

The Christian Messenger.

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WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XLV., No. 31.

Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.
By and By.

"By and By," so oft repeated,
By the careless, seems to be
Of little weight until defeated
In some enterprise, they see
How the moments, now so precious,
Were then lightly bid depart;
For some pleasure more delicious
Satisfied their sinful heart.

"By and By," the souls' best comfort,
Will be sought with earnest care;
When, with little human effort,
They will break the tyrants' snare.
But alas! when strength is needed
For the trying battle-ground,
Opportunities receded,
Time and strength are never found.

"By and by," there comes the judgment
Of the living and the dead;
When from off God's own enrollment
All the names will then be read;
But the careless will be smitten
With the terrors of the day,
When they find their names not written,
And their sins not washed away.

"By and By," O with what rapture
Does the child of God enjoy,
Meditations of the future;
What will be his soul's employ.
Now his days are sweetly gliding,
While serene and calm his sky;
For the Master he's abiding;
Joy awaits him "By and By."

HAWTHORN.

Granville, N. S., July 22nd, 1881.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.
Denominational Statistics.

I notice that it is proposed to give to the Convention more responsibility in the matter of our Statistics—a proposition that ought to meet with general favor. In case anything in this direction is undertaken, I have a suggestion to offer. All must admit that within the bounds of our Convention there should be uniformity in this matter. At present, three out of seven Associations, report members received "by statement." Either the remaining four should adopt the plan, or these three abandon it. I am in favor of the latter course, and for the following reasons. 1. But one of the three Associations ever by any direct action adopted the plan. The other two fell in with it because that column was inserted in the only printed forms prepared for them.

2. But very few Churches report in that column. Last year out of the one hundred and seventy eight churches in those three Associations, twelve returned members received by Statement. Eleven of these reported fourteen of the twenty-four in all so received. I have not before me previous years' records, but think the proportion last year about an average.

3. The column is unnecessary. "By letter, &c." is sufficient for all practical purposes. Our published Statistics can and need be only an approximate statement. The Church records can and should be kept with the greatest minuteness, but the world only needs to be informed of the general facts, and not at all of our irregularities.

4. By "Statement" is unsufficient. If you propose to go into particulars, you need other columns just as much as that.

5. The expression is indefinite and requires explanation. I think it very doubtful if any two of the Churches interpret it precisely in the same way, consequently the information the column gives is of little value.

6. It renders the Statistics disproportionate. We now have four ways of coming into the Church, and but three for going out. Everywhere else the column "by Experience," has as an offset "Dropped," which I am glad to know we have too much light to adopt.

7. Finally, the tendency of such a column is injurious. It permits and encourages looseness. There are only three regular modes of admission into

our Churches. Those that come from other Baptist Churches should bring letters. Those that come from other denominations are practically baptized. If we wish it to be known how many such we receive we must be more specific than this column makes us.

If as many and as cogent reasons for retaining the column can be given, I pledge myself to yield the point and quietly submit.

Maritime Provinces,
July 22nd, 1881.

For the Christian Messenger.
The Convention and the Associations.

Mr. Editor.—

A remark recently made to the effect that the Convention should be held before the Associations, is well worthy of the careful consideration of the Denomination. I believe this change would tend to the more harmonious and vigorous working of the various organizations of the Baptist body. At present, there is much friction and great indifference.

It seems to me that the proper work of the Convention is to discuss and prepare plans for the successful carrying out of the three great departments—Home and Foreign Missions and Higher Education. It is an important part of the work of the Associations to bring before the people—the Churches—these plans of the Convention. This cannot well, or satisfactorily be done when the Associations meet before the Convention. It is affirmed that the Associations are wanting in interest. It is evident that the recent Associational resolutions in regard to Foreign Missions have been made in the dark, and that the cause of Missions has been injured through want of knowledge, and hasty and imperfect criticism. If the Convention be held first, the Convention work can be taken up by the Associations, and much more effectually brought home to the hearts of the people than by the Convention; the Associations will receive new life through something to say and do; and unnecessary and injurious criticism in great measure avoided. The work of the Convention in its threefold character has not advanced, in fact, has retrograded during the past year. Our efforts for the next year are in some degree already nullified. Let there be one settled policy, and only one; let that policy be indicated by the Convention as the most nearly complete expression of the Denomination; let that policy be strictly adhered to by the various Boards appointed to carry it out, otherwise there will be discord and failure; let united and faithful work be done at our Associations, and in our Churches; then success is certain.

If the Convention should be held say about the 15th or 18th of July, sufficient time for the preparation of Reports would be given. Then the Associations could meet some time later in the summer, or in the autumn. I hope to see this question discussed at the Convention. I believe incalculable good would result from the change, and it is for this purpose I have written.

Yours truly,
A. J. DENTON.

For the Christian Messenger.

Life of the Rev. James Mursell Philpott; pp 432, by Edward Bean Underhill, L. L. D.

A remarkable book. It is crowded with facts of the most interesting kind, and will be a favourite with ministers and missionaries, and thoughtful men of all denominations. We have no doubt that it will secure an extensive circulation. The style is clear, the argument convincing. The pleading for unbelief will not stand against the force of facts and fruits which tell in favour of Christianity.

Mr. Philpott went to Jamaica in 1824. He laboured there under the auspices of the Baptist Missionary Society till 1879. His life was one long toil for Christ, and his efforts

were crowned with abundant success, particularly among the negro population to whom the gospel was a priceless boon. When he began they were slaves, and were mercilessly lashed and abused in unmentionable ways by men who had neither heads nor hearts, but were "abominable and brutish, and to every good work reprobate." These men hated Mr. Philpott, and exhausted their powers in inventing divers moles of annoying him. He met them with passive, but firm resistance, never retaliating, as he might easily have done, while he pleaded against oppression, and invoked the protection of law and justice. Slavery fell before missionary valor.

Then came the re-action. Freed, they required to be taught and trained to use their freedom aright. The influences of religion among them were all-powerful. Thousands of them were baptized and formed into churches, adorning the doctrine by godly lives and industrious habits. Land was purchased and divided into lots, where the freedmen lived on their own freeholds, and properties which previous planters had filled with the effects of their misrule, were now occupied by well-behaved and industrious people, intelligent and law-abiding. Jamaica is well dotted over with schools and chapels where knowledge is cultivated and true religion produces its accustomed fruits, for "the grace of God which bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly."

We cannot do better than place before our readers the resolution prepared by Dr. Underhill at the request of the committee of the Baptist Missionary Society. The results of Mr. Philpott's labours are skillfully summarised.

"In recording the decease of the Rev. James Mursell Philpott, the senior missionary of the Society, the Committee desire to 'glorify the grace of God' manifested in the long and unwearied labours of this excellent servant of Jesus Christ. Born in the year 1798, he entered on mission life in Spanish Town, Jamaica, in January, 1824, and for fifty-five years he consecrated all his powers to the service of the people of that island. Many were slaves when he began to preach to them the unsearchable riches of Christ; with many other eminent men, he toiled through evil and good report to obtain their freedom.

That great boon secured, by well-devised schemes of education, by the planting of villages, by the incessant advocacy of righteous and just legislation, by sheltering the poor and defending the oppressed, and by faithful instruction in Christian truth and duty, he laboured both day and night, in arduous journeys and with unsparring effort, often at the risk of life, to impart the elements of knowledge, and to assure the welfare and civilization of the emancipated peasantry. He was ever the friend of the distressed, the comfort of the sorrowful, the advocate of the miserable, and the true pastor of his flock. Endowed with both natural and acquired gifts he was the faithful minister of Christ, the courteous gentleman, and the loving friend. With Christian courage and fortitude he passed through many trials. He was the valued counsellor of his ministerial brethren, and prompt to co-operate with them, and to aid in every good design devised for the benefit of the people whom he loved. He lived to see the blessed results of emancipation, the great and successful increase of the mission, and to rejoice in the wide diffusion of the principles of liberty and piety of which he was the manly and conscientious advocate. His long service for Christ has terminated with honour to himself, is crowned with the grateful affection of his brethren and of the Society which he served with so much respect and esteem. His memory will be cherished by thousands of the children of Africa to whom he brought the blessings of salvation, and his name will be enrolled among the

noble band of men who struggled for and won freedom for the slave."

The death of this good man was sudden. The account is thus given by Mrs. Claydon his widowed daughter who lived with him and ministered to his comfort in his last years. "He seemed as well as usual all day Sunday, and retired to rest at his usual hour, but soon after he was in bed, he was seized with shortness of breath and violent pains in the chest, and before medical aid could be obtained, he had breathed his last. He retained his consciousness until the end, and was perfectly calm and untroubled, saying that his time was come and his work was ended. In an hour all was over." Later she continues: "I do not know that I can add more to what I have said respecting my dear father's death. He knew that his hour for departure was come, and said his work was done. His last words, at intervals were: 'my Jesus'; 'my Saviour'; 'my Friend'; 'Lord, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.'"

Dr. Underhill adds—"The earthly remains of our departed brother were buried beside those of his sainted wife, while thousands look'd or sobbed their unspoken sorrow. His record is on high." The writer enjoyed on several occasions before he left England, opportunities of intercourse with Mr. Philpott, and also maintained a correspondence.

Mr. P. was a liberal contributor to our College Museum.

Unfortunately his gifts were involved in the destruction occasioned by fire which deprived us of that valuable property, Dec. 2, 1878.

J. M. C.

Luthardt's Apologetical Discourses
on the Fundamental Truths of
Christianity.

(Translated from the German by Prof.
D. M. Welton.)

SIXTH DISCOURSE.

Religion.

Kant has supposed prayer to be "a slight attack of insanity." For every person who is come upon while in prayer by another, is hereby "thrown into embarrassment and confusion as if he were doing something of which he were ashamed," because, "being alone, he is found in an occupation and posture which only he can have who beholds another besides himself, which, in the instance supposed, is not the case." But one cannot worthily estimate prayer unless he has knowledge of a living personal relation to God, and Kant knows the personal God indeed, but no living relation to him, but in its place he has put obedience to the moral law. As certainly however that there is a living personal God and man sustains a personal and living relation to Him, so certainly is prayer natural and necessary, and without prayer religion and a religious man are absolutely impossible. And when Kant asks that obedience to the moral law be substituted for this, religion cannot yet be without morality, although it is not morality itself. Religion and morality go together; where one is not, the other cannot be, as John expresses it in his first epistle, in which he generally points out and brings to our notice the fact that they belong together: "For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also." For neighborly love or brotherly love is the soul of morality, but love to God is the soul of religion. The two are inseparable. But on this account the two are not one and the same. This was Kant's greatest error, that he made religion consist in morality. And it is still a widespread error, a consequence of rationalism, as if morality were at least the principal thing in religion, but dogma, the other part of religion, were more unessential and unimportant, while dogma in fact is as little religion itself as is morality. Morality is the moral perfection, the moral likeness of man to God; religion on the other hand, is the living personal

union to God, the living relation to God, by virtue of which we stand in fellowship with God and look at everything in its relation to Him. If morality be the fruit of religion, this vital relationship to God is at least its root. We cannot separate morality from religion. For if it has no longer its foundation and living source in God, then it must itself decline, its authority, power and life are gone. It may indeed in isolated instances resemble a branch which remains green for a time after it has been severed from its parent stock; but by degrees it loses its sap and withers: so also morality when deprived of the influx of life which comes from religion.

The inner relation to God which is born of faith and love is thus the substance of religion, and prayer is its manifestation and expression.

Let us now consider the place of religion in life. Some persons imagine that it is in various ways prejudicial to the present life and to its tasks and interests, for it refers us to the invisible world and withdraws us from the visible world in which we still live and in which our duties and labors lie. But this is not the case. Religion is powerful over this earthly life also. For while religion is intercourse with God, in whom we have the fountain of our entire being and its ground and goal, so it discloses and unbinds herewith our deepest life and opens to our innermost soul the fountain of energy, so that it pours its fructifying influence over our whole existence, temporal and earthly as well as spiritual. Religion is then the strength of the natural life also. It is not a stinting of life, but its proper development. In particular religionists it appears at times indeed to be a pining away of life. But this is the fault not of religion but of these religionists; it is a misunderstanding, not a correct understanding of the question of religion. Religion indeed condemns everything that is sinful in the natural life. For since it is life in God, it prohibits everything in our life that is offensive to God. But the natural life itself, as God has created it and will create it, and as it is in itself a good and a fullness of good, religion does not negative, but affirms it and carries it forward to its most beautiful unfolding.

Religion is the productive power of life, as the warmer sun which elicits beautiful flowers from the earthly soil. And at the same time it spreads abroad over all these productions of the earthly life the fragrance of a higher consecration, while it contemplates every thing in its relation to God. It is moreover a matter of history that human life is indebted to religion for its fairest and richest unfolding. The religious life of mankind is the oldest of which we have historical knowledge. The further back we go the more do the monuments which have been reared to the human mind stand in connection with religion. Religion is the maternal bosom from which the entire intellectual life of mankind has been developed. The whole higher culture of mankind is a daughter of religion. A daughter indeed that has come to full age—for she has her particular vocation and labor; but this mature and independent daughter is joined by a tie of reverence to her mother. And we should strongly reprove the daughter who violated this reverence towards her mother, of whom she supposes she no longer stands in need, and we should be convinced that by such a disposition no blessing could rest upon life. Of such character is the relation of the intellectual culture of mankind to religion. This culture now proceeds on its own independent way, and must do so. But a moral wrong is committed and no blessing rests upon it when it rudely sunder the tie of reverence for religion. Religion is not externally to rule in the sphere of the intellectual life of man nor dictate its limit, measure and goal, but must deal with it as sufficiently enlightened and free. At the same time the inner interlacing of the two and the inner life-connection must continue to subsist.