

CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

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REV. I. E. BILL,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men."

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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DREAM NOT, BUT WORK!

Dream not, but work! Be bold! be brave!
Let not a coward spirit crave
Escape from tasks allotted!
Thankful for toil and danger be;
Duty's high call will make thee flee
The vicious—the besotted.

Think not thy share of strife too great;
Speed to thy post, erect, elate;
Strength from above is given
To those who combat sin and wrong,
Nor ask how much, nor count how long
They with the foe have striven!

Wage ceaseless war 'gainst lawless might;
Speak out the truth—act out the right—
Shield the defenceless.
Be firm—be strong—improve the time—
Pity the sinner—but for crime,
Crush it relentless!

Strive on, strive on, nor ever deem
Thy work complete. Care not to seem
But be, a Christian true.
Think, speak, and act 'gainst mean device;
Wrestle with those who sacrifice
The many to the few.

Forget thyself, but bear in mind
The claims of suffering humankind;
So shall the welcome night,
Unseen o'ertake thee, and thy soul
Sinking in slumber at the goal,
Wake in eternal light!

[London Christian Reformer.]

The Baptist Anniversaries in London.

BAPTIST IRISH SOCIETY.

The Annual public meeting of this Society was held in Finsbury Chapel, on Tuesday evening; Richard Foster, Esq., of Cambridge in the chair.

The Rev. Wm. Groser read a brief Report, which stated that—"The Committee, which was appointed twelve months ago, having larger funds, thought it desirable to request Messrs. Birrell and Brown, of Liverpool, Dowson, of Bradford; Stalker, of Leeds, and Bigwood, of Brompton, to pay a visit to the Sister country. The observations with which these gentlemen supplied the committee after their return were of two classes. Some were urgent, but did not involve any very heavy permanent expenditure; these it was thought right to adopt without delay; while, with regard to others, which commended themselves strongly to the judgment of the committee, it seemed necessary to ascertain first whether the supporters of the Society were prepared to meet the additional cost. A circular was therefore issued, containing a summary of the recommendations received from these ministers. It has not been till within a very few weeks that the response has been fully made. It has been rendered evident, however, that there is a desire throughout the country, that we should not only continue those operations which we have carried on for several years past, and which have been maintained during the last twelve months with undiminished vigour, but also that we should increase our agency. Local zeal has sought and forwarded augmented contributions. The cost of the deputation has been defrayed, and a surplus remains which the retiring committee has great pleasure in handing over to its successors. At the close of the financial year, on the 31st of March, when the account was balanced, it was found that there were at the banker's, free from all claims, nine hundred pounds belonging to the Society. This included one item, received two days before, which deserves to be distinguished from the rest as peculiarly encouraging. A native of Ireland, himself a fruit of the Society's labours, who was introduced into the fellowship of the gospel by one of our agents, and who has since been greatly prospered in a distant portion of the globe, whose handsome donations were reported last year as those of 'An Irish Emi-

grant,' has this year forwarded two hundred pounds to be entered as from 'A Friend at Melbourne.' This constitutes one portion of that balance of £906 4s 11d which we have to transfer, and to which we trust that such additions will speedily be made as will justify the new committee in commencing operations in some of those large cities in which they are needed, especially among the two hundred and fifty-five thousand inhabitants of Ireland's metropolis where we have not at present a single agent."

The total receipts for the year were £2,569 11s 4d and the expenditure less by £906 4s 11d. There was also a balance in hand on the Relief Fund of £274.

The Rev. HUGH STOWELL BROWN, of Liverpool, was next introduced to the meeting as one of the Deputation to Ireland. On rising to speak, he was loudly applauded. He said: Last summer the Committee of this Society was pleased to ask me to take part in that Deputation work to which reference has been made, and I desire to acknowledge my grateful sense of the confidence thus reposed in me. I have now, I suppose, to give some account of my stewardship, which lasted somewhere about a fortnight. I think—(a laugh) but of which I have hitherto given on public account. There are some things of which I stand in great dread, and one of those things which are to my nervous system very dreadful is, the act of rushing into print; and so, deterred by this infirmity of mine, I have never yet been discovered in the "Irish Chronicle." (Laughter.) On this occasion, however, I must say a word or two with reference to some of the facts which fell under my notice, and that of my excellent companion in travel, Mr. Birrell, who has given to the public large notices of the Mission in which we were engaged. (Hear, hear.) The first Sunday of our being in that Mission it was arranged that Mr. Birrell should stay in Athlone, and that I should go to Moat in company with certain of the friends, and there we had a singular exhibition of the power of the Irish priesthood. A meeting was called, and I preached in the morning to about fifty people who came together,—that is as many as the room would hold. At the close of the services, I informed the congregation that I should hold a meeting in the main-street of the town, and invited them to appear at the proper time. We went together, Brothers Berry, Thomas, and myself, to the place appointed, and took our stand on the steps of the Court-house, as the people were coming out of the churches and chapels. Great numbers were passing up and down the street, but neither Romanists nor Protestants ever so much as looked at us. Some went up the street, and some down the street; some looked at the sky, and some looked on the ground; some right before them, and some, I was going to say, right behind them—(laughter)—and some at the opposite side of the street; but not one, whether Protestant or Romanist, condescended to cast a single glance, either of anger or approval, at the little group about the steps of the Court-house. At last a group of lads, some thirty in number, from twelve to twenty years old, assembled. They were very silent, looked very savage, exceedingly uncouth in their appearance, and exceedingly lean withal. (Laughter.) Certainly, if ever I saw a number of scowling and scornful faces, it was the faces of that group of young men who then stood before me, in a segment of a circle. Such was our congregation. We attempted to sing a hymn for their edification; but when I looked at them, I found I had no audience at all; every one of those youths had taken upon himself, upon the Voluntary principle, to afflict himself with temporary deafness,—every one of them stood with his fingers very carefully and steadfastly fixed in his ears. (Loud laughter.) Upon making inquiry into the cause of

this singular exhibition, the keeper of the Court-house—a Protestant man—informed me that the priests had heard of my coming, and—probably supposing that I belonged to the century of preachers whose presence he had understood were shortly expected, and that I was in the van-guard perhaps—that from all the altars in Moat the fact had been announced on the previous Sabbath. The priests did not actually curse me,—they were too gentlemanly for that,—but they warned the people neither to listen to nor molest us; and the people faithfully obeyed the warning. (Laughter and cheers.) It struck me, and strikes me still, that that was an exhibition of priestly power, a great deal more significant than even that other exhibition of priestly power which was almost tragically exhibited at Limerick a few days afterwards. (Hear, hear.) It is an easy thing to excite the passions of the mob. If the people had more to do, and were doing it; it would not be so easy as it is to get up a mob in Limerick. In any town or city, however, in the kingdom, an excitement can always be got up, on some subject or other, by appealing to the passions of the people; but to keep them under control, when a word would excite them to acts of the most ferocious violence, is one of the masterpieces of priestly power. (Hear, hear.) But, after all, our worthy friend Mr. Berry there is doing a good work, notwithstanding that he has to encounter hostilities and persecution of various kinds. He has been cursed, almost every Sunday in the year, from nobody knows how many altars. (Laughter and cheers.) He has even been threatened with personal violence; but the worthy man perseveres, and is diligent in his work. (Cheers.) Then, with respect to the schools; the priests not only command the people from the altar, but to send their children to these places, but they go into the people's houses and actually chastise them for allowing their children to attend the schools; they flog the children for going, and the parents for suffering them. (Sensation.) I do not think it is possible to imagine a more wretched and degraded state of society than that in which a man is content to suffer the priest to beat his wife and children before his eyes; yet such a scene did take place in Athlone, within two or three days of our visit to that town. A woman, whose child had been sent to our friend Berry's school, was laid hold of by a priest, while crossing the bridge at Athlone—a garrison town—and publicly beaten, in the presence of at least a hundred men, not one of whom had a word to say. ("Shame, shame!") It is well, perhaps, for myself that I do not live in the midst of such a state of things, or I should be sure to be getting into a fray of some sort. (Laughter and cheers.) I think this is one of the symbols of a most awful state of society in Ireland. (Hear, hear.) The power of the priesthood has been manifested lately, as you know, in a manner perhaps still more dreadful and distressing to every right-minded man. (Hear, hear.) You are aware that I refer to that most fearful case of the execution of the three men at the conclusion of one of the assizes; from which it would appear that the priestly power in Ireland is quite capable of congratulating the most atrocious criminals, of giving to every criminal an assurance of Heaven, no matter however black his crimes may be, and even the canonization of a martyr. (Hear.)

I next visited Ballynar, where our friend, Mr. Hamilton labours, a very excellent man, and who seems to have both the heart and ears of the various denominations of people in the town, and at the stations round about. I was there on the Saturday—and it matters very little whether you call a meeting on the Saturday or the Sabbath, because they can attend on the one day, if so minded, as well as the other. I wish it were not so. I think it would be far better that the people were

obliged to be digging from morning to night, and on every day of the week. (Hear, hear.) But so it is; if you can get a congregation on Sunday, you may get it on Sunday. We went in the course of this visit, to one of the schools situate in a desolate place, on the high road leading from Ballynar to Sligo. We found the scholars possessing a very respectable knowledge of the Scriptures, and that knowledge consisting not merely in the letter. (Hear, hear.) They seemed to be well versed also in the elements of all the other branches of education imparted in the school; and I found that nearly half the children in the school were children of Roman Catholics. (Hear, hear.) Another school, also, I can report of very favourably from personal inspection. (Hear, hear.) I preached in both the places in the course of the Saturday morning. In one instance, the service was conducted in a cottage, two rooms being thrown into one, and capable of holding a hundred people. About that number were present, and a more devout and interesting people I never saw,—about a third of them were Romanists. At Dollmelane, also, I met with a considerable number of people in the school-room, the larger proportion of them Roman Catholics. I preached several times in chapels in Athlone, Ballynar, and other places, and took part of a service in a chapel in Limerick, but the congregations there were not composed as the others; and I think it will be a very difficult matter to get the Roman Catholic portion of the people into the Baptist chapels. But there is a great work to be done among the Protestants in Ireland; and that not only among the Episcopalians, but among the Presbyterians as well. (Hear, hear.) If you were to build edifices as spacious as this and as elegant, it would be still a difficult matter to get the Roman Catholic people to enter; but I believe that cottage preaching is a possibility, and more than a possibility. (Hear, hear.) Any man who is qualified for the work can get a congregation in such places every day in the week. I think, also, that open air preaching is a possibility, notwithstanding my own failure, and that of the brethren at Limerick. All the dear brethren who went out last summer were not treated as those good men were at Limerick. But I think that such preaching is possible even at Limerick, where the people want the Gospel more than in any other place in Ireland. Let those brethren go again, or some others, and make the attempt. The people want the Gospel; then, in God's name, let them have it. (Cheers.) At any rate, I have no doubt that there are many parts of the country in which open air preaching might be carried on with very great success. If I went to Ireland again, I should try to have open air preaching wherever I went. (Hear, hear.) I have one or two suggestions to make to this meeting—we have been asked to present them—as to the future working of the Society. If it be the intention of the committee to take these suggestions into consideration, as I suppose it is, or else they would not have asked them to be made—(hear hear)—then it behoves us to be careful and candid in presenting such suggestions. In the first place, then, it will be well that the stations we have in Athlone and Ballynar should be vigorously sustained. There must be some assistance sent to our good brother Hamilton, at Ballynar, who seems to have an immense district open to him; but he obviously cannot himself visit the abodes of the people to any very great extent, but could introduce others, being himself well known in the whole district. In this country, and in large towns especially, it is easy for a man to get a thousand people to hear him preach on a Sunday; but in Ireland this cannot be done. We must take the water of life to the houses of the people, if they are to possess it at all. Domiciliary visitation must be very extensive-