev. Richard Burpee, Rev. R. W. Cunningham, Rev. Richard MeLear, Rev. Charles Lewis, Rev. Alex. McDonald, Rev. Samuel Elder, Rev. E. B. DeMill, Richard Creed, Rev. Levi H. Marshall, Simon Fitch, Rev. William Burton, Rev. Jarvis Ring, Rev. Charles Miller, Rev. Timothy Robinson, James W. Nutting, Rev. John Davis, Rev. Charles Spurden, D. D., Rev. James Parker, Rev. A. R. R. Crawley, Hon. Jonathan McCully, Rev. A. S. Hunt, Rev. George Richardson, Rev. Willard G. Parker, Rev. James A. Smith.
- X. THE CONVENTION AND ITS MISSION.
- XI. THE FIRST BAPTIST ASSOCIATION OF NEW BRUNSWICK, with Historical Sketch of one of the Mother Churches,—the Old Canning Church.
- XII. THE EASTERN AND WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF NEW BRUNSWICK.
- XIII. THE CENTRAL, EASTERN, AND WESTERN ASSOCIATIONS OF NOVA SCOTIA.
- XIV. A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE BAPTISTS OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.
- XV. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES AND MEMORIAL SERMONS:
Rev. Charles Tupper, D. D., Professor Isaac Chipman, Rev. R. H. Emerson, Senator Caleb R. Bill, Rev. Samuel Robinson.
- XVI. REVIVAL LETTERS, AND RECORDS OF GOSPEL LABOUR BY LIVING MINISTERS.
- THE ILLUSTRATIONS ARE
PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR; REV. EDMUND A. CRAWLEY, D. D.; VIEW OF ACADIA COLLEGE (1843-1877); PORTRAIT OF HON. JUDGE JOHNSTON; PORTRAIT OF REV. CHARLES SPURDEN, D. D.; PORTRAIT OF REV. J. M. CRAMP, D. D.; PORTRAIT OF REV. A. W. SAWYER, D. D.; VIEW OF THE NEW COLLEGE BUILDING (1878); PORTRAIT OF A. F. RANDOLPH, ESQ.; PORTRAIT REV. CHARLES TUPPER, D. D.

From this it will be seen that Dr. Bill has gone very elaborately into the biography of prominent brethren. The story of the educational movements and the missionary appointments of the Baptists is full of deepest interest and as far as we have been able to examine it, perfectly accurate and reliable.

One typographical error our brethren will please correct in the next edition. At page 777, (index), line 22, instead of "Selden, Hon. Stephen," omit *Hon.*

THE AMERICAN REVISED EDITION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, having the readings and renderings preferred by the American Committee of Revision incorporated into the Text. Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society. Long Primer. Price \$1.00.

The list of readings and renderings preferred by the English Committee is given at the end of the book, just as the list of the American Committee is given in the English Committee's Edition.

The fact of the English Committee of Revision putting the list in at the end of their Edition, shows how much they appreciated these readings. Respecting these the English Committee say, "We gratefully acknowledge their care, vigilance and accuracy; and we humbly pray that their labors and our own thus happily united may be permitted to bear a blessing to both countries and to all English speaking people throughout the world." These readings we regard in most places as decidedly preferable. The Baptist Publication Society have in this work rendered a valuable service to the cause of Bible Translation.

THE BAPTIST PRINCIPLE IN ITS APPLICATION TO BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER, by William Cleaver Wilkinson, D. D. Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society, pp. 252. Price \$1.00.

The attempts made a short time since to make it appear that the Baptist churches of the United States were becoming lax in their views of Communion, and that they were more in favor of what is called "Open Communion" than formerly, has led to more close examination of the great principle on which their restrictiveness rests. The whole question of Baptism and its relation to the Lord's Supper has been more thoroughly examined in its foundation, and superstructure than ever before. This book is one of the many results. It has been clearly shown that there were no grounds for the charge, and that Baptists were never more united on this great principle—that the true spirit of discipleship is Obedience to Christ. This book is a capital development of this principle, showing that anything less than a spirit of obedience in baptism is insufficient to meet the demands of the entrance upon true discipleship—submission to the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the principle which should regulate all believers, and what makes them followers of Christ. Unless there be sincere and hearty obedience to known commands there can be no discipleship. Baptism involves two ordinances or commands. One that directs to "baptize" and the other which directs the believer to "be baptized." These two are required before the ordinance can be properly observed. Both are acts of obedience to the "one Lord." This strikes at the very foundation of the administration to unconscious infants, and with the prerequisites, repentance and faith, comprise the entrance upon the Christian life. This book will be found an original and highly suggestive treatise upon the subject given in its title.

LITERARY NOTE.—The publishers of Rev. Dr. Robinson's "Spiritual Songs for the Sunday-School," have just issued a little book containing only

the hymns of that work and selling for one-half of the money. It will be a most desirable supplement to the large book, gratefully increasing its usefulness, and placing it within the reach of the largest mission-schools. The new edition is prettily bound in flexible red cloth, and costs about 20 cents. The complete tune edition, bound in stiff boards, covered with red cloth, with red edges, costs 40 cents to schools in quantities. It is said that the sales of the latter work have mounted up into the scores of thousands since its issue a year ago (THE CENTURY CO. New-York.)

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE for Sept. 3rd and 10th contain Florence, and Walks in England, Edward Gibson, Bonaparte, Two Theories of Poetry, and Sketches and Reminiscences by Ivan Tourgenieff, A Quaker's Graveyard, and The Last Journey of Pius IX, A German Cremation Hall, and New Aspects of German Life, with instalments of "In Trust," and "The Freres," and the usual amount of poetry.

REV. ALEXANDER MCARTHUR has accepted the invitation to the pastorate of Granville Street Baptist Church in this city, and expects to enter upon his labors next week. On Sunday next Rev. E. M. SAUNDERS will preach in the morning the closing sermon of his fourteen years pastorate and it is expected that Mr. McArthur will preach in the evening.

REV. J. E. CRACKNELL arrived from England, early on Saturday morning last, in the steamer *Hibernian*. He preached in Granville Street Church on Sunday morning with much acceptance, and in the North Baptist Church in the evening. Rev. J. W. Manning preaching in Granville Street Church in the evening. Mr. C. was to preach in the Tabernacle last evening, and was expecting to leave Halifax for Wolfville on Wednesday, and on to Annapolis and St. John, N. B., on Thursday. Mr. Cracknell's genial disposition will secure for him a hearty welcome in the various places in the Dominion and the United States he purposes visiting during the three months before he returns home.

We learn from one of our London exchanges that our Wesleyan brethren are busily preparing for their great Ecumenical Conference, which is shortly to be held in the City-road Chapel, London. For months past committees on both sides the Atlantic have been engaged in perfecting the details of the scheme. Two hundred delegates are expected from the United States and Canada, and the Conference will number in all 400 representatives, the British contingent amounting to 184 of whom 90 will be supplied by the Wesleyan Methodists, 36 by the Primitive Methodists, 22 by the United Methodist Free Churches, 12 by the Methodist New Connexion, and the remainder by other bodies. The results of such a conference ought to be important, and we cordially hope they may be so. Among the subjects to be discussed are—The Duty of Methodism in respect to Popery, Paganism, Pauperism, Scepticism, and Intemperance; the Relation of Methodism to Education; the Evangelical Agencies of Methodism; the Use of the Press for the Advancement of Christianity; Methodism as a Missionary Movement; the Relation of the Home to the Foreign Work, and the Best Mode of Avoiding Waste and Rivalries; the Spiritual Unity of Methodism, and the Best Way to Secure its Maintenance and Increase. Of all these subjects of discussion, the last is probably the one that will receive the most attention. As evidences of the interest taken in the movement by the Nonconformist bodies of Great Britain, it may be mentioned that both the Congregational and the Baptist Union will be represented by deputations to the Conference, and it is rumored that some time during its sittings certain Bishops and clergymen of the Church of England will likewise attend as a deputation.

THE REVIVED TREMONT TEMPLE in Boston, appears to have attractions no less than the former one. The *Harvard* Watchman informs us that "about 2,200 people in the morning, and about 2,500 in the evening, notwithstanding that it is the middle of August, and the heavy shower, gathered in Tremont Temple to listen to the man who for over nine years labored for the truth and for Christ within its walls. The Rejected, the Enthroned, was the subject of the morning's discourse, a wonderful sermon,