

lovely and fertile land in the possession of a despotic government, its inhabitants debased and ignorant, its natural glories only serving to show forth in stronger relief the moral gloom. Let us for one moment transport ourselves in thought, to the valley of the Irawaddy. At our feet flows the glorious river watering a valley whose fertility seems exhaustless. On every side nature has scattered her gifts with an unsparing hand. On every side we discover some new beauty. Lofly mountains swell upward into the clear blue sky; their sides waved with lofty palms and olives; their bases are green with vineyards and plantations. Through the thick shrubbery and groves we can descry the white summit of a dwelling or the walls of a town. The valley is thickly peopled, flocks and herds abound, and everywhere the fruits of human industry gladden the eye. Yonder, at no great distance, we behold the glittering pinnacles of many a gilded spire, and the arching summits of many temples. Palaces and splendid mansions may be seen, dazzling us with gorgeous ornaments of oriental architecture. That is Ava, the golden city; and not far away you may see the white wall, lofty towers, and temples of its deserted sister, Amarapura. Beautiful land! Gorgeous scene! The senses are intoxicated, but the mind is filled with emotions of profoundest melancholy.

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

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## The Christian Visitor.

SAINT JOHN, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1858.

### Encourage your Pastor.

Why? Because he especially needs encouragement. He has a mighty work upon his hands—a work so extended in its range, so weighty in its obligations, and so tremendous in its results, that in the contemplation of it an inspired Apostle exclaimed: "Who is sufficient for these things?" He has to deal with deathless souls, each one being of more value than worlds, who are pressing with him to the bar of God; and every day of his existence he is instrumentally preparing them for heaven or hell. To one he is the saviour of life unto life, and to another a saviour of death unto death. How awfully solemn his position! Upon his peril he must not shun to declare the whole counsel of God, and he must do this under the influence of the eternal spirit. His work is one of vast extent and terrible significance. The broad fields of God's revelation to man must be explored by him in search of instructions adapted to all classes of his hearers, that each may have his portion of meat in due season. The ignorant must be instructed, the wavering confirmed, the advanced christian fed with strong meat, and the babes nourished with the sincere milk of the word—the mourner in Zion comforted, and the wayward reclaimed—the infidel driven from his strongest citadel, and the careless sinner aroused to a sense of his guilt and danger—the hypocrite must be unmasked, and the penitent soul led to the foot of the cross to obtain forgiveness; and all this has to be done in anticipation of the searching scrutiny of that tribunal from which there is no appeal.

2d. Your Pastor needs encouragement because of the obstacles with which he has to contend in the prosecution of his mission. He is called to cultivate a sterile soil, and as he

sows the precious seed it falls by the way side upon the rock, and among thorns, as well as into good ground—all the principalities and powers of evil combine to frustrate the purpose of his sacred embassy, and to hasten the eternal destruction of the souls that he is seeking to save. Hence he is often constrained in anguish to exclaim, "Lord who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

3d. He needs encouragement because professed friends sometimes prove to be his greatest foes. The Apostle had to complain of this. Those who were once ready to pluck out their eyes and give them to him, became his implacable enemies. So it is in the present age. Human nature is still deceptive, and cannot in all cases be trusted. Unchanging friendship is dear to all: but probably no human being prizes it so highly as the christian Pastor. His soul is the seat of strong and undying attachments, and when he sees those requited, by professed friends, with deception and alienation, or even with neglect, his heart is made sad and his inner spirit mourns in bitterness. Persons who cherish this evil spirit will be sure to make it manifest. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak. Every thing is wrong with the Pastor. His sermons are too long or too short, too loud or too low, too warm or too cold—he has too much argument, or not enough—too much scripture, or too little—his style is too simple, or too profound: and if he were to preach with the startling eloquence of an Angel he would fail to hush this spirit of evil. If no fault can be found with his preaching, he is assailed in some other part of his ministerial life. He visits too much, or too little, or he visits some families more than he does others, &c. But what is worse than all, such troublemakers in Israel instead of going to the Pastor in the spirit of the gospel with their complaints, they are made the subjects of remark behind his back, in a manner adapted to mar his usefulness. Such false hearted persons cannot but hang as dead weights upon the soul of the christian Pastor, and place him in circumstances in which he needs encouragement from the faithful.

But how is this encouragement to be given? 1st. Let your minister know that he has a deep interest in your sympathies and in your prayers. Let him feel as he stands in the sacred altar, that he is preaching to a people who are listening to his instruction with a prayerful spirit, that the message may have its desired effect upon saint and sinner. We cannot imagine a more unenviable position for any human being to be in, than to be constrained to preach the word of God to a prayerless church. But if sustained by the prayers of his people, his word will be like pointed arrows in the consciences of his hearers.

2d. Encourage him by holding his character sacred at all times. He is a man subject to like passions with yourselves, and has his imperfections; but be careful how you magnify them, and hold them up to the gaze of others. Instead of spreading them abroad to his injury, throw a veil of charity over them. If you hear others defame him in any way, always vindicate his cause, and let him see that you hold his reputation as dear as your own life.

3d. Encourage him by co-operating with him in all his plans for doing good. Be punctual in your attendance upon all the appointments of the church. Let him know that you are interested in all that concerns the health and prosperity of the people under his care, and that you are exerting your influence to render his ministry successful in the salvation of souls. If he is worthy to be your Pastor, he is the best judge as to what means are best adapted to save souls from death. Be careful lest you thwart his plans by deadly opposition, or cold indifference. It is not enough that you do not oppose; you must engage heartily with him in his work. He will be successful, or otherwise, in proportion as his brethren co-operate with him in the performance of his responsible duties. If they allow him to enter the field of conflict alone, discomfiture must be his lot: but if they rally around him as true and faithful friends, victory is certain over every foe. Give efficiency and point to his sermons by practically adhering to the truth which he inculcates. If he embody christianity in his sermons, see that you embody it in your lives, and let him be able to say of you, "These are my epistles, known and read of all men."

Lastly, encourage him by so providing for his temporal support as to free him, as far as

possible, from all worldly cares, that he may give himself wholly to his work. If he be under the necessity of entangling himself with the affairs of this life in order to meet the necessities of his family, his ministry will lose its spirituality, and consequently its power. His work demands his undivided energies, and therefore you must not allow him to have recourse to earthly pursuits for the sake of a living. If he administer to you in spiritual things, it is only reasonable as well as scriptural that you should administer to him in things temporal. They who preach the gospel must live of the gospel. We would say to every Church of Christ in the Province, let your Pastor be thus encouraged in his work, and you may with confidence expect such a display of the Lord's power in the salvation of souls as you have never yet witnessed. The Lord enable us, one and all, faithfully to do his will, and to his name shall be the praise.

We call attention to the following extracts on the impropriety of Christians giving countenance to the Ball Room. It is worthy of the most serious consideration, not only of the persons immediately addressed; but of all such as have made a solemn profession of attachment to the religion of the cross. We cannot but deeply deplore the occasion which called for such an epistle: but we greatly admire the fidelity which gave it birth; and we most cordially approve of the sentiments which it contains.

If members of the Church of Christ sanction the carnal amusements of the "Ball Room" either by attending themselves, allowing their children to attend, or by training them in dancing schools for such associations of gaiety and unholy mirth, where we ask is the distinction between the Church and the world? Where the line of demarcation between those who professedly tread the narrow pathway of self-denial, and those who make no such profession?

The letter from which this extract is taken was addressed to the members of a given Church under peculiar circumstances: but as its scriptural remonstrances apply with much significance to a wide spread and growing evil, we trust that we shall be pardoned by its Author for giving it extended publicity. It reads thus—

"We do not for a moment place these amusements upon a level with the violation of the moral law of God, but we do maintain that it is highly unbecoming in the christian to seek recreation in the ball room and the dance. Omitting all reference to that which may be decorous in a man, considered as a being whom God has endowed with reason, we limit our remarks to that which becomes him in the far higher relation he sustains as a child of God, through the redemption of Christ Jesus our Lord. Does it become such an one to mingle in a scene where the spiritual exercises of prayer and praise to God would be pronounced altogether inappropriate? Is it fitting that a christian should engage in an amusement from which he would feel it incongruous to return and gather his family around him for the worship of God? Can he conscientiously take part in frivolities which tend to dissipate serious thoughts—to create an excitement of feeling which it requires length of time to calm, and which is unfriendly to every holy aspiration, and spiritual frame of mind? Can he come to the Lord's Table on the Sabbath, and partake of the precious emblems of the Saviour's death, and meditate upon the sufferings which He endured, and consistently spend the Monday evening in dancing and revelling? Does his inferior nature stand in so much need of aids for its development that he must sacrifice to it the interests of the superior? Do men of the world require the help of christians to urge on their recreations? Is there any fear lest there should not be enough dissipation if christians abstain from sharing in it?"

These questions might be multiplied, were not the incongruity already sufficiently glaring. And what, we may ask, must be the effect of these amusements, and the encouragement given them by professed christians upon the minds of those who may have become seriously impressed by divine truth. Do they not tend to quench the spark of desire that may have been enkindled in the breast? Are they not directly hostile to the efforts of the christian ministry? Do they not, in a night, frustrate the toil of your Pastor for many a Sabbath? Can the professed disciple of Christ think lightly of such opposing influences to the spread of pure religion? Is it an act devoid of blame to hinder those who appear to be entering into the kingdom of heaven? Most earnestly, therefore, we entreat you to abstain from these amusements.

Brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: we claim no dominion over your faith; no authority over your conscience; we do not ask you to surrender any opinion you may have formed upon the subject; we do not solicit from you any pledge of conduct; but we do beseech you to refrain from giving any countenance to practices that will entail upon you nothing but dishonor; we do implore

you to spare us the shame and grief of knowing that those for whom we watch and pray must be numbered among the votaries of worldly pleasures; we do entreat you to show christian regard for the feelings of your fellow members, who, though innocent, must be involved in the disgrace of your inconsistency; and above all, we most affectionately urge you not to enter upon a course in which you cannot hope to enjoy the approval of your Saviour. "In whose presence there is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures evermore."

#### History for Young Persons.—Chap. XV.

##### THE HISTORICAL BOOKS IN THE BIBLE.

THE Pentateuch or five Books of Moses contain the history of God's people in the world, and the revelation of his will to them. "The inspiration of God is evident in every page; and did we not know that this holy man wrote as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, we should never cease to wonder at their marvellous contents."

In *Genesis* we read the beginning of all things, and the early history of God's people, to their settlement in Egypt. In *Exodus* we read of their going out of Egypt, and the events of the first year in the wilderness. In *Leviticus*, the services belonging to the priests and *Levites*, &c. In *Numbers*, the numbering of the people and their journeyings through the wilderness, &c. In *Deuteronomy*, Moses' repetition of the Lord's dealings with them, and his will concerning them. The book of Joshua, the chosen captain of the Lord's armies, describes a great destruction among the Canaanites, the partial subjection of those who remained, and the possession of their land by the children of Israel. And here we should rest, in order to consider the difference between the wars undertaken by the Lord's command, and those which spring from the sinful passions of men. We have noticed that the long-suffering of God waited more than four hundred years; and it was only when those nations had filled up the measure of their sins, that the Israelites came as his righteous executioners to destroy them. They did not come in the ambitious spirit of the heathen warriors; for they were ready to turn back into Egypt. By their own will they would not have gone in to possess the land at all; and it was because they shrunk from it in terror and unbelief, that they were turned back into the wilderness for forty years. There all the men of might died; and none of the old and experienced were left, except the true-hearted Joshua and Caleb. Again, no feeling of self-exaltation was cherished amongst them: their own strength and righteousness were always set down, and the plain truth stated, "for the wickedness of these nations the Lord doth drive them out before thee" (Deut. ix. 1—6).

In every battle, instead of the excitement of the carnal mind, and its forwardness in the work, there is the seriousness and solemnity of God's judgment upon evil. Before they began to fight the Lord's battles, they were all circumcised: a ceremony, which rightly understood, signifies the putting away the sins of the flesh (Josh. v.). At the siege of Jericho, the walls fell by miracle; and they were only commissioned entirely to destroy the accursed thing (chap. vi). And even when one of the people had been defiled by touching the unclean thing, the sin was chargeable on all because they were one body; and their strength, which arose from the presence of the Holy One, could not be restored till the evil was put away (chap. vii).

If they were to execute judgment for the Lord, they also must be judged by the Lord.

If war now, or at any time could be carried on in this power, with these principles, and in submission to such judgement on those who fight, it might be called right; but if under any different circumstances, how can the example of the Jews be so boldly pleaded?

In the next book of the Bible we read of the judges who were raised up by the Spirit of the Lord, after the land had been divided by lot among the tribes of Israel. It is a history of continual failure: "the flesh profiteth nothing;" "it is the Spirit that quickeneth;" these are the lessons to be learned. Some who are ignorant of their own hearts think that the Jews must be the worst people that ever lived upon the earth; but it is written, "There is no difference, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." And again, "Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." (Rom. iii.)

In whatever circumstances man is placed, nothing will avail him save being made a new creature in Christ Jesus. Like the Jews, un-