

The Christian Visitor.

A FAMILY NEWSPAPER: DEVOTED TO RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

REV. I. E. BILL, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men." MR. JAMES DE MILL, ASSISTANT EDITOR

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Poetry.

Lines addressed to Sunday School Teachers.

While yet the heart is tender,
While yet the mind is young,
While yet the frame is slender,
Ere into manhood sprung,—
Instill the word of truth divine
Into the youthful heart,
Teach them the sacred hills to climb,
Where pleasures ne'er depart:—
Where God is ever smiling,
Where angel's songs abound,
Where saints are e'er admiring,
The blessed enchanted ground:—
O lead them to the Lamb of God,
Who takes away all sin;
O point them to redeeming blood,
To make them white and clean.
Before their hearts are hardened
By oft repeated sin—
While yet they may be pardoned,
O lead them near to Him;
That when to riper years they come,
They may His wonders tell,
And souls once wretched and undone,
His glorious praise shall swell.

"Only Waiting."

A very aged man in an almshouse was asked what he was doing now. He replied, "Only waiting."
Only waiting till the shadows
Are a little longer grown;
Only waiting till the glimmer
Of the day's last beam is down;
Till the night of earth is faded,
From the heart, one full day of;
Till the stars of heaven are breaking
Through the twilight soft and grey.
Only waiting till the reapers
Have the last sheaf gathered home;
For the summer time is faded,
And the autumn winds have come.
Quickly, reapers! gather quickly,
The last ripe fruits of my heart;
For the bloom of life is withered,
And I hasten to depart.
Only waiting till the angels
Open wide the mystic gate,
Here my feet too long have lingered,
Weary, pale, and dejected,
Even now I hear their footsteps,
And their voices far away;
If they call me, I am waiting,
Only waiting to obey.
Only waiting till the shadows
Are a little longer grown;
Only waiting till the glimmer
Of the day's last beam is down.
Then from out the gathering darkness
He, bright "Morning Star," shall rise,
By whose light my soul shall gladly
Tread its pathway to the skies.

Nineveh.

The veil is gradually falling from one of the sublimest pictures that have been vouchsafed to the inquiring mind of man since he first addressed himself to the investigation of truth in the spirit of daring and heroic importunity. Upon the earth, and above it, proofs of the wisdom and power of Omnipotent God have long been accumulating upon us with a force and swiftness that might well challenge the respect of the sceptic, and put to shame the audacious folly of the atheist. It has been left for our own time to deliver up from the very bowels of the earth evidence equally overwhelming and conclusive of the value and truth of those writings in which the doings of God's chosen people from the earliest times find their only record. It is difficult to speak or to write without emotion of the significant and extraordinary discoveries that have been made upon the site of ancient Nineveh. We have read as children of the devastating wars of Sennacherib, and been subjected to the awe arising from the perusal of events occurring at a period of time which it fatigued even the imagination to reach. We have listened, as children still, to the prophetic denunciations of Ezekiel, and trembled as we reflected upon the dismal fate of the gorgeous city he had doomed—once a city, a barren desert now. We have grown older, and acquired at school some knowledge of those classic times, in which, first Greece, then Italy, stamped the impress of civilisation upon the world—times so remote as to be themselves buried in antiquity, yet not so near to the still far-off Assyrian epoch as to be conscious of the least remains of its once surpassing glory. As children, as youths, as men, we have thought of Nineveh and Babylon as of the world before the flood—with interest,—with belief,—with amazement, and with dread; but knowing nothing of their history beyond the intimations afforded in the Bible, how could we entertain the hope that their hidden story, kept back from the conquerors of the world two thousand years ago, should be revealed silently, but absolutely, and in all its fulness now? Yes, so it is! What the Greeks knew not we clearly apprehend. Three thousand years have passed over the Assyrian mounds—three thousand years of storm, of passion, of darkness, and of night, and at length the grave gives up its dead. Athens has breathed her beauty upon the world, and expired. Rome has lived to prove the triumph of its institutions and the hollowness of its strength. Yea, the Son of Man has appeared among the nations to teach a heaven-born creed, which, happily for human progress, is taking root in every quarter of the globe. Dynasties have risen and been extinguished. Great countries have dwindled into molehills, and specks of earth have risen into the mightiest empires; and, at the end of all, the crusted earth, beneath which Nineveh has for so many ages been inhumed, cracks, bursts asunder, and reveals, not a miracle, but a verified verity—the monumental history of its greatness, the imperishable witness of its

once incomparable renown, the marble commentary of an inspired text. It is all there! The other day we had but a glimpse of the treasure,—to-day we discern more, and every hour is adding to the richness and the marvel of the unexpected sight.

We have spoken of inscriptions found on the bas-reliefs. These inscriptions, written in characters no longer in use among men, and utterly unintelligible to the common eye, are freely rendered in Mr. Layard's volumes, and are made to interpret events and to indicate facts of the most momentous kind. But for such rendering, all the excavations must have been to no purpose, and the sculptured monuments would have been worthless as the dust from which they have been torn. By what splendid accident, then, has it happened that illumination has been thrown into the heaps, and that art, interred for 3000 years, becomes, when brought to light, in an instant as familiar to us all as though it were but the dainty work of yesterday? How comes it that these arrow-headed, or, as they are more generally styled, cuneiform characters, which bear no analogy whatever to modern writing of any kind, and which have been lost to the world since the Macedonian conquest, are read by our countrymen with a facility that commands astonishment, and a correctness which admits of no dispute? The history is very plain, but certainly as remarkable as it is simple. Fifty years ago the key that has finally opened the treasure-house was picked up, unawares, by Professor Grotefend, of Göttingen. In the year 1802, this scholar took it into his head to decipher some inscriptions which were, and still are, to be found on the walls of Persepolis, in Persia. These inscriptions, written in three different languages, are all in the cuneiform (or wedge-like) character, and were addressed, as it now appears, to the three distinct races acknowledging in the time of Darius the Persian sway—viz., to the Persians proper, to the Scythians, and to the Assyrians. It is worthy of remark, that, although the cuneiform character is extinct, the practice of addressing these races in the language peculiar to each still prevails on the spot. The modern Governor of Bagdad, when he issues his edicts, must, like the great Persian King, note down his behests in three distinct forms of language, the Persian, the Turk, and the Arab, who submit to his rule, will find it difficult to possess themselves of his wishes. When Grotefend first saw the three kinds of inscription, he concluded the first to be Persian, and proceeded to his task with this conviction. He had not studied the writing long before he discerned that all the words of all the inscriptions were separated from each other by a wedge, placed diagonally at the beginning or end of each word.

With this slight knowledge for his guide, he went on a little further. He next observed that in the Persian inscription one word occurred three or four times over, with a slight terminal difference. This word he concluded to be a title. Further investigation and comparison of words induced him to guess that the inscription recorded a genealogy. The assumption was a happy one. But to whom did the titles belong? With no clue whatever to help him; how should he decide? By an examination of all the authorities, ancient and modern, he satisfied himself at last of the dynasty that had founded Persepolis, and then he tried all the names of the dynasty in succession, in the hope that some would fit. He was not disappointed.—The names were Hystaspes, Darius, and Xerxes. Although the actual pronunciation of these names had to be discovered, yet by the aid of the Zend (the language of the ancient Persians), and of the Greek, the true method of spelling was nearly arrived at that no doubt of the accuracy of the guess could reasonably be entertained.

The achievement had been worth the pains, for twelve characters of the Persian cuneiform inscription were now well secured. Twenty-eight characters remained to be deciphered before the inscriptions could be mastered. Grotefend here rested. The next step was taken by M. Bournouf, a scholar intimately acquainted with the Zend language. In 1836 he added considerably to the Persian cuneiform alphabet by reading twenty-four names on one of the inscriptions at Persepolis; but a more rapid stride was made subsequently by Professor Lassen, of Bonn, who, between the years 1836 and 1844, to use the words of Mr. Fergusson, the learned and ingenious restorer of the palaces of Nineveh and Persepolis, "all but completed the task of alphabetical discovery."

While progress was thus making in Europe, Colonel Rawlinson, stationed at Kermanshah, in Persia, and ignorant of what had already been done in the west was arriving at similar results by a process of his own. He too had begun to read the Persian cuneiform character on two inscriptions at Hamadan, the ancient Ecbatana. This was in 1835. In 1837 he had been able to decipher the most extensive Persian cuneiform inscription in the world. On the high road from Babylon to the east stands the celebrated rock of Behistun. It is almost perpendicular, and rises abruptly to the height of 1,700 feet. A portion of the rock, about 300 feet from the plain, and still very perfect, is sculptured, and contains inscriptions in the three languages already spoken of. The sculpture represents King Darius and the vanquished chiefs before him—the inscriptions detail the victories obtained over the latter by the Persian monarch. This monument, at least 2250 years old, deciphered for the first time by Major Rawlinson, gave to that distinguished orientalist more than eighty proper names to deal with. It enabled him to form an alphabet.

Communication.

Karen Missions.

BY X.

(Continued.)

PROGRESS OF THE SANDAWAY MISSION.
It is mournful to view the melancholy fate of so many who by the flight from their oppressors had testified their willingness to surrender all but Christ; but we can cheerfully turn to a brighter picture in the history of the Karen mission in Arracan. A glorious work was progressing. Many were baptized in 1843 and 1844. Mr. Abbot and his assistants baptized upwards of 2000 Karens.

Though much of the labor of this mission was shared by the native preachers; still the work performed by Mr. Abbot was more than one man could long sustain. He was obliged to devote much time and attention to the school in Sandaway; the churches which were springing up so rapidly demanded much instruction and supervision from him; and it was also necessary that he should preach the gospel to the unconverted. Incessant toil at length prostrated him. Other afflictions were at hand. While struggling with ill health, he was called to meet with some most painful bereavements. In 1844 his two children were removed from him by death, and in the January of the following year, he followed his beloved wife to the tomb. Thus afflicted in body and mind, he found it necessary to leave for a time his interesting field of labor. In the spring of 1845 he left for the United States, promising his assistants that if life were spared him he would meet them in January 1848 at Oyang Kyoung.

On his arrival in America he had a glorious tale to tell. The Karen mission had ever excited an interest in the minds of Christians at home. Mr. Abbot had just looked upon scenes of most thrilling interest to every warm hearted Christian. Three thousand idolaters had been converted and baptized during the five years he labored in Arracan. He had seen the ignorant and vicious Karen turn to Christ, and offer himself up as a living sacrifice. He had seen exhibited by these children of the jungle all that liberality of which modern Christianity boasts; with all that heroism and endurance which shed such a brilliant lustre upon the first confessors of our faith. He had seen men whose minds had hitherto been shrouded in midnight darkness, whose hearts had been stained with the pollutions of idolatry, now directing their fellow countrymen to the source of light and purity. He had seen the impure idolater cleansed in the fountain provided for sin and uncleanness;—and the illiterate Karen preaching the Gospel with success. He had seen the Gospel of Christ advancing with a power and rapidity which recalled to mind its miraculous progress in Apostolic times. Such a tale told by one who had been an eye witness, awoke in the hearts of the Christians of America, a new interest in behalf of the Karen mission.

While Mr. Abbot was in America, the Karen preachers whom he had left behind were not idle. The work which had been so providentially begun, which had been so wondrously carried on, still advanced with striking rapidity. Tgawh-Pole, who was at the head of the Church in Arracan, baptized 600 converts while Myat Kan, who labored chiefly among the Karens of Pegu, between the Juawaddy and Arracan, baptized 550. Besides those who had been baptized by the only ordained native preachers in connection with the mission, there were 1200 converts waiting for baptism.

Mr. Abbot left America in August 1847, and arrived in Sandaway early in December. He was thus able to fulfill the promise which he had made previous to his departure, and in January 1848 in accordance with his engagement, he met a large number of Karen preachers and converts at Oyang Kyoung.—The meeting was a most interesting one. The Karens were delighted at meeting with their teacher, while his heart was gladdened by the report of so many conversions, during his absence.

Communication.

A Voice from Australia.

The following article is selected from the correspondence of the *Primitive Church Magazine*. It contains much valuable information in relation to the spiritual necessities of Australia and its prospects as a field for missionary enterprise. We commend it to the careful perusal of our readers, especially to such of them as may have any doubt in respect to the propriety of the Baptists of this country establishing a mission in that Golden Isle of the Sea:—

DEAR SIR,—It has not been in my power to write to you sooner, in fulfilment of my promise to you immediately before I left England in March last. The subject upon which I intended to offer further observations was as you are aware, "The Spiritual Wants of the Gold Fields." But instead of giving my resumed remarks upon this subject in the form of an article, it will, perhaps, be more expedient and suitable to confine myself to the style and limits of a letter.

Neither is it my intention to confine myself so strictly to the matter in hand as to exclude from it the information which I promised you respecting our own denomination in Melbourne, but shall endeavour, as one who has the welfare of that denomination deeply at heart, to present your readers with a brief and faithful account of its present state and future prospects.

In my last paper, which appeared in the March number of your Magazine, I finished an account of those vices to which I considered the people of this colony were more particularly addicted, and in the two papers which immediately preceded it, I noticed the most likely means which, under the blessing of God, might prove effectual in checking or restraining those vices, as—the introduction into this country of pious ministers of the gospel from home—and the diffusion of religious knowledge through the circulation of evangelical tracts and periodicals; and I now proceed to notice the strong and urgent necessity there is for greatly increased and combined missionary effort in this highly interesting and important colony.

By missionary effort I am to be understood as meaning that there should be an increase of religious teachers, to carry the gospel through all parts of the vast interior of this country which is now more or less populated to catechize the people, wherever they might be found, whether in their huts or in the open air, to exhort and expostulate with them, to distribute the Scriptures and other wholesome literature among them, and willingly to endure suffering and privation for the cause of Christ in the discharge of their duties.

STATE OF THE INTERIOR.
The great incentive to this work is the melancholy state of the interior. Vast sections of it have been wholly overlooked by the various denominations of Christians here; religious knowledge and instruction are thus shut out from the people inhabiting those sections, and, as a natural consequence, they are sunk in brutish ignorance, vice, and degradation. The only outstanding missionary effort that the Melbourne churches have made, has been directed towards the aboriginal inhabitants of this colony, who, prior to this, have had many similar efforts made on their behalf, but without the least success. The persons employed in the present effort are Moravian brethren, who seem very zealous and earnest in their endeavours. They report many serious obstacles to the success of the mission, such as the difficulty experienced in mastering the native tongue, the degraded condition of the natives, and the vicious propensities they have imbibed since the introduction of Europeans to their shores.

CONDITION OF THE ABORIGINES.
As I have spent much time in the interior, and have seen much of the native population, it may not be uninteresting nor ill-judged, if I attempt to throw together a few thoughts upon that ill-treated and deeply degraded section of the human race. Since the colonization of this country by the British, about twenty years ago, the native population have gradually but surely diminished in numbers; several tribes which then existed in full vigor, are now wholly extinct. Many causes may be advanced to explain this. The means which they formerly had, to obtain adequate subsistence have been cut off to a very considerable extent. These consisted of wild roots, and herbs, and also of animals obtain-

ed by hunting, the skins of which they used for coverings, after careful preparation,—as the opossum, the kangaroo, and the wombat, besides other animals of less note, and importance. Now these means have greatly diminished in extent and practicability since the country has been occupied by British settlers and graziers; and the poor natives have thus been obliged, from sheer want, to resort in many cases to dishonest stratagem and artifice, in order to obtain subsistence.

Add to this circumstance the numerous abominable and contagious vices and diseases introduced to the natives by Europeans, some of which have carried many of them off with astonishing rapidity; for the natives not having skill to discern the real nature of the diseases which afflicted them, nor to know their fatality if allowed to proceed without attention, generally allowed death itself to terminate their painful and melancholy sufferings. Many of them are notoriously addicted to drunkenness, to swearing, and other kinds of abandonment; and the report given by the Moravian brethren to a Melbourne audience, some time ago, in the hall of the Mechanics' Institute, clearly testified to the low state of their moral and physical condition.

Another cause of the premature disease and extinction of whole native tribes is the unsettled and roaming character which is common to the native population. Their camps are generally stationary not more than a day or two in one place. After that period their travelling propensities must be indulged and they are exceedingly strong. By this continual journeying from place to place, they not only expose themselves to the sudden changes of the climate, but to a precarious supply of food and water; thus, their style of living speedily engenders disease of the most fatal kind—as consumption, and violent diarrhoea—by which they are hastily consigned to the grave, with no burial nor funeral rites, save those which savage natures can devise.

But still even these poor, degraded, and suffering natives of the interior are not without the hope of the gospel. To argue, as many do, that they are wholly irreclaimable either to Christianity or civilization, is to support a most false, dangerous, and untenable position; for the contrary of this is proved by the strongest and plainest facts. In our own family we had a native boy as a servant for a considerable period, who could not only read well in the New Testament, but who acquitted himself with propriety and intelligence in the duties to which he was called. But it is quite needless to cite isolated instances like this. There are others of much greater weight, and which may be aptly noticed. I have seen about fifty native men, women, and children engage together in singing a hymn, and in reading the Scriptures, which they did with propriety and solemnity; and I think the fact that the local Government of this country have in their employ a body of native mounted police, of the most efficient and intelligent character, and who have been thus engaged for a long period of years, is quite sufficient to set at rest the question of their capacity to make progress in knowledge.

Rainy Sundays.

A rainy Sunday is the church-goer's holiday. When he is awaked in the morning by the drops pattering upon the roof or window-pane, he nestles more comfortably in his bed, and congratulates himself because he may take another nap. He rises at a late hour and comes down with a headache, which, somehow, a strong cup of coffee does not dispel. Then he casts about for employment for of course, he is not going to church in the rain! He might muddy his boots, or spoil his beaver—silk hat, we mean! Perhaps he takes up the last novel, but if he is a business man, it is more probable that he will look over some old account, or even go to the store—in spite of the rain!—to do so.

So the day wears leadenly on, and, in spite of himself, he feels uncomfortable. He has spent the day wretchedly, and he knows it, yet surely you would not have him go to church in the rain? But we would though! That is just what rainy Sundays are made for. When the sun shines, and the grass is green, when the flowers are springing, birds are singing, and all is fair without, then one can worship in the open air, and in the devotional walk have all his deepest religious feelings aroused. But when the sky lowers and the rain or snow falls, it is the duty of all to go to church. For our part, we like a stormy Sunday for church-going, better than a fair one. We always liked to go to school on rainy days, because then there were fewer scholars, and we got more of the master's attention. Then, too, he became familiar, put by his stern demeanor, and drawing the faithful few around him, told us tales, or explained the difficult lesson. There was a coziness about the school-room on such days, that we liked. So on rainy Sundays we go to church because then we can get a larger share of the sermon. When the house is full, and the butterflies of fashion are fluttering in their pews and ranks there with haughty head, somehow we never can get any good from the preacher. We feel overlooked in the bustling crowd, and are disturbed by the wandering glances and loud whisperings of over-dressed girls and rustling matrons. There is always a little boy to kick his heels against the pew, and move restlessly about from seat to seat—there is always an old gentleman, to nod his head at us, with close shut eyes, as if answer-

ing our internal questionings. There is a cold air of the world—of formal ceremony, and heartless parade about the church; that chills the religious element in our being.

But on the rainy Sundays, when the butterflies remain at home for fear of soiling their wings, and the little boy plays horse at home in the garret, and the old gentleman takes his nap upon his own bed, we get a good share of the sermon, and seldom get to sleep. Then the few present are dressed in subdued colors, are quiet and attentive, and a sort of grateful gloom comes in at the hazy windows, and wraps all in partial obscurity. Then the preacher puts aside the airs of oratory, and talks with us plainly and sociably. Then the spirit of true religion seems to rest upon the worshippers, and the world is shut out. Then, indeed, it is good to be there.

Reader, if you would enjoy a rainy Sunday, go to church.—*Portland Transcript.*

The Theatre.

BY REV. W. W. EVERTS, D. D.

The theatre not only prejudices the great interests of intellectual and practical education, but as a mere institution of amusement it is too prodigally expensive for an economical community. Its edifices are erected and furnished at a cost of from fifty to five or eight hundred thousand dollars; a sum sufficient to furnish adequate buildings for a national university. It is supported at an expense that would sustain several hospitals, or charitable asylums; or fifty or a hundred schools for the higher education of the children of the poor. Its professional services are rewarded with a prodigal extravagance allowed to no industrial, useful, and honorable calling. According to their grade of service, they receive from perhaps ten to a thousand dollars per night. Celeste received in New York, Philadelphia, Mobile, and New Orleans, a hundred thousand dollars in the course of a year. Ellsler obtained twenty thousand dollars from a short engagement in New Orleans; and in Havana received a thousand dollars per night, and at the close of her engagement, a present of fifty-seven thousand dollars from her admirers. For the profuse and dissipating service of dancing a half-hour, she received as much compensation as ten of her own sex, of pure hearts and cultivated intellects, would demand for a year's toilsome service in the education of the poor; and for a year of such performances, receives a sum that would be sufficient to introduce a thousand educated and pious females as teachers among the rising communities of the west. According to the report of its manager, a theatre in this city received into its treasury eight-hundred thousand dollars in seven years. The Broadway theatre, when first opened received several nights nearly two thousand dollars per night. Alas! what calls of charity, what piercing cries of human woe, would draw nightly from this city the aggregate sum received at its theatre? What claims of philanthropy or virtue could draw it from the same classes? If this enormous expenditure were made chiefly by the rich, or even by the city authorities, the evil would be abated. But the poorer classes are as much addicted to amusement as the rich, and seeking it in its approved forms, they patronize the theatre in larger numbers than those more affluent. They are just commencing business, and the price of frequent admission, with usually an equal sum of associated expenses, curtails their means, and blights their prospects. They are journeymen, clerks, and agents, and the expenses of the theatre absorb or reduce those gradual accumulations that might soon furnish the capital of an independent business. They are those whose home is on the deep, and who by squandering at the theatre and in its concentric circles, their hard earnings, that might, if husbanded, furnish them a home and competence on land, are doomed to the hardships and poverty of the sea until a violent death. Or they are porters, apprentices, and nameless classes of vicious boys, who spend their scanty pittance, or steal from their parents or employers means to purchase a check or obtain a standing in the pit. Theatrical entertainments, therefore, upon the question of economy, lie beyond the reach of three fourths of their patrons, and hence greatly encourage improvidence, prodigality, and their attendant vices.

The author of the Great Metropolis declares that more boys in London commence the practice of stealing, to obtain means to attend the theatre, than from any other cause. The same fact has been ascertained by repeated investigations in American cities. The extravagant mode of living which annually precipitates the fall of so many young men in the metropolis, commences in companionship with the votaries of the theatre.

5. As a place of popular amusement, under the ascendancy of vice, the theatre precludes the essential safeguards of virtue at the very points where she is most exposed and defenceless. Amid industrial pursuits, and professed avocations, virtue is secured by accustomed associations and all the avenues to the heart are guarded by the sentiments of habit. It is at the intervals of regular occupations when this protection is in a measure withdrawn, the mind enters amid pleasing recreations, conscience sleeping or only half conscious at her post, and virtue is least apprehensive of danger, that she is most likely to be betrayed by surrounding insidious influences.

Home and its correlative associations therefore are the true sphere of amusements. Any public institution subjected to the most rigid supervision and invested with all possible safeguards, is not the most congenial sphere for