

The Christian Visitor.

A FAMILY NEWS PAPER: DEVOTED TO RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

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

GEO. W. DAY, Printer. SAINT JOHN, NEW-BRUNSWICK, WEBNESDAY, APRIL 9, 1856. VOL. IX.--NO. 15

Poetry.

"My Meditation of Him Shall be Sweet."

'Tis sweet to think at eventide
Of earthly friends we love,
But sweeter far than ought beside,
To meet our Friend above:
To tell him all our woes and joys,
The hopes and fears we feel,
And far from worldly strife and noise,
A glimpse of heaven to seal.
What joy, what rapture fills the heart
Attuned to heavenly lays;
And what delight does God impart
To those who muse his praise.
How faint and feeble mortal tongue,
Express his boundless grace;
The loudest strain e'er angel sung
The theme can ne'er embrace.
It swells the meditative heart
With ecstasy untold,
O, holy Saviour ne'er depart,
Nor let my love grow cold.
Beneath the shadow of thy wing
My loving heart would fly,
And of thy mercy loudly sing
At morn and eventide.

Correspondence.

Reminiscences of the Past.

No. XXIV.

My Dear Brother,—I learned much of the workings of human nature in my intercourse with the motley characters, with whom I had to deal, on my journey in the eastern country. Religion assumed every imaginable shape according to the training, or want of training, of the people. I had to encounter every sort of prejudice and opposition, from the people with whom I came in contact. True, I sometimes met with little opposition where I expected much; and in other instances, I encountered great bitterness where I little expected it; even where I anticipated friendship and sympathy.

One curious incident I met with as follows. A woman and two of her children, both over twenty years of age, experienced religion; and gave the clearest evidence of its genuineness. The husband and father, a Romanist, was at the time absent from home a fishing. When he heard that they had been baptized, he hastened home, swearing revenge on them, and myself. His family fled from the house, as he swore he would kill them. Not finding them, he came over the harbour with a gun, vowing that he would shoot me. A friend, who saw what a rage he was in, hastened on to warn me, and get me out of the way. But I refused to fly, presently we saw him paddling his boat across the bay; and when he landed, he shouldered his musket, and marched up the field like a brave soldier. Though my friends remonstrated, I concluded to go out and meet him; and have a fair fight. I left the house, and walked towards him; when I got near, he raised his gun, not to shoot, but to strike me. I spoke to him kindly; but in a somewhat trifling manner, which arrested his movement. I then began to talk to him; and reason the subject. He was much agitated; both in limbs and countenance. At one moment he was in a rage; then he would laugh; then cry. At last I got him to sit down on the grass; and lay his gun down between us. I then talked to him as well as I was able; and he confessed his wrong, and invited me to come to his house. I told him I would come and stay all night, and named a time, if he would consent that I should hold a meeting there. He told me I might. And so we parted, quite as good friends as when we first met. I told him afterwards that it was a great pity he had lost so much time and so many fish, to come and fight a Baptist preacher; and then get beat after all. I held worship in his house; and he was more kind to his family after, than ever before. In one of the harbours, where was a good work of grace, and many precious souls converted, I met with some considerable opposition, where I little expected it, from a professor of religion. There were a goodly number to be baptized on Lord's-day. And in my discourse in the forenoon, I referred to the subject. The person I referred to got up the moment I concluded my sermon, and raised a strong opposition. I replied to him; but when I stopped, he sprung to his feet, apparently in great rage, and said, "Sir, I forbid you to baptize on my land." I replied, "Sir, I do not baptize on the land, but in the water." With this he left the house; and I saw him no more that day, but proceeded to close the service, and prepare to administer the ordinance of baptism to a goodly number of joyful converts.

We had a most solemn season at the water; and at the afternoon and evening services.

There were at anchor, in the harbour, that Sabbath day, fifteen or twenty vessels, wind bound; and most of the people attended worship, making quite a large congregation. I had reason to hope that great good was that day done by the power and spirit of God. Many shed tears; and some inquired what they must do to be saved. Six months after that time, I baptized two men (who were awakened that day) at a distance of three hundred miles from there; and who belonged to one of those vessels. There were ships, brigs, and schooners, from England, the West Indies, United States, and other ports; and as the people all heard in their own language, and saw with their own eyes the wonderful works of God, who can tell the number of souls born for glory, in that remote harbour, near Cape Canso! Only one of those ships did I ever hear of since that time; and two, at least, of her crew, were brought into the kingdom. Although that is now thirty-five years ago, I heard a few months since that they were both walking still in the truth.

How mysterious are the ways of God! Even the winds obey his will; and contribute to the accomplishment of his purposes even in the conversion of souls to himself. While in this vicinity, I was sent for to go, at midnight, and visit a family who had a child in the agonies of death. When I arrived there, I found the parents in great trouble; not so much in the loss of their child; as, because, it had not been christened. They were very anxious that I should do this service for them; as they evidently thought it was necessary to its future happiness. When I intimated my unwillingness, they were both greatly disappointed and distressed. I had much trouble to pacify and convince them that their child was as safe without being baptized as with it. But at length they became calm; and resigned it into the hands of God, with apparent submission to his will. I have never been called upon to perform this duty, but in one other instance, in the course of my ministry; and that was here in St. John, a few months ago.

In the revival, in this region, which extended from Manchester, through Guysborough, to Cooks Cove, Crows Harbour, Canso, and other places, two brothers, by the name of Hull, experienced the grace of God. They both afterwards became Baptist preachers. John, I assisted to ordain at an Association in Nova Scotia, several years afterwards; and had the melancholy satisfaction of preaching his funeral sermon in the United States, at a later period. He died young, of consumption. He was a good man; promising great usefulness. He lies in the burying ground, in the town of Turner, Maine. The other brother Hezekiah, I baptized in the waters of the Cherebucto Bay, near his father's house; and assisted at his ordination, in the town of Harrington, in the State of Maine, a number of years afterwards. I do not now remember how many were hopefully converted, or how many were buried with Christ by baptism, in the eastern part of Nova Scotia, on this journey; but there were a great number. I remember twelve or fourteen at a time followed their Saviour into the liquid grave. It was a joyful season; and will be remembered, while I remember anything. And here I can raise an Ebenezer, and say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped me!" D. NUTTER.

War on Christian Principles.

BY REV. S. L. RAND.

Proofs of the efficacy of the "peace principle" in overcoming men's evil passions, and preventing injuries, may be found in abundance. I will give you one illustration from the "life and times" of Elder Joseph Dimock. In the earlier days of his ministry he had some pretty rough subjects to deal with. Ignorance, prejudice, brutality and rum, sometimes assailed him. Crowds of rowdies would surround the house where he was holding meetings, making unearthy noises, "firing" snowballs at the candles, the preacher and people. Once a plan was laid to tar and feather him, and he escaped almost miraculously. An indescribable, unaccountable impression on his mind to "beware," was the means God used to protect him. Once a drunken man was hired to cut off his ears, and entered the house with a sharp shoemaker concealed about his person, and took a seat behind Mr. Dimock, in order to watch his opportunity to effect his diabolical purpose. Providence again interposed and saved him. These must have been disorderly days in and around Lunenburg, as well as in other

parts of these provinces. It was believed that there was no law to protect the "new lights." They afterwards discovered their error. They became acquainted also with the man and his communication. I need not say how universally esteemed and revered he soon became by all classes. A wondrous change has taken place in Lunenburg and its environs since the period to which the story refers which I am about to relate. I give it as I do the other incidents just mentioned, on the authority of the venerable brother himself, long since gone to his rest. He had gone over from Chester to Lunenburg (the distance is about twenty miles or so) on business. But his motto always was, "As ye go, preach." For this he was always ready. It is well known that he had adopted it as a rule early in his ministerial career, never to refuse to preach when invited. It was soon known, on the day aforesaid, that Mr. Dimock was in the place, and he received an invitation to preach. It was from a gang of half-drunken fellows of a tavern near by. The leader of the party had an ominous name, or nickname I should rather say. They called him Moloch, his real name being somewhat similar in sound, and his character corresponding as nearly to that of the worthy of ancient fame, whose name he bore. Moloch and his boon companions wanted to have some fun. It would be a capital play, they argued, to get the new-light minister to come up to the tavern, and give them a sermon. They would then have him in their power, and could maltreat him to their heart's content, without difficulty or danger. Mr. Dimock returned an answer to the following effect: "Tell your friends that I have serious objections to going to a tavern to preach, but if they would come down to Mr. Hubley's house in an hour and a half, so as to give me time to circulate the notice somewhat, I will be most happy to comply with their wishes." This arrangement was agreed to—it would answer the purpose. Twelve able-bodied men, well screwed up to mischief by the potency of rum, would be able to accomplish their evil purposes, notwithstanding the army which could, under the circumstances, be mustered against them.

An Irishman—I believe he was a Roman Catholic—invited Mr. Dimock to take dinner with him. He could not help expressing his astonishment that Mr. D. should have complied with the singular request. He warmly urged a recall of the appointment, and pointed out the impending dangers. But the preacher was not so easily frightened. He considered it his duty to preach, and the path of duty, he knew, was the path of safety. Their motives were doubtless bad; but that was their business, not his. If they would come and listen, he would preach the gospel to them. Who could tell but God might bless the Word to the everlasting good of some? It is not by any means necessary to be a coward in order to be a "man of peace." There are many ways of displaying courage and heroism, besides that of rushing upon the cannon's mouth or the point of the bayonet. There is infinitely more manliness as well as Christianity in bearing insults and provocations unmoved, and in overcoming evil with good, than in fighting, any way you can fix it. "Better run like a man than stand and fight like a dog." Mr. Dimock was not afraid to suffer or even die in the discharge of his duty. If this be not courage, pray what is? Having despatched the business of dinner-eating, it was concluded that an elongation of the drinking bowl for an additional half hour, would not render the party any more capable of profiting under a sermon; so he concluded to anticipate the time a little and sent them word that he was ready. The son of Erin accompanied him. Before starting he took down his "shelalah." "What are you going to do with that," Mr. D. inquired. "I think I shall have occasion to use it before I come back," was the response. He was urged to return the stick to its place. "I am more afraid of that stick than I am of all those men," said Mr. D., "I am unarmed. I have never injured them. I am entirely defenceless, and they will not be able to touch me, unless you undertake to defend me. If you do, I cannot tell what may be the result." But this was strange reasoning to the Irishman. He thought the way to prevent war was to be ready for it—to be armed "cap a pie," and that the "sprig of shelalah" was a much more effectual barrier against aggression than innocence, goodwill, helplessness, and confidence in God.

Mr. Dimock took the exactly opposite view of the subject. And he was right. He showed his knowledge of human nature. He had studied man as well as the Bible. Bad as the world is, it may be affirmed without fear of contradiction, that there is hardly to be found a wretch so depraved as to shoot down, or hurt a man who is his friend, who is unarmed and trying to do him good, and from whose death he has nothing to hope, and from whose life he has nothing to fear. (Soldiers, alas! in times of war must be excepted. In exploding bombshells, in making cavalry charges, they cannot discriminate.) But throw yourself into a posture of defence—raise your club or pull out your revolver, and you certainly alter the case. Hundreds are to be found who will kill you if they apprehend you have designs against their lives. They will defend themselves to the death, even in the most unrighteous of causes. Mr. Dimock wanted no bowie knife, no revolver, no club. I have read of preachers of the Gospel being armed with revolvers. The account was, however, contained in a newspaper. I never met with such a statement in the New Testament. Peter it is true carried a sword on one occasion, but it was before he understood the Gospel dispensation. He was just emerging from Judaism. He used it too, and committed another offence immediately after that. Defended his Lord with the sword, and then denied him! Fighting Christians ponder the lesson? But you never read of his carrying a sword afterwards. "Put up thy sword into the sheath." "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" were words not uttered in vain to him. Mr. Dimock had read that statement, and he wished to act upon the principle there laid down in meeting the danger which now threatened him. But the Irishman would not be persuaded to leave his stick. Bitter cause had he to repent of his obstinacy. He found our Lord's maxim correct. Moloch and his band were promptly on hand. And the preacher was there ready to commence. He delayed a little "Come, we are all ready" says Moloch. Mr. Dimock rose and gave out a hymn. "Can you raise a tune" he asked. "Well, I know the Black Joke, I guess it will go in it," was the profane reply. "We will omit singing, let us pray," responded the Minister. I wish I could report the prayer, but I cannot. It is recorded on high, but mortals cannot read the record. But oh! how vividly the whole scene comes up before me as I write, I seem to see the form of that holy man; I seem to hear his voice, tremulous with emotion, and I can almost catch the accents of his earnest pleadings for those immortals rushing headlong to perdition. And I seem to see one "like unto the son of man," walking with him in the midst of the fiery furnace, and saying unto him, "fear not, for I am with thee." But tho' we know not how that prayer was worded, nor how it was uttered, yet many of us have heard that holy man pray, on different occasions. And we have felt that the place where we stood was holy ground, while we listened to those deep heavings of his earnest soul, while he talked with his maker as a man talketh with his friend.

I doubt not the prayer was appropriate, simple in its language, and earnest. There would be no denunciations, no praying at the poor sinners who had come to mock and molest; but appeals on their behalf, such as move heaven and earth, and hell; "The affectionate fervent prayer of a righteous man." If they were preserved from the overt act of a single sin, that prayer was not offered in vain even for them. Next came the text. Could there have been a better? "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and will open the door I will come in and sup with him and he will be with me." Soon there was a bustle among the hearers. They were talking, shuffling, consulting. The time for commencing operations had arrived. The friendly Irishman had "mounted guard" stick in hand, seated close to the Minister. His eagle eye detected the hostile movement. It was time to "show power." He raised the stick, swore at the rioters, and ordered them not to disturb the good minister. The effect was electrical. It snapped the chain that held them. It unloosed the hounds of war. They were on their feet in an instant, ready to pounce upon their prey like so many tigers. But they were arrested. Instantly, calmly, but firmly Mr. Dimock desired his friend to put away the stick and give himself no trouble about the rest. He added force to his advice by quietly taking hold of the stick and resting his weight upon it. He had a powerful wrist, and he so secured the weapon that it could not be very easily wrenched into his service. He put the sword up into its sheath. The astonished foes were confounded, disappointed, and again fixed to their seats. The ser-

mon proceeded. The sword of the spirit, two edged and sharp, was drawn and wielded by the hand of a master. Terrible were the wounds it inflicted. The preacher feels deeply. How could it be otherwise? Emotion choked his utterance, and tears fell thick and fast. He reasoned with them of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." He warned the wicked to turn from his evil way. It was their danger not his own, which moved him. "As though God did beseech them by him, he prayed them in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God. Brave man of God! I think I see thee, the open Bible before thee, facing thy foes and keeping them at bay, thy left hand extended in earnest pleadings, and thy right hand holding back the "dogs of war." What a subject for a painter! But I can in substance give part of the sermon. "The Saviour now stands at the door of your hearts and knocks." But remember the tables will soon be turned. If you refuse to let him in, what will you do in that awful day? It will be your turn then to plead. "Lord, Lord, open unto us," will be your despairing cry! O can you endure the thoughts of being shut out from his presence to all eternity. When you see those fearful flames flashing in your face, and hear the sentence, "depart ye cursed." Oh! how your poor hearts will bleed at the recollection of such a neglected opportunity as the present! May the Lord have mercy on your precious souls.

Dear readers, depend upon it, that is the way to "fight," formidable weapons those tears, those prayers, those meek appeals. Well might the apostle exclaim, "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God." Glorious warfare! It was fighting a good fight. I would there were more such fighting in the world. It was "war on Christian principles," and no mistake. Could they teach him? No indeed! Not a dog could move his tongue against him. Not a hand could be laid upon him. For "to the mountain was full of horses of fire, and chariots of fire round about Elsha." Even Moloch's king could not have breasted such a battery as that. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you," and so will his emissaries. Poor Moloch made his escape, followed by his train. "We have heard enough," he exclaimed, "let us go." The victory was won. The foe had been literally driven from the field. The "war on Christian principles" had prevailed. Mr. Dimock was left to finish out his sermon to the half-dozen who composed the remainder of the audience—the friendly Irishman who might now resume the control of his stick, a solitary sailor, and the members of the family. The sermon, I take it, was short. Not of such formidable dimensions as those to which brother Nutter's good natured hearers used to listen to with such marvellous tranquillity in those palmy days of cowhide boots, homespun gowns, meeting houses without clapboards or stoves, and a handful of meal in the barrel! Before the friends at the "farms," to whom word had been sent, had arrived, all was over, and the blessing pronounced. They had been anticipated by half an hour. The Minister met them at the door, "you have arrived too late," said he, "for the meeting; but I trust you will not be too late at mercy's gate." He proceeded to converse with them individually upon the concerns of their souls. Suddenly there was an interruption. Two fierce looking fellows were seen coming down the hill from the tavern on the run, seeming bent on mischief. They were two of the party for whose special benefit the service had been held.

Mr. Dimock threaded his way through the group, went up to the foremost, laid his hand upon him, and kindly spoke to him of "Jesus and the Resurrection." The poor fellow stood as one petrified and transfixed to the spot and listened attentively to the exhortation. The other turned on his heel and fled, shouting at the top of his voice, "He's got him! he's got him!" But whether he meant that the man had got the minister, or the minister the man, was never ascertained. No one could however doubt what the fact was in the case. As soon as he was released, the poor fellow walked slowly back to the tavern whence he came, a wiser, if not a better man. It was afterwards ascertained, that on re-assembling at the tavern, some such enquiries had been made, as were made once in a case somewhat similar. Such as, "why have you not brought him?" and answers were returned somewhat like those of the Jewish officers, "Never man spake like this man." It was agreed, unanimously, that no violence could be committed upon the person of so good a

man. But might he not be brought up to the house without violence? It was to test this question that the two had returned. They were to be "treated" if they succeeded. A gallon of gun, was, I believe, if they succeeded in fetching him up, to be the reward. But it could not be done. Mr. D. had taken the best course for self-defence. O could the world be persuaded to "go and do likewise," what woes and miseries would be prevented! "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" in every sense. So far as christianity prevails, wars must cease. And, bear in mind that public bodies and nations are composed of private individuals. The principles of Christianity must control us in all states, situations and relations, or we ignore this altogether.

But my story is not yet ended. The effects of the "war spirit," was illustrated on that memorable day, as those of the "peace principles." In returning to his home it was necessary for Mr. Dimock to pass the tavern. Mr. Hubley and the Irishman accompanied him, the latter still grasping his cudgel. One of the rowdies put his head out of the window and addressed them in obscene and insulting language. "I cannot stand that," said the Irishman, "my blood boils to be revenged." The others remonstrated but he would not listen, and returned to try the potency of the "war principle," of which he was a little embodiment. They met him as he approached brandishing his weapon, and he levelled them right and left. "He'd teach them to insult decent and peaceable people, and disturb divine worship." In their broken heads and bloody noses, they would reap the fruits of their doing. But alas! the odds were against him, as they were against Napoleon at Waterloo, after Blücher had come up. The stronger force, as in that case, crushed the weaker. The heaviest battalions gained, as usual, the victory, irrespective of the worse or better cause. The poor fellow was beaten almost to death. Such is the war spirit. Such is war. Such are its results. God grant that it may cease!

LETTER FROM LONDON.

Visit to a Jewish Synagogue.

One morning after wandering our way through narrow streets, lanes and suspicious looking courts, (with of course a rum shop in one corner of it—where there is misery and vice, we generally find one of these cess pools)—which are to be found in abundance in the city of London, we arrived in St. Mary's Axe. In a court leading from thence we saw a substantial looking building, rather too good for the place where it is built, which upon enquiry, I found to be the Synagogue we were in search of. It belongs to a reformed sect, differing a little from the old school. On entering, we were shown to a seat by one standing in the area. I was very much surprised to see all the men with their hats on, and really felt very strange, it being something singular in a place of worship. The building is finished inside with great taste. At the farther end from the door there is a splendid dome, beautifully decorated; in the centre there is a desk where sat four or five Rabbies, as I suppose, because one of their number led the devotional exercises. The ladies are not allowed to sit with the gentlemen down stairs, nor do they take part in the exercises. They are by themselves looking on from the gallery. A Bible was handed me, when I found they were reading in their own tongue, the Law given by Moses. I could not help feeling while viewing the congregation, that I was in the midst of intellectual worshippers. There was something in their appearance that made me feel very solemn. We soon did their adieu, in order to visit the old sect, who, my conductor informed me, appear to be more devotional, and seem to enjoy their religious exercises much more than their stiff brethren in Great St. Helens. After making a few more windings in this maze, we found out the synagogue in Duke street. My conductor being well acquainted with the city, there was no necessity for me to enquire my way of any of those gentlemen dressed in blue, with metal buttons on their coats, from whom I should probably have received a reply in this way, "Do you see that yellow house?" "Yes." "Well, turn there and take the third turning on the left—first on the right—second on the left—straight on and then enquire again," and this gabbled over in double quick time. This building is constructed similarly to the former, only not quite so modern in style, and more gorgeous. At one end a Prayer is inscribed on a tablet on behalf of the Royal family. All round the front of the gallery there are passages of Scripture inscribed in golden letters. On entering this place I felt that my friend was quite right in the statement made respecting the devotion of the congregation. The Rabbi who led the exercise possessed a rich mellow voice. The singing sounded to my ears more like chanting, the whole congregation joined, which very often, as a sort of response, it peculiar sensation on my mind. I felt these ancient people of God who