

They were piled in huge heaps from the floor to the ceiling.

From the progress already made in reading the inscriptions, I believe we shall be able pretty well to understand the contents of these tablets; at all events, we shall ascertain their general purport, and thus gain much valuable information. A passage might be remembered in the book of Ezra, where the Jews, having been disturbed in building the Temple, prayed that search might be made in the house of records for the edict of Cyrus permitting them to return to Jerusalem. The chamber recently found there might be presumed to be the house of the Assyrian kings, where copies of the royal edicts were duly deposited. When these tablets have been examined and deciphered, I believe that we shall have a better acquaintance with the history, the religion, the philosophy, and the jurisprudence of Assyria, 1500 years before the Christian era, than we have of Greece or Rome during any period of their respective histories.

CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

SAINT JOHN, FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 1861.

CLOSE OF THE VOLUME.

We to-day conclude the Third Volume of the Christian Visitor. Early and late, and day after day, for the year past, our mind has been engrossed with care on its account, realizing as we do, the longer we have connection with it, the great influence such an agency has in educating and moulding the character of its readers both young and old. Our first object has been to excite and assist in the promotion of vital piety. We have endeavoured carefully to guard against the admission to our columns of anything which could interfere with the efforts of Pastors to feed the flock, or of Parents to train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. That we have not succeeded in all cases in meeting the particular tastes and wishes of our readers is doubtless true; but we presume few have found just reason to take offence. It can easily be seen that the post of an Editor is not only a responsible but a difficult one.

In anticipation of another Volume we throw ourselves again upon the indulgence of our friends: we beseech their aid. It is well known that those burthened with the care of this Paper are not aiming at pecuniary profits; that nothing but sincere desire for the progress of our denomination, and especially of its younger members, in intelligence and true practical piety would lead them to make such an unrequited outlay as they are now doing. Is it unreasonable in them to solicit and to expect an energetic co-operation on the part of brethren through the Province, and more particularly of the Ministers of our denomination? Pastors who will interest themselves can be the most efficient agents, nor can we see any good reason for inattention to so urgent a want as that of select religious reading and general information amongst their people.

How interesting to a person whose life is devoted to the promotion of it is the hope of Progress in Society. What Pastor or Teacher of the Sabbath School at the beginning of the year can be so indifferent as not to weigh with seriousness and careful deliberation the means within his reach and at his command to accomplish his wishes and secure the desired answer to his prayer. Cannot we have the help of such? In helping us will they not help themselves? Will not the prayer meeting be made more attractive if members of Churches are reading and pondering the various selections we offer upon the vital points of religion? If vital piety is promoted in the heart of the reader, will there not be more unanimity in Churches, more kindness and brotherly love in the intercourse of members? If there is zeal for the advancement of religion will not the intelligence communicated with reference to the state of the Province and of the world contribute to give a prudent direction to that zeal? If children have already a habit of reading, and a thirst for information, do we not afford a safe medium and a valuable aid to a parent or teacher laudably engaged in furnishing material for instruction? If they have no such habit, what can be devised to create it more readily than a paper, which may be perused but a few moments and yet leave some definite statement of fact; or beguile by its variety to a longer and a more thoughtful perusal than any book of greater pretensions could be expected to do? The amount of good a person may accomplish by putting a few papers in circulation at the commencement of the year is incalculable; it is to

exert an influence which one is sure beforehand he will never have occasion to regret; it is to make himself happier, and all about him by increased intelligence and refinement, the one giving the means and the other the relish for what is rational above what is sensual, qualifying us at the same time both to use and to enjoy life. Some of our friends have already given proof of their sympathy in our work by sending new names. We hope to hear soon from many more.

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP.

We almost fear to set the above heading to another article, knowing how averse many are to reading a long exposition of any subject; but those who have followed us in the preceding editorials under this caption are aware that we might appropriately have had a different one over each separate piece, as the subjects treated were only related as coming under a general head, and grew out of one question respectfully proposed by a correspondent.

Our object to-day, is simply to consider the impropriety of neglecting either the Public Worship of God or the Ordinances of the Church or Family Religious Worship and the justice of holding members who make light of these important and reasonable religious duties amenable to discipline for their neglect.

Although we advocate Church Discipline it is not on the ground that the Church has authority to legislate; this we hope we have already made apparent. Nor do we now insist on the duties alluded to because they are due to the Church, but because they are commanded in Scripture, a neglect of them is therefore an offence against Christ, and implies an irreconciliation to his government, and a rejection of his authority.

Where a person makes his own feelings the standard of duty and will do or leave undone just as his inclination may suggest, irrespective of the divine precept, he commits the same offence in kind which a Church would commit if in its Church capacity it assumed to require or forbid irrespective of Christ's authority. If this is wrong in a Church embracing the combined wisdom and piety of many, much more may we consider it wrong where one member thus unadvisedly acts. If inclination were an authorised guide in religious duty then religion would every where wear an aspect of confusion, and all order and discipline be set at naught. To correct these varying inclinations, and make order and regularity a possible attainment, and secure the conformity of all to the will of Him to whom all submission is due, the Scriptures have been given "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Here then is our reason and authority for subjecting every man's inclination to law, and for refusing to recognise either in an individual or in an organization, call it a Church or Society, or what you may, any right to be independent of Christ's commandment.

If we were proceeding to organise a Church amongst those who had had no advantage for becoming acquainted with the Commandments of Scripture or with the practice of apostolic Churches, we might consistently define and defend those Scriptures upon which these duties are predicated; but the members of our Churches professed their acquiescence in such an interpretation, and solemnly pledged a faithful observance when they joined the Church, and as often as they have renewed their covenant with it since. To make such a covenant understandingly and voluntarily and then violate it is an immortality, more aggravated certainly than the breaking of a contract in trade. To persist in doing so, when the Church and the world know what we have covenanted to do, is to betray the dearest interests of religion and the credit of a Church without the paltry pretext of even thirty pieces of silver. For a Church to allow such a state of things is to relinquish virtually the principles of its organization, to be unfaithful to the trust delegated to it, and instead of being a light to guide others, only contributes to increase darkness and to encourage sin. And how fearful the consequences when those who may be under religious awakening are looking for council, and those who are careless are waiting for reproof, and the only ones to whom we could look as conservators and guardians of religion and truth are neglecting the duties of the one, and recreant to the obligations of the other. The only corrective we know after faithful instruction and reproof, for reasons fully given in preceding articles, is FAITHFUL DISCIPLINE.

APPROPRIATIONS OF THE BIBLE UNION.—This Society has recently appropriated \$1000 for the circulation of the sacred Scriptures in the Karen language, which sum has been accepted for that purpose by the American Baptist Union as signified in a kind Note by Mr. Bright the Corresponding Secretary.

A similar sum was tendered to the Southern Baptist Board to aid in the circulation of the Chinese Scriptures by their Missionaries in China, which they have declined to accept, "having," as Dr. Howell the President replies, "in 1846 decided to separate from their Northern brethren in conducting Bible operations, in order to preserve the cordial and efficient union of the whole constituency of the body, in all its benevolent operations, and to avoid all occasions of alienation in any part of it."

A thousand dollars then of Northern money is not to be received to aid in giving the Bible to the millions of China perishing for lack of knowledge. There must certainly be very great hostility to northern Christians at the south or very little zeal in behalf of idolatrous China, and in either case a very questionable regard for the cause and commandment of Christ. This shows how domineeringly the Institution of Slavery towers over all other interests—secular and religious at the South.

"In vain with lavish kindness  
The gifts of God are strown;  
The heathen in his blindness  
Bows down to wood and stone."

The American Messenger has come to hand. We have despatched some to their destination, and shall distribute the rest as speedily as possible. Who will send further orders for the January number?

LETTERS RECEIVED.—R. H. Emerson, with remittance; Rev. G. F. Miles, do. do.; Hon. W. B. Maclay; Isaac Hanson, with remittance; Rev. J. Francis, do. do.; Rev. E. Webb, do. do.

The Communication enquired for from Albert County, was received, but we did not feel at liberty to publish it. In gratifying some we should wound others, and likely do no good.

Correspondence.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

There he stands, the conqueror! In mien majestic and godlike; while from the sweep of angel lyres, and the swell of angel voices, roll in one deep and mingling tide the harmonies of the universe, under the vibrations of which even heaven's starry pavement trembles. Then, to signalize this event, to set it apart from all others, as the movements of the power and grace of Christ, down come from heaven to earth, the gifts of the Holy Ghost. They come as in the rush of a mighty wind, in the mystic form of cloven tongues of fire. The apostles, who are engaged in solemn worship, and are in a posture of religious expectancy, are at once filled with the Holy Ghost, under the light and power of whose inspiration, they begin to speak in other tongues, strange and unlearned, as the Spirit gives them utterance. They are listened to by Parthians and Medes, the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and Judea, in Asia, Egypt, Rome, and other places; by Jews and Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians; these people from distant parts of different nations and speech, hear them speak, each one in his own language, the wonders of redeeming love. The greater part are awe-struck and amazed, and well they may be; for miracles so resplendent with mercy, so characterised with Divine wisdom, power and love was never seen before. But this is not universal. There are some even here, looking upon this spectacle of unequalled grandeur who do not accord in the prevailing feelings and sentiments of wonder, awe, and adoration. They are unbelieving mockers; and under the infatuation of sin, they refer these miracles to the power of wine.—But undeterred, strong in the consciousness of innocence, the intrepid and fiery Peter, rises, he lifts up his voice of manly and commanding eloquence,—he has the attention of the mighty multitude,—he utters his defence, and he speaks of the wonders that are witnessed as the fulfilment of ancient prophecy, and the visions that passed before the prophets of old. He points to Jesus of Nazareth as the long expected Messiah, and the miracles, and wonders and signs which he did as evidences of this; and to his strange and mysterious death, as connected with the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. He goes to the writings of David, whose tongue was

glad to utter the words, predictive of the advent, the grace and the glories of Jesus. He shows that in them the great and grand events of the Saviour's history are made known.—And though the Jew, with the keen eye of malice, might point to his dress, as an objection not to be removed, to the truth of all that Peter would have him believe; and the philosophic Greek, accustomed to a gorgeous ceremonial, the pomp of circumstances and the parade of words, might fix on the humble mien and habits of the Saviour, and the simplicity and homeliness of his teachings, as a reason for rejection, yet the apostle, in these his best and most clear-sighted moments, with his noblest powers guided by the light and love of Heaven, darts his words like fire into the wakeful excited minds of his audience; the heart is reached, the work is done, and three thousand souls pierced and smitten, turn to Peter and the rest of the apostles, and ask, "Men and brethren what shall we do." Acts iii. 37. He tells them to repent and to be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins (v. 3). They gladly receive his words, are baptized; continue steadfast in the apostle's doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and prayers. They form one holy and happy society; minister to the necessities of the needy and sorrowful; accord in the daily worship of God; eat their meat with gladness, and singleness of heart, have favour with the people, are fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God.

Here then you see the purpose; the agents; the example of this salvation; its relations to the past, the present, and the future; to the doings of the Patriarchs; the ministry of Moses; the ritual of the Jewish Priesthood; the visioned glories of the ancient seers; but above all to the life and death of Jesus; his teachings, his miracles, his strong crying and tears; his blood shed in a death of agony and shame; and in the gift of his spirit, the preaching of his apostles, the conversion of men; and the formation of his Church. Here are profound arrangements, matchless wonders, cloudless glories, and clear, hope-inspiring revelations of his love, vast and awful, who upholds all things.

It need not be asked, "Is not this salvation great?" It is so indeed. Rather let us press the inquiry, How shall we escape if we neglect it? How shall we escape from the dreadful penalties of that law, which is holy, just, and good. For violation we are in its firm grasp. It is stern and unrelaxing. It knows nought of mercy; it urges its penalty—Death. Where can you look for a way of escape?—In this state of apparant and real hopelessness, Jesus comes to you, and he says, "I am the way." Turn you back on this, and there is no other. The apostle knew this. And he brings out the Truth in the form of inquiry, that he may give it greater power, and make the conviction of impossibility, sink down with deeper impressions upon the heart.

Ask again, How shall we escape the keen hell-kindling accusations of conscience?

How much soever men may sin, and go contrary to this inward monitor, they cannot still its voice, or bribe it to side with wrong. It may be seared, and for a time it may cease to act; it cannot be destroyed. When God sees fit it is rekindled; it lifts up its voice, and rolls its burning words round the soul. Its hand writing is in flame characters. What kind of suffering can equal this? Poverty is often borne with uncomplaining meekness, persecution with a patient and composed spirit, and many pure noble-minded Christians have passed through the pangs of martyrdom without so much as rippling the surface of deep, inward tranquility. They are free of the master evil, a guilty and an accusing conscience.

In the book of God, and in common history, we have examples of great suffering caused by this. It has poisoned the springs of happiness, made existence a burden, and when all outward things have concurred to produce peace and joy, it has driven its victims to self-destruction. The uneasiness caused by this part of our nature, is always proportioned to the extent of wrong doing. Conscience is just in its retribution. Who gives it so much room for agonizing work as the neglect of God's salvation? Is it wrong to trample under foot the greatest loving kindness? To treat with ingratitude and insult the greatest benefactor? To smite on the face one, who comes to us with a tender and loving spirit, and seeks to win us to happiness and God? This sin is committed by him who neglects this great salvation. He tramples under foot