

Christian



Visitor

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"BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED."—St. PAUL.

{ Rev. E. D. VERY, Editor

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THE TRUEST FRIEND.

BY CHARLES SWAIN.

There is friend a secret friend,
In every trial, every grief,
To cheer to counsel, and defend,
Of all we ever had the chief!
A friend, who, watching from above,
Whom'er in Error's path we tread,
Till sought us with reproving love,
That friend, that secret friend, is God!

There is a friend, a faithful friend,
In every chance and change of fate,
Whose boundless love doth solace send,
When other friendships come to late!
A friend that when the world deceives,
And wearily we onward plod,
Still comforts every heart that grieves,
That true, that faithful friend, is God!

How blest the years of life might flow,
In one unchanged, unshaken trust;
If man this truth would only know,
And love his maker and be just!
Yes, there's a friend, a constant friend,
Who ne'er forsakes the lowest sod,
But in each need, His hand doth lend!
That friend, that truest friend, is God!

A Glance at Grande Ligne.

The village of St. John lies upon the West bank of a river of the same name, or, as it is also called, the Richelieu, which is the outlet of Lake Champlain. Eight miles south of the village the "Grande Ligne" commences, and at the distances of two miles west, you reach the original seat of the Swiss Mission, with which Madame Feller, so well known, is connected.

The road is generally good and lined, the principal part of the way, with Canadian cottages. The mission-house is a solid structure of two stories high, surmounted by a cupola in which is suspended a small clear toned bell; by which the surrounding villagers are summoned to the services of the sanctuary. One half the lower story is fitted up as a place of public worship, and the remainder is divided into school room, dining hall, library, dormitories, &c. In front and on each side are flower and kitchen gardens, tastefully arranged and highly cultivated. Its general appearance, especially compared with the habitations in its immediate vicinity, is very imposing, and being situated on a gentle eminence, is seen at a considerable distance.

But its chief attractions are the family and their employments. Madame Feller, the teachers and pupils, constitute a family of some 40 persons, nearly all of whom are converts from Romanism. The pupils are of both sexes and different ages, and are pursuing a course of education, including the English, Latin and Greek languages, adapted to the useful career which Divine Providence seems to be marking out for them.

The Manual Labor system has been introduced here and operates well. The farm, comprising about 80 acres, is cultivated and several mechanical branches are pursued by the teachers and scholars to good advantage. A single glance at the establishment assures the observer that industry, skill and order reign there.

All who visit that interesting place are forcibly struck with the simplicity, frankness and christian bearing of all the inmates, from the oldest to the youngest. The moment you pass its threshold you feel that you are at home—perhaps not exactly a New England or a New York home, but a Swiss-Canadian home, where all are brothers, sisters, children; bound together by affection's loveliest ties, and of which, in spite of yourself, you are one. There is enough of conventional form to secure all the proprieties of social life, but it is not mere form—the restraint of cold ceremony. There is a patriarchal dig-

nity mingled with social confidence, kindness and attention, and graced with christian feeling, which act irresistibly upon your fraternal sympathy and draw you at once into the communion which christian friends only can feel.

And then, all the domestic appointments of the establishment; furniture, apparel, food—all proclaim the self-denial and christian love of those who dwell there, and prove the great object of their lives to be usefulness in the cause of Christ.

The history of this mission is before the public. It is the offspring of Divine Providence; wonderful in its origin, its progress and its preservation amidst bitter persecution, wonderful in the agencies which God has raised up to carry forward its lauding design—the conversion and christian education of the people among whom its influences are exerted. At present their ecclesiastical organization is somewhat anomalous; symbolizing with no particular denomination and yet embracing among its constituents Paedobaptists and Baptists of many evangelical grades. Several of the family, including Madame Feller and Mons. Roussy, have but recently been baptized. The grand foundation of action here is the word of God alone. This is prayerfully studied, and as its teachings are understood by individuals of the family, they advance step by step. This they will, doubtless, continue to do until standing in the full light of the gospel truth, they will be found a congregation of the Lord, walking in all his commands and ordinances, blameless.

One thing should be done for them immediately. All who love the cause of Christ, without respect to denominational differences, should combine their benevolent efforts to relieve them of a debt which, though not very large in amount is really oppressive to them. About \$4000 or \$5000 is the amount of their present embarrassment, and if it could be removed, would place them in a situation to prosecute their labor of love efficiently. Why should it not be done?

The writer of this, asks indulgence for one suggestion. Many christian families, at this season of the year, retreat from the business, care and tedium of city life. Let them visit Grande Ligne, and if consistent, other stations connected with it. If they are at Niagara, let them take the route by Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence river to Montreal; thence by Steam boat and Railroad to St. John, where carriages can be obtained for the visit to the mission station. The route from St. John, homeward, is by the way of Lake Champlain to Whitehall, and thence to Saratoga, Albany or elsewhere as inclination or necessity require. The expense to Albany is but a trifle more than direct from Buffalo.

Or if a shorter tour is desired, proceed to Whitehall, and by the Lake to St. John, and after visiting Grande Ligne, pass on to Montreal and Quebec. Either of these routes will be found delightful; full of interesting points of observation, and will abundantly repay the tourist; while with our favorite object accomplished, a call at Grande Ligne, the christian tourist will find himself improved in mind and better fitted for usefulness.—N. Y. Recorder.

Trust in Providence.

Among the small band of serious inquirers after the good old way, who, under the influence of sincere desire to be imitators of the churches which in Judea were in Jesus Christ, assembled in a country town to observe the laws of him whom they called Master and Lord, none was more conspicuous, more decided, more useful, than W. S. He was a master manufacturer in

the neighborhood. His character for integrity stood very high in the public esteem. He was truly one of whom it might be said, his enemies could find nothing against him but what concerned the law of his God. In all benevolent societies he took the lead, of Sabbath Schools especially in the town and its vicinity, he was the zealous promoter, and frequently on the evening of the Lord's day, he went to the country villages to hold prayer meetings, and exhort from house to house. "Zealous in every good work," seemed the motto of W. S., and was his general character. While he was going on with untiring diligence in his Master's service, esteemed by all the friends of Jesus in the neighborhood, and respected for his unimpeachable consistency even by those who disliked his religion, there happened one of those disastrous convulsions in trade, which have produced so much distress in this commercial country.

Failures became fearfully frequent; the banks, alarmed, refused pecuniary assistance, or doled it out sparingly and distrustfully, to many never doubted before; the produce of the honest industry of years the losses of the wreck swept away; and so wide spreading was the wreck that I have heard a rich and pious commercial friend remark that he was accustomed to thank God when the usual time for delivering letters passed by, and he had received no intimation of fresh disasters.

During that appalling crisis, a large commercial company in the city of ———, became embarrassed. It was known in the town where W. S. resided, that he had extensive dealings with that firm, hence his solvency became suspected, and with all the shrankings of one who prized a good name, at the prospect of bankruptcy our friend had to anticipate its probability. One forenoon he visited Mr. R., his intimate acquaintance, and fellow office-bearer in the Church, and with a heavy heart announced, that the branch of the bank in the town had refused to discount a bill, and as most of his funds were locked up by the state of the affairs of his correspondents in ———, he saw no help for it but that he must become insolvent. He added that nothing affected him more than the injury religion might sustain by his failure, for those who sought occasion to scoff would not consider his embarrassments had arisen through the conduct of others, but would hint dishonesty, and exclaim all are hypocrites, and those who make the loudest professions are the worst. He took leave of his friend, observing, his only resource was in his God, who, he knew, was able to prevent the catastrophe he feared was inevitable.

He had not been gone many minutes when Mr. R., standing at the door of his shop, was accosted by Dr. H., a medical gentleman, who had acquired a large fortune abroad, and had lately returned to reside in his native place. This man was an avowed deist. He would even sometimes intimate by sarcastic objections, doubts of the existence of a God, disbelief of an hereafter. He manifested violent hostility to religion, stigmatised all professors of religion as designing hypocrites, or imbecile dupes, and delighted to hold up those who were decidedly godly, as objects of public scorn and contempt. He was also a selfish, close-fisted, hard hearted miser, who sternly repelled every application for assistance to the poor and needy. When that notorious scoffer stopped to address Mr. R. in his usual jeering manner, he said, "You have an uncommonly long face to day, your aspect is peculiarly sour and doleful, has your vaunted religious consolation failed? has your God been unpropitious? what is the matter with you?" By an impulse, for which he could not well ac-

count at the time, Mr. R. plainly told his enemy who might have been expected to gloat over the information, that the cause of the mental distress visible in his countenance was, the bank, that forenoon, had refused to discount Mr. S.'s bills, and his friend must therefore become bankrupt. "That must not be allowed," suddenly exclaimed Dr. H., "with all his fuss about religion, and his wild and ill directed notions, S. is a sincere enthusiast and strictly honest man; he must not be crushed in this manner." He hurried away, and soon after called at Mr. S.'s house, and inquired if he were at home. Mrs. S. told him her husband, she supposed, had gone to a neighboring town to request the assistance of their relations. "When he returns," said the doctor, "give him this letter and my best wishes." But instead of applying to human friends, Mr. S. had determined first to apply to his heavenly Father for help in his emergency, and appeal to his all-sufficient, prayer-hearing God. He had procured the keys of the chapel, and locked himself in to be excluded from all interruption, and there, alone with his God, he had been engaged for about an hour in earnest supplication, wrestling with the Lord of Providence, who had all hearts under his control, and innumerable resources at his command, to interpose for his relief, and prevent the Redeemer's cause from suffering through his calamity. Having tried the efficacy of believing prayer he came home, and his wife gave him the letter from Dr. H. With surprise and apprehension he opened the packet, and there was an order from the Doctor, on his funds in the bank to the amount that Mr. S. required, and had been refused. Along with this there was a note, encouraging him to keep up his spirits, for the writer engaged to bring him securely through all his temporal difficulties.—This timely, yet most unexpected aid, was amply sufficient to avert the threatened and dreaded catastrophe. Was not the hand of an over-ruling Providence visible in this? Was not assistance from such a quarter somewhat like Elijah's being fed by ravens? Was not that well authenticated fact, a very striking demonstration of the efficacy of the prayer of faith!—*Scottish Congregational Magazine.*

Labors of Calvin.

Dr. Hoyle, who wrote under the patronage of Archbishop Usher, mentioning Calvin, says, "What shall I speak of his indefatigable industry, almost beyond the power of nature? which paralleled with our loitering, will, I fear, exceed all credit! It may be truest object of admiration, how one lean, worn spent and wearied body could hold out. He read, every week of the year through, three divine lectures; every other week, over and above, he preached every day; so that, as Erasmus said of Chrysostom, I know not whether more to admire his constancy, or theirs that heard him. Some have reckoned his yearly lectures to be one hundred and eighty-six. Every Thursday he sat in the presbytery. Every Friday, when the ministers met to consult upon difficult texts, he made as good as a lecture. Besides all this, there was scarcely a day that exercised him not in answering, either by word of mouth or writing, the doubts and questions of different churches and pastors; so that he might say with Paul, The care of all the churches lieth upon me. Scarcely a year passed wherein, over and above all these employments, some great volume, in folio or other size, came out forth." This celebrated man, even in his dying illness, would not refrain from his labors; but when his friends endeavored to persuade him to ease himself, he replied, "What! shall my Lord come and find me idle?"—*Cyclopaedia of Moral and Religious Anecdotes.*