

The Christian Visitor.

A FAMILY NEWSPAPER: DEVOTED TO RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

REV. I. E. BILL,

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

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

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Specimen of the Preaching of Christmas Evens.

THE DEMONIC OF GADARA.

Luke viii. 26-29.

"And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils a long time, and wore no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs."

Imagine that this demoniac was not only an object of pity, but he was really a terror in the country. So terrific was his appearance, so dreadful, and hideous his screams, so formidable, frightful, and horrid his wild career, that all the women in that region were so much alarmed that none of them dared go to market.

And what made him still more terrible was the place of his abode: it was not a city, where some attention might be paid to order and decorum (though he would sometimes ramble into the city as in this case.) It was not in a town, or village, or any house whatever, where assistance might be obtained in case of necessity; but it was among the tombs, and in the wilderness—not far, however, from the turnpike road. No one could tell but that he might jump at them, like a panther, and scare them to death. The gloominess of the place made it more awful and solemn. It was among the tombs—where, in the opinion of some, all witches, corpse-candles, and hobgoblins abode.

One day, however, Mary was determined that no such nuisance should be suffered in the country of the Gadarenes. The man must be clothed, though he was mad and crazy.

And if he should at any future time strip himself, tie up his clothes in a bundle, throw them into the river, and tell them to go to see Abraham, he must be tied and taken care of. Well, this was all right—no sooner said than done. But, so soon as the fellow was bound, he broke the bands asunder, and could not be tamed.

By this time, the devil became offended with the Gadarenes, and in a puff he took the demoniac away, and drove him into the wilderness. He thought the Gadarenes had no business to interfere and meddle with his property for he had possession of the man. And he knew that "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." It is probable that he wanted to send him home; for there was no knowing what might happen now-a-days. But there was too much matter about him to send him as he was: therefore, he thought the best plan would be to persuade him to commit suicide by cutting his throat. But here Satan was at a nonplus—his rope was too short. He could not turn executioner himself, as that would not have answered the design he has in view, when he waxes people to commit suicide; for the act would have been his own, and not the man's. The poor demoniac, therefore, must go about to hunt a sharp stone, or any thing that he could get. He might have been in search of such an article, when he returned from the wilderness into the city, whence he came when he met the Son of God.

Jesus commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. And when he saw Jesus he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee torment me not.

Here is the devil's confession of faith. The devils believe and tremble, while men make a mock of sin, and sport on the brink of eternal ruin. To many of the human race, Christ appears as a root out of dry ground. They see in him neither form nor comeliness, and there is no beauty in him that they should desire him. Some said he was the carpenter's son, and would not believe in him; others said he had a devil, and that it was through Beelzebub the chief of the devils, that he cast out devils; some cried out, Let him be crucified—let him be crucified; and others said, Let his blood be on us and on our children. As the Jews would not have him to reign over them; so many, who call themselves Christians, say that he is a mere man; as such, he has no right to rule over their consciences, and demand their obedience, adoration, and praise. But Diabolus knows better—Jesus is the Son of God most high.

Many of the children of the devil, whose work they do, differ very widely from their father in their sentiments respecting the person of Christ.

Jesus commanded the legion of unclean spirits to come out of the man. They knew that out they must go. But they were like Scotchmen—very unwilling to return to their own country. They would rather go into hogs' skins than to their own country. And he suffered them to go into the herd of swine. Methinks that one of the men who fed the hogs, kept a better look out than the rest of them, and said, "What will the hogs? Look sharp there, boys—keep them in—make good use of your whips. Why don't you run? Why, I declare, one of them has gone over the cliff! There goes another! Drive them back!" Never was there such a running and whipping, and hallooing; but down go the hogs, before they are aware of it. One of them said, "They are all gone!" "No, sure, not all gone into the sea!" "Yes, every one of them the black leg and all! They are all drowned!—the devil is in them!—What shall we do now?—what can we say to the owners?" "What can we say?" said another. "We must tell the truth—that is all about it. We did our best—all that is in our power. What could any man do more?"

So they went their way to the city, to tell the masters what had happened. "John, where are you going?" exclaimed one of the masters. "Sir, did you know the demoniac that was among the tombs there?" "Demoniac among the tombs! Where did you leave the hogs?" "That madman, sir—" "Madman!—Why do you come home without the hogs?" "That wild and furious man, sir, that mistress was afraid of so much—" "Why John, I ask you a plain and simple question—why don't you answer me? Where are the hogs?" "That man who was possessed of the devils, sir—" "Why sure enough, you are crazy—you look wild!—tell me your story, if you can, let it be what it may." "Jesus Christ, sir, has cast out the unclean spirits out of the demoniac; they are gone into the swine; and they are all drowned in the sea; for I saw the tail of the last one!" The Gadarenes went out to see what was done, and finding that it was even so, they were afraid, and besought Jesus to depart from them.

How awful must be the condition of those men who love the things of this world more than Jesus Christ!

The man out of whom the unclean spirits were cast, besought Jesus that he might be with him. But he told him to return to his own house, and show how great things God had done unto him. And he went his way and published throughout the whole city of Decapolis, how great things Jesus had done unto him. The act of Jesus casting out so many devils out of him, was sufficient to persuade him that Jesus was God as well as man.

I imagine I see him going through the city, crying—O yes! O yes! O yes!—Please to take notice of me, the demoniac among the tombs. I am the man who was a terror to the citizens of this place—that wild man who would wear no clothes, and that no man could bind. Here am I, now in my right mind. Jesus Christ, the friend of sinners, had compassion on me. He remembered when I was in my low estate—when there was no eye to pity, and no hand to save. He cast out the devils and redeemed my soul from destruction.

Most wonderful must have been the surprise of the people, to hear such proclamation. The ladies running to the windows, the shoemakers throwing their lasts one way and their awls another, running out to meet him and to converse with him, that they might be positive there was no imposition, and found it to be a fact that could not be contradicted. "O, the wonder of all wonders! Never was there such a thing!"—must, I think, be the general conversation.

And while they are talking and everybody having something to say, homeward goes the man. As soon as he comes in sight of the house, I imagine I see one of the children running in, and crying, "O, mother, father is coming—he will kill us all!" "Children come all into the house," says the mother.

"Let us fasten the doors. I think there is no sorrow like my sorrow!" says the broken hearted woman. "Are all the windows fastened, children?" "Yes, mother." "Mary my dear, come from the window—don't be standing there." "Why, mother, I can hardly believe it is father! That man is well-dressed!" "O yes, my dear child, it is your own father. I knew him by his walk the moment I saw him." Another child stepping to the window, says, "Why, mother, I never saw father coming home as he does to-day. He walks on the footpath and turns around the corner of the fence. He used to come towards the house as straight as a line, over fences, ditches, and hedges; and I never saw him walk as slow as he does now."

In a few moments, however, he arrives at the door of the house, to the great terror and consternation of all the inmates. He gently tries the door, and finds no admittance. He pauses a moment, steps towards the window, and says in a low, firm, and melodious voice, "My dear wife, if you will let me in there is no danger. I will not hurt you. I bring you glad tidings of great joy." The door is reluctantly opened, as it were between joy and fear.

Having deliberately seated himself, he says: "I am come to show you what great things God has done for me. He loved me with an eternal love. He redeemed me from the curse of the law and the threatenings of vindictive justice. He saved me from the power and the dominion of sin. He cast out the devils out of my heart, and made that heart, which was a den of thieves, the temple of the Holy Spirit. I cannot tell you how much I love the Saviour. Jesus Christ is the foundation of my hope, the object of my faith, and the centre of my affections. I can venture my immortal soul upon him. He is my best friend. He is altogether lovely—the chief among ten thousand. He is wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. There is enough in him to make a poor sinner rich, and a sinner happy. His flesh and blood is my food—his righteousness my wedding garment—and his blood is efficacious to cleanse me from all my sins. Through him I can obtain eternal life; for he is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person; in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He deserves my highest esteem and my warmest gratitude. Unto him who loved me with an eternal love, and washed me in his own blood, unto him be the glory, dominion, and power, for ever and ever! For he has

rescued my soul from hell! He took me out of the miry clay, and out of a horrible pit. He set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings, and put in my mouth a new song of praise and glory to him! Glory to him for ever!—Glory to God in the highest!—Glory to God for ever and for ever! Let the whole earth praise him!—Yea, let all the people praise him!"

It is beyond the power of the strongest imagination to conceive the joy and gladness of this family. The joy of the seafaring man delivered from shipwreck; the joy of a man delivered from a burning house; the joy of not being found guilty to a criminal at the bar; the joy of receiving pardon to a condemned malefactor; the joy of freedom to a prisoner of war, is nothing in comparison to the joy of him who is delivered from going down to the pit of eternal destruction. For it is a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

A Child's Eloquence.

We give the following as from Rev. Dr. Baker, of Texas:

During a revival in—, a sweet, little girl, named Sarah, went home full of what she had seen and heard. Sitting at table with the family, she asked her father, who had been to church, but was a very wicked man, whether he ever prayed. He did not like the question, and in a very angry manner replied, "It is your mother, or your aunt Sally, that put you up to that, my little girl." "No, papa," said the little creature, "the preacher said, all good people pray; and those who don't pray, ain't going to heaven. Pa, do you pray?" This was more than her father could stand, and in a rough way, he said, "Well, you and your mother, and your aunt Sally, may go your way, and I will go mine." "Pa," said the little creature, with sweet simplicity, "which way are you going?" This question pierced his heart. It flashed upon him that he was in the way to death. He started from his chair, burst into tears, and immediately began to cry for mercy. Within a few days he was a happy convert, and I believe will appear in heaven as a star in his little daughter's crown on rejoicing.

To Boys who have Sisters.

Boys, be kind to your sisters. You may live to be old, and never find such tender, loving friends as these sisters. Think how many things they do for you, how they love you in spite of all your ill-temper and rudeness, how thoughtful they are for your comfort; and be you thoughtful for theirs. Be ye ever ready to oblige them; to perform any little office for them that lies in your power. Think what you can do for them; and if they express a wish, be ready to gratify it, if possible. You do not know how much happiness you will find in so doing. I never yet knew a happy and respected man who was not in his youth kind to his sisters. There is a beautiful song which says—

Be kind to your sister—not many may know
The depth of true sisterly love;
The wealth of the ocean lies fathoms below
The surface that sparkles above."

Correspondence

Baptist Associations.—Their Vocation.

It is well for persons organized into bodies, civil, social, or religious, to examine, occasionally, first principles. By so doing we may often avoid doing work for repentance, and prevent confusion. This is exceedingly important in connection with our Associations.

As the time of the meeting of our associations is approaching, a few words on this subject may prepare us the better to discharge our duties, and secure peace and order in our meetings. Let us remember that the Association is only composed of ministers and delegates, who are members of the churches they represent. No other person has any right there, only by way of courtesy accorded to individuals, which favour is to be used by them for peace and not for contention.

Secondly, the business of the Association is exceedingly simple, when observed and pursued according to its legitimate nature and original design. It is, first, to receive and record in statistics, and otherwise, the true state of each church. Secondly, to counsel and advise with each other as churches, through the delegates, or otherwise, as occasion may require. Thirdly, to deliberate on the best measures to promote the general prosperity of the denomination in the land and world. Fourthly, to conduct the social and public worship of God, during the sessions of the body; for their own spiritual advantage and the edification of all in attendance with them.

If our Associations would strictly confine themselves to these duties, the meetings would be pleasant, and much more spiritual and promotive of the prosperity of Zion. Then would we oftener have to say, "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity—there the Lord commanded his blessing—even life forever more."

Secondly, the discipline of our churches is a very simple affair, as we have no synodical or conventional rules. We profess to follow the plain dictates of the Bible and common sense, and when these are strictly observed, there

is not much room for disagreement amongst us.

Our troubles, whether in the churches or in our Associations, come when we exhibit a disposition to copy after other denominations. This has especially been our trouble in the associations when they have undertaken to discipline church members, or to amend the discipline of the churches.

With such discipline the association has nothing to do, until a church has become so corrupt, that it has abandoned the principles of the gospel, in doctrine or practice. We believe in the independence of the churches; that the church being God's institution, and not the association, the trial of delinquent members devolves upon the former and not the latter.

In receiving accusations against churches, as corrupt, we must distinguish between what is clearly required or forbidden in the Word of God, and what is treated as indifferent or doubtful. In the two last cases, they are subjects of forbearance, and must be looked upon as matters of private opinion. We find in the gospel, reference to washing feet—laying on of hands—the kiss of charity—love-feasts; but like the distribution of property and abstaining from meats, they do not appear to be binding on the churches; and if so, they are not subjects of censure.

But such is not the case with the clearly defined doctrines and laws of God. The one class is to be contended for, and the other kept as delivered. But, even in this case, our own paraphrase or interpretation, or *ipse dixit*, is not to be set up by which to judge others. We must, for instance, believe and maintain the principle of the sovereign free grace of God in election, conversion, justification, sanctification, and final perseverance, not because they are our opinions, but because they are fully and clearly revealed in the gospel. But, the question whether the opinions and fine-spun inferences of Sublapsarians, is to be received as orthodox, we have nothing to do with. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

In cases of this kind brought into the church, or into the association, we have nothing to do, but to throw them out again, at once. If the Moderator would assume sufficient moral courage to refuse to entertain such questions, or complaints against ministers or others, he would save himself much perplexity and the church a great deal of contention.

Let us then remember, that an association is not an institution of Christ, or a lawful court to try errors of life or opinion; but that it is a union of churches, for friendly intercourse and advice; but that gospel discipline is a prerogative of the church, committed to her by Christ her King, and she, and she only, is responsible for the faithful discharge of its duties.

An association is bound to receive the delegates sent by the church; but when it is satisfactorily proved that she has lost her character as a Christian church, she must be dropped from the minutes of the association, as unworthy of fellowship.

Let our associations leave out all extraneous subjects to the churches, and expediter her proper business, and rebuke all who would rouse contentions and divisions; then may more time and energy be devoted to spiritual improvement of all present, when the revival of religion in the churches will follow these gatherings, as of old; and every Christian will esteem it a privilege to be there; and enjoy it as an emblem of the great association above. D. N.

HANTSPOUT, N. S., June 24.

The Central Nova Scotia Baptist Association has just closed its Session at this place. It commenced on Saturday last. Dr. Cramp was chosen Moderator. A goodly number of delegates had arrived on Saturday with the letters from the churches they represented. The letters were read and some preliminary business was transacted. On the Lord's day religious services were held at Hantsport, at Upper Falmouth, at Mount Denson, and at Lockhartville. The day was fine, the congregations large, and that part of the preaching heard by the writer was appropriate and good. The meeting house, at Hantsport, though recently enlarged, could not hold near all the people. Out door services were therefore held. The Association sermon was preached on Monday morning by Rev. J. Stephens from John, iv. 36.

The afternoon was devoted to the subject of Home Missions. It was resolved to form a General Missionary Society for the whole Province upon the model of yours of New Brunswick. Interesting addresses were delivered. Bro. H. Ross gave a thrilling account of his labors among the Gaelic population of Cape Breton. A constitution was presented for adoption, by the Committee on Home Missions. Their Report was received, a subscription opened, and a sufficient number to form the society, qualified themselves for membership, by subscriptions and dollars. On Tuesday the constitution was adopted, the Officers appointed and the Board held its first meeting.

It is supposed that the Eastern Association will concur in the measure, and the Western will do the same next year, and thus combine the energies of the whole denomination in the great work of Home Evangelization.

Since the division of our Association, the Home Mission cut up also into three portions, has been dwindling and crippled. A resuscitating has been earnestly called for. Mean-

while other organizations have sprung up, calling for distinct and separate patronage, such as the French Mission, the Gaelic Mission, &c, the object of which, as many believe came within the appropriate sphere of our Home Mission, and should never have been disjoined from it. What action the Board may take with reference to these Missions, remains to be seen; but the general impression of the brethren present, as gathered from their remarks, seemed to be, that as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made, these distinct organizations will all be merged in the Nova Scotia Baptist Home Missionary Society.

The Reports of the Education Society relating to the College and Academy, were presented on Tuesday. Both were represented as progressing favourably, and calling for increased confidence and support. Several interesting addresses were delivered on the subject of Education. To show with what perfect ease the College might be endowed to almost any extent of pounds, shillings, and pence, it was intimated that a small portion of the tobacco used by the Denomination would do it. Let them give up one-fifth, see if it would not amount to £2000. This is the interest of £33,333 6s. 8d, which it was stated would do for a few years at least, if they would hand it in for the Education of our sons and daughters, instead of puffing it away in smoke. The services of Brother Thomson, one of your New Brunswick ministers, have been secured as an agent to raise the endowment fund. A better man for the purpose could not have been selected. It was evident from his address that like the skillful angler, he would know where and how to cast his line. The inefficient and inexperienced are anxious to be on the ground early, and to get ahead of the rest. The man who understands his business walks on at his leisure.—He cares not though a dozen boys have been whipping the stream ahead of him; and they who had supposed they had cleared the waters are astonished to see his catch as he comes up. He has the largest number, and of the largest size. Thus may it be with our worthy Brother in his mission in behalf of Acadia College.

The Association was well attended. A good degree of harmony characterized the proceedings. There was one or two slight discords one or two strings got occasionally stretched beyond their proper degree of tension, a jar, which a faithful sketch cannot wholly pass over; but the harmony was in every case immediately restored, and we sang the union hymn, composed by the great and good Dr. Bawdson of Boston, at the close, with cheerful heart and voice, and we separated to meet again at Berwick, (D. V.) on the third Saturday of June, 1858.

A MESSENGER.

York County Quarterly Meeting.

The above meeting was held according to appointment with the Baptist church, at Rushagornish on the second Friday in June: Ministers in attendance, in connection with the meeting, Revs. T. Sanders, Tozer, Guilford, and Magee. Delegates, Rev. Mr. Rigby, from Carleton, and Rev. I. Wallace, from Queens' and Sunbury. Also, J. G. Harvey, licentiate, and brother B. Jewett, a worthy member of the Baptist church, Mack-naquack, who has lately commenced preaching. These all laboured faithfully in proclaiming the gospel, and in prayer meetings. We trust the solemn appeals made will not be lost. The church in this place, though few in number and without any pastor, have endeavoured to maintain the worship of God among them. Of late they have been supplied with preaching by several young men studying at the seminary. There appear to be deep religious impressions upon the minds of many in this locality. The word of God has found a lodgement in many hearts. May it yield an abundant harvest! The claims of Home Missions were presented, on Monday at four o'clock, P. M. Sermon on the occasion by Bro. Wallace, and earnest addresses by other brethren. Meeting exceedingly interesting, collections in all amounted to £4 18s. 4d. Since this auxiliary was organized it has, under God, been the means of sending the gospel to the poor in districts where they were not able to support it, and the success attending brother Harvey's Mission at Springfield and Caverhill, together with the earnest appeal from the newly organized church in that place, induced the Board to continue the labours of brother Harvey for two months in the same field. Bro. Saunders is appointed to a four weeks' mission at Bear Island. This is a field that has long been neglected by the Baptists. We feel it our duty to supply such places with the gospel. Brother Tozer is also appointed to upper Keswick and Cardigan for the term of four weeks. These interesting fields have been crying come over and help us. Many destitute settlements, far back in the wilderness, are eager to hear the gospel and will do what they can to support it among them. We feel deeply anxious for their well-fare, and hope the word proclaimed may lead many to repentance.

It is our painful duty to report that intemperance is prevailing in many sections of this county. This melancholy fact induced the meeting to adopt the following resolution:—

Resolved, That this Quarterly Meeting earnestly recommend to all the churches it comprises the importance of strictly observing the principles of "Total Abstinence" in

their discipline; especially would we urge upon our brethren who may be called upon to assist in the organization of new churches, the desirableness of having such churches organized upon principles of Total Abstinence. We are decidedly of the opinion that the example of tipping members is highly prejudicial to the cause of Christ, and consider that they should be faithfully disciplined. We further recommend that if there be any individuals found in our connexion who may be engaged in the ruinous traffic of ardent spirits, that they be excluded with the least possible delay.

Resolved, That we hold our next Quarterly Meeting in the Baptist Chapel at Bear Island, on the second Friday in September, at four o'clock, P. M.

BENJAMIN HUGHES, Secretary.

FREDERICTON, June 28th, 1857.

Correspondence from the far West.

MONTICELLO, WRIGHT COUNTY, M. T., June 15th, 1857.

DEAR BROTHER BILL,—I suppose that you and many of the readers of your welcome "Visitor," begin to think that it is time I gave some account of myself as to my whereabouts. Then passing by the many interesting incidents connected with my journey, which would take all the spare room on your paper for several weeks, allow me to say that I arrived safely here after a voyage of nine days, which might be accomplished in seven days. Upon my arrival I found the little church in this place anxiously waiting my appearance, and not a little pleased when they learned that I was here. And I assure you that I was glad to find in this country of speculation and worldly-mindedness, a people so devout, spiritual and zealous in the cause of God.

But so far as my observations have extended in travelling through this Territory, this place in these respects is an exception. A more moral, intelligent, or religious community than Monticello is rarely to be found in any of our Eastern Towns or Villages. We have no grog shops here, but we have Sunday which is seldom the case in many of the towns on the Mississippi, and as to natural location, there is no place that I ever saw, East or West, that fills my eye with so many attractive beauties as does Monticello. In fact I think there is no spot but that would be delighted with its scenery, it is situated on the West bank of the Mississippi River. The town is built on a level piece of Prairie that reaches back about half a mile, and then there is a rise of about twenty feet with ravines sufficient to run streets back without any difficulty. After you rise the bluff above described you then find yourself upon a level piece of Prairie that extends back some five miles; after which it gives way to the big woods. The soil is of a good quality, by breaking it up in the spring which is not so good as the fall, it will produce without much further labour a better crop of any kind of vegetables than any of our most highly cultivated lands in the East, the St. John River interval not excepted.

But this year, the best portion of this Territory labours under a rather calamitous disadvantage with regard to its farming prospects. Last fall there came an army of grasshoppers from the still farther west, supposed to be the same as troubled the Mormons at Utah; and they ate up everything that was not ripe, and deposited their eggs in the ground, and this spring they have come out in swarms, and are devouring everything as soon as it comes through the ground. They are principally confined to within ten to twenty miles back from each bank of the Mississippi River.

Back of that distance there are none, and the crops in those back regions are looking well. I have made a town claim of three hundred and twenty acres, and there are none of them within fifteen or twenty miles of it. If I had the means, and was not otherwise engaged, I could make a fortune by putting in a crop there this year. However, the prospect is that they will leave this summer, as they are not apt to stay long in one place, and are now on the move. But so far it has caused considerable stagnation in the business of the country, and no doubt, but some of the poorer emigrants will see hard times next winter in consequence of it. With this exception, there is nothing to discourage any one from coming to this country; and this, I hope, will not last beyond this year. However, I believe it is for the good of the country, at least, for speculation had become so rife, and the excitement to become rich that the state of things here was assuming a fearful aspect; but this visitation is teaching many that there is a Supreme Ruler that measures out to men their possessions, and that we are dependent upon him for all our daily mercies. I, as one, and I think there are many more, who feel to bless Him for the important lesson.

I have made arrangements to serve with the people here for one year; our meetings well attended, and I hope, ere long, to see some manifestations of converting grace.—At present I am rather busily engaged in building a house for myself. My health is good and I am happy and contented; the country meets my expectations, so I am not at all disappointed in my calculations of it. If any of our friends in the Province wish to change their place of residence for another country, I can recommend this as one that