

RELIGIOUS

And Bible Society, Missionary, and Sabbath School Advocate.

E. McLEOD, Editor.

That God in

all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.—PETER.

G. W. DAY, Printer

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G. W. DAY, PRINTER.

Jerusalem and Palestine.

A late number of the New York Observer contains the following article on the present condition of Jerusalem which we think cannot be otherwise than interesting to our readers:—

The Holy Land will always possess a deep interest to the Christian heart. There the love of God was shown in wonderful miracles. There He came, lived, taught, suffered and died, who redeemed the world from its sins; and from that land he was raised to the right hand of God. How then can we be indifferent to the spiritual condition of a region in which the greatest events of human history have taken place?

I borrow from the reports of the Rev. Mr. Gobat, Protestant bishop of Jerusalem, who publishes an annual circular upon the important mission under his charge.

The variety or confusion of religious persuasions in the population of Jerusalem is curious to behold. Among the 18 or 20,000 inhabitants there are disciples of almost every religion on the globe; Protestants, Roman Catholics, Greeks, Armenians, Syrians, Abyssinians, Jews, Mahomedans, Drusian idolaters, &c., &c. Jerusalem, the ancient city of God, is become a vast caravan-sary, in which all confessions, all religious rites seek a refuge. The variety of languages is equally great. The divine service is alternately celebrated in English, German, French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, &c. It is a Babel. There is probably no place on the earth where so many and heterogeneous elements can be found. This fact renders evangelization difficult. The people must be divided into small congregations, and the missionaries must preach in several languages. It also forms an obstacle to establishing large schools.

The city of Jerusalem has recently suffered great calamities. The government of Constantinople is favorably disposed toward the Christians, and wisely tolerates the different communities; but the pacha and subaltern Turkish officers commit acts of oppression and cupidity. They try to excite contention between Christians of different sects, in order to sentence some to heavy fines, and to sell their good offices to others at the highest price. Without money, the innocent do not even obtain justice.

Palestine has also been visited by two terrible scourges,—the small pox, and a great scarcity of provisions. During one winter, from 15 to 1800 of its 18 or 20,000 inhabitants were swept off by small pox. And at the same moment famine was making sad havoc among the survivors. "It was a heart-rending spectacle," says Mr. Gobat, "to see hundreds of famished persons presenting the hand for alms. . . . And now if you ask me of what moral benefit have these calamities been to the people in general, I am obliged to reply, none whatever. When once the moral nature of man has been completely degraded by superstition and its usual companion vice, the judgments of God, instead of softening the heart and awakening the conscience, seem to have no other result than to prepare the man for even severer dispensations."

Notwithstanding so many obstacles, Mr. Gobat and his worthy fellow laborers ceased not their labors among the Jews. They have established a house of industry, in which proselytes are received, who, abandoned by their ancient co-religionists, have no other means of subsistence. This house is a necessity; but it has caused the directors much trouble and embarrassment. The Israelites are unaccustomed to regular and sedentary occupations. Their long state of bondage has degraded them physically and morally. They promise and do not fulfil their engagements. They appear to have some feeble faith for a time, and then return to their hereditary prejudices. In the course of the past year, however, nine adult Jews who had given satisfactory proofs of their faith, received baptism. Public worship in Hebrew, Arabic and Spanish, celebrated for the Jews of different countries, is still attended by a few, although several Rabbis have stood at the door of the temple to prevent the Jews from entering.

The schools in Jerusalem are quite numerous. There is a boy's school with three masters, who teach their pupils the history of the Bible, the catechism, geography, grammar, &c. The lessons are given in three languages, Arabic, English, and German. There is also a girls' school, to which Madame Gobat assiduously devotes her time and labors. Both schools united number from 100 to 110 scholars, who belong by birth to various religions. Some are the children of proselytes, others of unconverted Jews, others of Protestants, Greeks, Armenians, and even Mahom-

edans. This is perhaps the most important branch of the missionary work.

A pious and intelligent person, Miss Cooper, presides over an industrial school, established for Jewish women and children. She instructs them in the usual occupations of their sex, and strives to make them love to work. This undertaking has produced good results, notwithstanding the violent opposition which it has raised. The Jewish women have been too long neglected. They have been brought up in profound ignorance, and in idleness, which is the path to vice. If Miss Cooper succeeds in correcting them of their faults, she will render a signal service to the Jewish race; for it is especially by the regeneration of woman that nations are changed and reformed.

A few deaconesses from the German institute of Kaiserswerth, have opened at Jerusalem an orphan asylum, and are engaged in nursing the sick, visiting the poor, and other works of charity. These deaconesses are universally loved and esteemed. They have certainly as much zeal as the Romish sisters of charity, without their narrowness of mind and intolerance. Their orphan asylum has served to shelter unfortunate children, who but for this, might have fallen under vicious influences.

Jerusalem is not the only place in Palestine in which Protestantism has pitched her tent. The city of Nazareth contains a congregation of between 60 and 70 proselytes, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Klein; and if a proper edifice were built, their number would greatly increase. The Franciscan monks, established in this town, have violently opposed the Reformed doctrines, and have tried to excite the suspicions of the Turkish authorities against the Protestants. Happily their perfidious intrigues have failed, and many influential members of the Greek church have openly declared themselves in favor of the evangelical religion.

At Nablous, (ancient Shechem or Scythar, of Samaria) there is a school containing several Mahomedan children, and young Samaritans, who are faithfully instructed in the Word of God. The Samaritan priest consented to give a few lessons in this school upon condition of receiving a monthly salary from Jerusalem; but he soon abandoned this mission; apparently considering his position too equivocal. The pastor Bowen recently departed for Nablous, where he intends to labor for a few years. The cities of Bethlehem and Jaffa also contain small Protestant congregations.

Such is the present religious condition of Palestine. But what will be the future of this country? Will the land of Canaan become once more the object of the Lord's special blessings? And will the Jews, who form a considerable part of the population, adore the God Saviour whom their fathers despised and persecuted? Let us not cease to hope it, though the descendants of Abraham have until now expressed so much antipathy to Christianity. Great things are being accomplished in the East. The Mahomedan race is on the decline, and cannot long keep the provinces which it has conquered. Romanism in its turn inspires scorn or disgust by its superstitions. And if Protestants perseveringly advance in the way on which it has entered, we shall see the truth flourishing and reigning in those holy places which heard it for the first time announced by Him who is the "Light of the world."

True Christian charity—its sources and effects.

The regenerated heart is a fountain of love to God. The deepest currents of its being flow towards him. As it contemplates his character, and reflects upon his acts of love, its affections heave and swell with emotions "unspeakable and full of glory." But it may not exhaust its love in the raptures of spiritual exercises. God is not satisfied with the mere admiration, reverence, and delight of his creatures. He would have their devotion to him begin but not end, in spiritual pleasures. He requires service,—high, ennobling, useful service, by which his love may be reproduced in others, and communicated to the entire race of mankind. As his own unbounded love flows out in pierceless gifts,—as the love of Jesus, moulded after the pattern of the Father's, exhibited itself in devotion to the physical and spiritual happiness of men,—so must the affection of every regenerate mind pour itself out upon the world's great heart in streams of holy charity. Failing to do this, it will flow back upon itself, grow stagnant, and be absorbed in the desert of a heart made barren by a greedy, disgusting selfishness. "If I have not charity," saith the apostle, "I am nothing."

True Christian charity is a stream with two branches. Upon one, it bears blessings to the bodies, upon the other to the souls of men. It comprehends both the lower and higher wants of the race. It is no one-sided, imperfect philanthropy, seeking the social regeneration of the race, by ministering exclusively to its physical necessities; nor does it overlook these, and confine itself solely to its spiritual wants.

That charity which does not bear this two-fold stamp is not genuine, because it does not resemble the Saviour's which it must do if it be the product of his love. The coin must bear the image and superscription of the dies which seal it. The charity of Jesus was two-fold. While the grand object of his mission was to die for souls,—to secure the spiritual salvation of men,—he filled up the measure of his public ministry with deeds of charity to their bodies. He flung miracles of mercy to the afflicted multitudes, as ancient monarchs were wont to cast gold coins among their subjects. He introduced his sermons by casting

out a devil, or giving sight to a blind man. He applied them by feeding the hungry with bread. How, then, can that charity for souls which whispers no truth for the salvation of the soul, be Christian? Nay, both are essentially imperfect; both are wanting in an important feature of that pure charity which Christ exhibited, and which his love invariably produces. Neither is the charity of Jesus. The possessors of both need to draw near to the Master, and listen to his voice, until their purified affections overflow in a twofold stream, embracing that manifestation of "pure religion" which visits "the fatherless and widows in their affliction," and which also responds, eagerly and earnestly, to the command which bids the church so to love souls as to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

Oh, how fearfully lacking are we Christians of the present age in that exalted love which glories in sacrificing itself for its object! The prosperity of the times has superinduced a softness, a love of ease and of self-gratification, which act with secret but amazing effect against the vigour of divine affections in the Christian's heart. This is doubtless the reason why so few are distinguished from abroad, liberal, self-devoted charity. Love to Christ, the fountain whence all true charity proceeds, being small, the stream of benevolence is narrow, shallow, limited. Were the fountain large, full, deep, overflowing, the stream would be broad, deep, vigorous, and far-reaching. The best talent, the time, the wealth, the energy of the whole church would be poured forth, without stint or grudging, in noble deeds, and in magnificent exertions to evangelise the world. Lycurgus, the legislator, loved Sparta; and having pledged the Spartans to observe his laws inviolate until his return from a journey, the stern old Greek departed, starved himself to death, and while dying, ordered his ashes to be scattered on the sea, that his Spartans might never be released from their promise. Did Christians generally love their God as Lycurgus loved Sparta, the world would witness a self-devotion to high claims of the gospel such as it has never seen, except in the cases of the early martyrs, and of those few choice spirits whose names shine in the history of the church like stars of highest magnitude in the firmament of heaven. Nevertheless, this love, with all its sublime and lofty self-devotion, is every Christian's duty; for, is it not written, in letters traced by Jehovah's fingers, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself?* And whenever the church generally shall fully comprehend the scope and grandeur of this obligation,—whenever it shall respond to it in all the breadth and fulness of its meaning,—then will its charities overflow the world.

It is upon this duty to cherish a love of entire self-devotion to Christ, that the doctrine of systematic benevolence reposes. That doctrine demands the consecration of a Christian's property to charitable and evangelical uses. It assumes, and justly, too, that property, being the product of powers which belong to Christ, ought to be used according to the will of Christ, as truly and as conscientiously as those powers themselves. Many Christians have long endeavored to make a distinction between their obligations with respect to themselves and their property. The former, they admit, must be strictly governed by the will of God; while they claim the right of disposing of the latter as they please. They would fain give themselves to God, and yet hold their property independently of his will, spending it upon their own lusts, tastes, and fancies, or covetously hoarding it up for their heirs. But the advocates of the doctrine of systematic benevolence, planting themselves on this distinction, deny the truth of this distinction. They claim that it is a wretched sophism; that the man who first exercises his powers to acquire property, and then uses that property for selfish ends, is in fact a selfish man; and his profession of devotion to God is either a mockery or the offspring of self-deception. They insist that the use a man makes of his property is one of the best tests of the actual state of his affections; and they would have every Christian gauge the fountain of his spiritual affections by the extent of his almsgiving, by his pecuniary contributions, and by his personal endeavours to promote the evangelization of the world.

In making these demands, the advocates of systematic benevolence are assuredly correct. The idea that property may be used according to the dictates of selfishness, while its own is consecrated to God, is an absurdity too gross to be soberly maintained,—a contradiction too apparent to be unobserved by the most shallow thinker. For is not the disposal of property an act requiring motive, purpose, and volition, like all other acts? And is not the man who is really devoted to God moved, in all he does, by that love to God to which he has surrendered himself? Is not love the motive, the approval of God the object, of all his volitions? Is it not the habit of his mind to will under these conditions? How, then, can he will to dispose of property upon solely selfish considerations, while under the control of this habit? He cannot. His established and dominant motive must rule in this as in all other parts of his conduct; and hence he will seek to expend his property in such ways as, in his judgment, God requires. He may err in judgment, to be sure, and thereby fail to make the best possible use of his property. But his intentions will be pure, and he will not fail of approximating, if he does not entirely reach, the true standard of Christian benevolence. Certainly, he will not do less than to use his property, be it more or less, in the fear of God. Of any man who does less than this, it would be proper to inquire, *How dwelleth the love of God in him.*

LETTER FROM A CHAPLAIN IN THE EAST.

HOSPITAL WORK.

How shall I describe the work? My dear friend, horrible as war is and must necessarily be, the scenes of Scutari hospitals are something worse than any ordinary results of mere war. Your newspapers have sufficiently described, but indeed they have not over-pictured these horrors, which have been so cruelly augmented by headless, heartless incapacity and maladministration. But to see thousands of men with such noble simplicity of patience suffering and dying is a tremendous sight. To see men with their toes and fingers (and often with their whole feet and hands) frost-bitten and mortifying, and to perceive the terrible smell from these cases, and to see the magnanimous fellows suffer without a murmur or a groan, and so die, is a lesson not easily forgotten.

The average deaths here, since I came, have been about fifty per day. This does not include Kululee, where I suppose the deaths may be about ten or twelve per day. It does not at all include the Crimea, nor the deaths on the passage at sea from Balaklava to the Bosphorus. The graveyard at Scutari is a melancholy spot, and will be a beacon in the history of the world. It overlooks the Propontis, and on the right is the entrance to the Bosphorus, and the minarets of Stamboul and the shipping, looking gay and lively. Around you are the heaped-up dead, in graves containing forty or fifty each, with some few single graves, with touching memorials rudely engraved on bits of wood, such as "A Russian General," "A Woman," "Captain Lord Cheuton," "Lieutenant Singer," "Dr. Reed," and so on. No more but these simple names to mark the resting-place of these dead, far from their native home and friends.

Scutari is more fatal than Alma or Inkerman. But all is not gloom. Let us trust that many of those died in the faith, and slept in hope. In my own little sphere I had hopes of some; and never before have I seen the power of the simple gospel, as by the bedside of these sick and dying sinners. The simple announcement of the love of God, and the death of Christ, and the virtue of his precious blood, and the grace and power of the Spirit, in Scripture language, has caused the bosom to swell and the tears to roll when nothing else would be listened to. I have on the average about 600 men to attend to. Many of these have fever, dysentery, &c., and they often die rapidly, though often they linger a good while ere they die or recover. The shortness of the time necessitates direct ministrations. I have to go at once to the root of the matter, and deal with their souls as a surgeon with dangerous wounds. Often the result is marvellous, and convinces me that in our ordinary ministrations at home with sinners we lack both faith and fidelity. I frequently see that it is quite a relief to a poor fellow, when at once and without circumlocution, I am enabled to ask him plainly about the state of his soul. And as often the answer is a direct confession of its need, and a consequent readiness to receive the simple gospel and close with it. Perhaps, however, there may be a preparedness in answer to our prayers, by the special providence and grace of God, in these remarkable circumstances. I feel that our cases are so numerous, and the labourers so few, and the sudden changes so great, that we work like moles in the dark, and therefore I pray always for special leadings to particular cases; and also for a tenfold blessing on weak words and weak tracts uttered or distributed. These prayers are doubtless often answered. And, my dear friend, I do beg that our friends at home will not fail to meet and pray for us and our intensely interesting and exciting work. For myself I have hitherto been wonderfully sustained in health and strength. I have been only one day absent from my charge; that was through a sudden fit of sickness, which passed rapidly away, and was caused by visiting, at midnight, a poor man dying of fever. The noxious effluvia somehow seized and affected me suddenly, having been fatigued the day before, and having to sit up all that night; I was compelled to keep my bed the next day, which quite restored me. But with this little exception, I have enjoyed remarkable health and vigour, and I attribute this to the special goodness of our God, whose grace alone is sufficient for these things. I assure you I feel we are walking in the fires, and that if the Son of God be not with us our lives are not worth a week's purchase. Great numbers of medical men are sick and many have died. Some of our nurses are sick.

MISS NIGHTINGALE.

And this reminds me of a point on which I wish to say something. Much has been, I believe, said and written in England upon the subject of Miss Nightingale and her nurses, which has not been very well grounded. I do not desire to touch the question of the original policy, or necessity, or scheme, whichever it might be, which led to her being surrounded here, not with simple Protestant women, but with Roman Catholic and Sellonite females of certain orders. But this I can testify, that Miss Nightingale is no proselytiser; and that no proselytising by her means, or under her, can take place here. The chaplains have exclusive control in respect of the Protestant portion of their wards, and the Romish priests confine themselves to Roman Catholics. And no open teaching or preaching is allowed. And I have never seen in my wards the slightest attempt at anything of the kind. As to the case of Miss Nightingale herself, she has been the greatest blessing here. Many a poor fellow has said to me with tears in his eyes, "She has been under God our only friend." But for the relief afforded through her instrumentality, the mass of human misery and the number of deaths would I doubt not have been vastly increased. I have no doubt indeed, but that somewhere there was a scheme to establish some Romish sisterhood or system out here. But assuredly, with this Miss Nightingale and her co-participation. And I flood my wards and corridors with

New Testaments, Bibles, and tracts, and I see and speak with every Protestant man, and I see not the remotest attempt to interfere with me; and if there were, I have authority to repel and prevent it. So rest assured, the thing that is wanted is merely to take care that chaplains are appointed in sufficient numbers, and of the right sort.

TOUCHING INCIDENT.

I must close for post, or I would have wished to give you some particulars of individual cases, but I cannot. The other day I saw a poor frost-bitten man who was a Baptist, and who begged me to get him a Bible and a book of poetry. I happened to have a penny hymn book in my pocket, with large print, and I opened it at "Rock of Ages," and never shall I forget the poor fellow's emotion as I held it up before his eyes, and he read and swallowed it down like wine of life; and when he finished it, with emotion he said, "Oh, Jesus! I know thou wouldst come at last!" He told me he had been for days dry as barren soil in his soul, and could get no comfort, but when I spoke to him he revived; and this hymn he had been used to sing at home and in his congregation, and it was like the touching of a fountain spring. Dear friend, these are wonderful scenes.

Ever yours affectionately, in haste,
J. S. BLACKWOOD.

—Evangelical Christendom.

WHEN DO YOU INTEND TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

A gentleman daily passing along a street in Glasgow to his office, observed an old woman squatting at the end of a passage. He used to bid her good morning, and ask after her health.

One day he observed that her place was empty, and inquired of some of the neighbours where she was; they said she was ill—and being directed to her house down the passage, he found her in bed, very poorly indeed. He spoke to her on different subjects, most kindly; and turning round to her he said—"I think you have attained a good age." "Yes," she said, "I have lived a good while." He also directed her attention to the one thing needful, and the necessity of preparing for another world. "O no, sir," she said, "I am not going to die for eight days yet!" How old do you think this woman was? Well, I hear you say, 80;—guess again—well, then 90;—no, she was more than 90; she was 108 years of age, and still she thought eight days too long to prepare for eternity! She had put off like Felix, when she was young, the concerns of her soul till a more convenient season; and, though she had lived 108 years, yet, during that time, she never found the convenient time,—and, with death staring her in the face, she was more unwilling than ever to devote eight days to God, and to make ready to meet Him!

Felix never found a convenient season! Shortly after Paul preached before him, he was banished by his imperial master to an island, forsaken of God, and without hope: he died a miserable wretched death.—In like manner was this old woman dying. Satan had long told her she had plenty of time, and she believed him, saying to herself, "There is time enough for that, say I. And, boy, you see, I am not yet so old, however great, will incline the natural man to prepare for another world; it is always put off to some future time. Your soul is worth all this world. Don't throw it away to please the devil. Why will ye die eternally?" when Jesus will receive you;—his heart is overflowing with love towards perishing sinners, and his arms are stretched out to embrace you, saying, Come.

Aged Reader,—have you come to Christ Jesus for pardon of all your many sins? If so, it is well; and you are now worthy of all respect: for "the hoary head is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness." But if not pardoned, you are of all men most miserable! Time is nearly over with you, and it has failed to satisfy you, and give you enduring happiness. Eternity is just at hand, and you are utterly unprepared for it. Your case is most mournful!—Be entreated, this very hour, to listen to the gracious voice of Jesus: "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." This winter may prove your last! O, then, hear and live. "To day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart." "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—British Messenger.

RULES FOR VISITORS AND TRAVELLERS.

IF RESIDING IN THE COUNTRY.

1. Never neglect your accustomed private duties of reading, meditation, self-examination, and prayer.
2. Never fail to attend to some place of worship on the Lord's day, unless prevented by such circumstances as you are sure will excuse you in the eye of God.
3. Never entertain invited company on the Lord's day, and pay no visits, unless to the sick and needy, as acts of benevolence.
4. Never engage in any thing, either on the Lord's or on any secular day, which will compromise your Christian consistency.
5. Seek to do good to the souls of your family and all others within your reach.
6. Always remember that you are to "stand before the judgment seat of Christ."

IF TRAVELLING.

1. Never, on any plea whatever, travel on the Lord's day.
2. Make your arrangements to stop, if possible, in some place where you can enjoy suitable religious privileges.
3. If at a public-house or watering-place on the Lord's day, do not mingle with indiscriminate company; keep your own room as much as possible, and be engaged in such a way as may make the day profitable to your soul, and honorable to your God.
4. Every day find or make time for your private duties of reading, meditation, self-examination, and prayer.
5. Carry tracts and good books with you to read, distribute, or lend, according to circumstances.
6. Seek opportunities to do good to the souls of those to whose society you may fall.
7. Never, by deed or conversation, appear to be ashamed of your religious profession.
8. Remember you are to "stand before the judgment of Christ."

Let me entreat you to read these items of advice over and over again, and recur to them in every time of temptation. They are the affectionate warning of one who knows the danger of your situation, and whose heart's desire and prayer to God it is, that you maintain your Christian integrity, honor God, live in obedience to his will, and enjoy the peace which can alone spring from a "conscience void of offence,"—because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart."—American Tract.