

# CHRISTIAN



# VISITOR.

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REV. E. D. VERY,

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

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## THOUGHTS OF HEAVEN.

No sickness there,  
No weary wasting of the time away,  
No fearful shrinking from the midnight air,  
No dread of summer's bright and fervid ray!

No hidden grief,  
No wild and cheerless vision of despair,  
No vain petition for a swift relief,  
No tearful eye, no broken hearts are there.

Care has no home  
Within that realm of ceaseless praise and song:  
Its tossing billows break and melt in foam.  
Far from the mansions of the spirit-throng.

The storm's black wing  
Is never spread athwart celestial skies:  
Its wailings blend not with the voice of Spring,  
As some too tender floweret fades and dies.

No night distils  
Its chilling dews upon the tender frame;  
No morn is needed there! the light which fills  
The land of glory, from its MAKER came.

No parted friends  
O'er mournful recollections have to weep;  
No bed of death enduring Love attends,  
To watch the coming of a pulseless sleep!

No withered flower  
Or blasted bud celestial gardens know!  
No scorching blast, or fierce descending show,  
Scatters destruction like a ruthless foe. [er,

No battle word  
Startles the sacred hosts with fear and dread!  
The song of peace Creation's morning heard,  
Is sung wherever angel footsteps tread!

Let us depart,  
If Home like this await the weary soul!  
Look up, thou stricken one! thy wounded  
heart  
Shall bleed no more at Sorrow's stern control.

With Faith our guide,  
White-robed and innocent to tread the way,  
Why fear to plunge in Jordan's rolling tide,  
And find the portals of eternal day!

[From the British Cor. of the Watchman and Reflector.]

## REV. CHRISTOPHER ANDERSON.

My last contained a notice of Rev. James A. Haldane. I now propose to say something of Rev. Christopher Anderson, who, for 44 years, has been pastor of the Baptist church, Charlotte Square. Mr. A. was awakened under the preaching of Rowland Hill, and after leaving the University removed to Olney, where for three years he enjoyed the instruction of Sutcliffe; he returned to Edinburgh and has ever since been pastor of one church. Some twenty years ago, he was the most popular preacher in Edinburgh, the doors of his church being besieged long before the opening. Since then his wife and all his children, five in number, have been taken from him. His afflictions and arduous labors, have so affected his health that his voice is extremely weak; in fact, one must attend his church a few times to become accustomed to his gentle whisperings. Attention will not be unrewarded. For this reason, he is no longer a popular preacher, but his congregation, if not as large as formerly, still regard him as the prince of preachers and the loveliest of men. Each year he grows dearer—all look up to him as a father, and he regards them as his own children.

Without exception, his congregation is the best behaved I ever saw. When assembled, they seem to be in truth a company of worshippers—so quiet, so composed, no bustle

and no loiterers. At the hour, they are all present before God. Many have spoken to me of the deep impressions made upon them by the solemnity pervading the place. Compared with other churches the contrast is very striking. The people stand while prayer is offered, and stand until after the amen is uttered. The shuffling and sitting down just before the end of the prayer is never seen there. In most of the Scottish churches, seldom or never can the conclusion of a prayer be heard, so great is the disturbance created by the people. So, too, during the benediction, in general there is a grabbing of hats, a fumbling of gloves, and an opening of pew doors—everything prepared for a bolt. Not so in Mr. A.'s church. There the benediction is regarded as the most solemn part of the service. After it is pronounced the whole congregation resume their seats and many seem to be engaged in private prayer. After two or three minutes they go out one by one—no crowding, no jostling.—From the beginning to the end, composure reigns. It is a house of worship, not a mere preaching house. Why should not all our church buildings, be made houses of worship? To vast numbers of Christians they are; but most churches are sadly wanting in a sacred air, if one may so speak. Let the pastors instruct their people about behavior in the house of God, not in generals but in particulars, and the needed reform will be affected.

Mr. Anderson is large and well formed, and appears to be about 60 years of age. His style of preaching is more conversational than that of any one I ever heard. His sermons are written, and delivered from the manuscript, but not read. He is animated and earnest, and his gestures are graceful and appropriate. He wants nothing but voice to make him what all say he was, not many years since—a Christian orator.

After many attempts to report the outlines of different discourses he has delivered, the result has not been satisfactory. Without giving undivided attention, so gentle in his voice, that one is apt to lose the connection, and so all my sketches are meagre. Here is one, such as it is. It may give some faint idea of his style of expository preaching. His text was Matt. xiii. 4—19. The discourse was one of a series on the parable of the sower.—The subject was the way-side hearer. "When any heareth the word and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart." By speaking in parables the Lord Jesus furnishes remarkable evidence of divine prudence. They were employed as a means of defending himself against human and satanic wickedness.—All things were made plain to the willing, the studious; but when his enemies sought to entrap him, and attributed his miracles to infernal agency, from that time he began to speak in parables. What a wonderful prospective reach they had! We see the same prospective reach in the institution of Baptism, Lord's Supper and the commission, "Lo I am with you," with you, and such as you, not with those who desecrate the Lord's day by entertaining an audience with their own oratory.—No, the devil is then present especially. His tactics vary with the character of the message and the manner of its delivery. He knows when the word and when the man is preached. In this parable the Saviour views and makes known the effects of ministerial labor in ages to come. Of the way-side hearer we are taught, I. That he is inconsiderate and inattentive.—We inquire, II. Why he is so disposed.

The truth is important, and we are to hearken give heed. Mere hearing is idleness and something worse. "Take heed how ye hear!" "Under the sound of the gospel!" How soon it is uttered! How thoughtlessly we con-

gratulate ourselves on account of it! Alas, too often it is a sound and nothing more.—"Why," says the Saviour, "do ye not understand my speech?" I want you to think of the answer to that. Ah, these heart wanderings, idle plans, vain, distracting cares, even in the house of God! It is very affecting!—The hearer will be brought into judgment.—The preacher should not be discouraged by stupid, listless, hearers. It is painful, but it must be looked for.—Duty, not success, must lead him. He has a Master whose word he is to obey, and whose example he is to follow, and he should know that Christ was a faithful, pungent preacher, and that such preachers will be successful. The people, though rebuked, love, and will follow the pungent preacher. The prick in the chargers' breast makes him press forward.

II. Why is the hearer so disposed? The Devil is at work. What cruelty—seeking the ruin of souls. Inconceivable! There is but one wicked one, as there is but one archangel—poetic license to the contrary notwithstanding. "I believe," says Robert Hall, "in the existence of the devil as much as I do in that of God himself." So you may, to feel his assaults is convincing. The devil deals with the inattentive, 1st. In dividing the attention. 2d. Blinding the mind. 3d. Removing the truth. 1st. While the devil cannot search he can affect the heart, and this we know. The conflicts of good men, show that his assaults are real and powerful. 2d. The devil blinds the mind lest the light should enter. Some complain of the difficulties of the Scriptures.—This is either wickedness or folly. It is base when offered as an excuse for idleness, and folly to attempt to study difficulties before learning the first principles, the A B C of the Bible. 3d. He catches away the word. Some complain of their memories. It is very singular—they remember everything but the sermon. They complain but have never made an effort. Listless hearers are devil pleasers. That is not your wish? Well then resist the devil, he is a coward, resist him, he will flee. He assaulted the Saviour once, and but once.—Some tell us the Bible is a dead-letter. Poor men; wiser than their master even! The devil knows better; he is ever present where it is preached; and busy—how busy. It is very melancholy, but perhaps the devil has near as many preachers as the Saviour. Poor men! Orations and essays, discourses on nature, on the times &c., blind leaders of the blind. No wicked one is there to interfere. Exposed to such assaults, resist, give diligence, take heed how ye hear, remember the judgment.

A short time since, I was in Glasgow when the Rev. Mr. Taylor showed me a copy of an old magazine containing one of Cheever's letters from Europe, published originally in the New York Observer, ten or twelve years since. The subject of this letter was Christopher Anderson. As I am anxious to give a sketch as near the life as possible, I am tempted to transcribe a portion of Dr. Cheever's letter. He gives an account of three discourses delivered by Mr. A. from the 2d chap. of 1st John, 18th to 27th:

"Religious error is sin in the heart, and proceeds from not holding the head, the centre. Take a circle and from the centre you may draw ever so many lines to the circumference, but they never cross each other. They are proportioned in exactness, harmonious as the rays of light. Put a pin in any other point and then draw lines. They cross and entangle at every step. Christ is the centre of the circle of Christian truth. All conclusions drawn from him are harmonious and true.—Reject the centre, or refuse vital union with him, and opinion becomes error. \* \* \* \* He observed that when a taste of divine truth

is once received the soul hungers and thirsts after it; and the system of truth is such that the knowledge of any one portion leads to the knowledge of all. Each part must be pursued with reference to its connection with the whole. Take the anatomical structure; if you confine your attention to one particular spot or point, you will know nothing of the human frame.—The reason why so many Christians are so destitute of knowledge of the word of God is not because they do not read portions of it, and now and then pay some attention to particulars and talk about them: but it is because their knowledge has no joints, it is not connected. It is the joints that gives strength to the human system. So your knowledge of divine things must be connected with the centre and form a body of truth in your minds. \* \* \*

When our Saviour was on earth it was the centre. It was changed as it were into heaven to the inhabitants of the upper world. It was a privilege to the angels to see him—to be with him. "Seen of angels." He quoted a remark made to him by Andrew Fuller—"Alas, dear brother, there was only one being that could say, when he died, 'It is finished.' We all leave our work imperfect, and it must be so. God forgive us." Mr. A. is one of the most interesting expository preachers I ever heard. His sermons are in a most simple, affectionate, conversational style; but rich with thought and Christian feeling, and dropped from the lips of the preacher, like the droppings of a full honeycomb."

Since the publication of the "Annals of the English Bible," Mr. Anderson has been engaged on a work illustrating the harmony of the work of the Son and the work of the Spirit. It is looked for anxiously. Many have urged him to write a life of Carey, with whom he corresponded for more than 30 years. The life of Carey is yet to be written by somebody—it is to be hoped, by Christopher Anderson. No one living is more competent. Mr. A. says that Fuller, with his dying breath, charged him to do something yet undone, if he lives to complete that, he will see about a Memoir of Carey. I cannot close this letter more appropriately, than by saying, in the language of Dr. Cheever, "Mr. Anderson's character and conversation in private, were in the same interesting, familiar, rich and instructive style as his preaching in public. Altogether, he was one of the most heavenly-minded and delightful men with whom it was my privilege to become acquainted in Great Britain."

## Present State of the Seven Churches.

At a recent meeting of the Asiatic Society, the Secretary read a memoir, by Captain J. T. Newbold, on the present condition of the seven churches of Asia, mentioned in the Revelation, which the writer has recently visited. He observes that the history of these interesting localities is well known; but their present condition has been little adverted to.

He begins his account with the church of Ephesus, the first mentioned by St. John, and that which still maintains its ecclesiastical superiority in giving a title to the Greek patriarch, while the others have only Bishops at their head, though it is low in statistical importance. The port of Ephesus is now choked up by a pestiferous morass, and lonely walls, tenanted only by the Jackal, occupy the site of the once populous city. The village of Ayasalux stands about a mile from the ruins, and contains about forty scattered cottages, one only tenanted by a Christian. The mosque of the village contains only four granite columns, said to have belonged to the great temple of Diana, whose ruins are still visible near the port. The mosque is going to decay, like the Christian church, and everything appears to be in the last stage of dissolution. Captain