

# CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

"HOLD FAST THE FORM OF SOUND WORDS"—2d Timothy, i. 13.

VOL. XXXII.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1879.

NO. 49

## THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR,

The largest Religious Weekly in the Maritime Provinces.

IS PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY

AT

No. 99 GERMAIN STREET,

Saint John, N. B.

Price \$2.00 per annum in advance, or 50 cts. extra if not paid within the year.

Rev. J. E. HOPPER, A.M.,

Editor and Proprietor.

All Correspondence for the paper must be addressed to CHRISTIAN VISITOR OFFICE, No. 99 Germain St., St. John, N. B. All payments or remittances for the CHRISTIAN VISITOR, from May 1st, '78, are to be made to REV. J. E. HOPPER, No. 99 Germain Street, St. John.

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### CHRISTIAN VISITOR OFFICE,

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From the Athenæum.

## Reminiscences of European Study and Travel.—No. 11.

BY PROF. D. M. WELTON.

About half way from Cologne to Bingen is Coblenz, the most beautifully situated town on the Rhine, standing at the confluence of the Moselle and the Rhine, and being the focus of the commerce of the Moselle, the Rhine, and the Lahn.

Just opposite to the influx of the Moselle rises the majestic fortress of

EHRENBREITSTEIN,

justly termed the Gibraltar of the Rhine. It is situated on a precipitous rock 387 ft. above the Rhine, and never succumbed but twice to an enemy, once when taken by stratagem, and once when reduced by famine. On each of these occasions it fell into the hands of the French, first in 1631 and second, after being four times besieged, in 1799. On getting possession of it at the last of these dates, the French increased its impregnability by additional intrenchments, but in consequence of the Peace of Lunéville they blew it up and evacuated it in 1801. This method of quitting the place proved, however, rather costly to themselves. By the terms of the treaty subsequently made at the Second Peace of Paris they came under obligation to pay 15 million francs to the Prussian Government for the restoration of the fortifications. During the ten years beginning with 1816 the Prussians spent 8 million dollars on this great stronghold, and it is extremely doubtful if the French ever succeed in taking it again.

A little above Coblenz on the opposite side of the river is the town of Oberlahnstein, overlooked by the picturesque

CASTLE OF LAHNCK.

This castle has been recently restored; and though not the most interesting of these old structures, it yet calls up some of the pleasantest of my Rhine memories. On the present occasion I contented myself with simply looking at it from the deck of the steamer.

But nearly two years after I left the steamer at this point for the purpose of going through and around it. The path leading to it winds in a zigzag direction by successive flights of steps cut in the solid rock, and is somewhat difficult of ascent; but the summit once gained commands a view a thousand times repaying the toilsome climbing. Standing on the edge of the high elevation on which the castle is built, I could look immediately down upon Oberlahnstein at the base of the mountain. On my immediate right flowed the Lahn to join the Rhine on my immediate left. Directly opposite the castle rose the *Allerheiligenberg* with its pilgrimage chapel. At the confluence of the Lahn and Rhine could be seen the Romanesque Church of St. John, and beyond it Niederlahnstein; farther down the river the Island of *Oberwerth* with its large dwelling house—once a convent; in the background the conspicuous fortress of Ehrenbreitstein;

opposite to it Fort Constantine, and between them Coblenz. Seldom have human eyes surveyed a more charming scene. Scarcely a single object necessary to the perfect landscape was wanting. And to crown the whole, jutting headland and river, convent and castle, city and fortress were suffused and transfigured in the mellow splendor of the setting sun.

About seven in the evening we arrived at BINGEN.

The beautiful poem of Caroline Norton, called "Bingen on the Rhine," in which she gives touching expression to the thoughts of the German soldier dying far from friends and home, had made me interested beforehand in this place. Our stay here, however, was very short. After a hasty inspection of the chapel of St. Roch, whose August festival is so charmingly described by Goethe, we got on board the cars for

FRANKFORT ON THE MAIN,

twenty miles further on; or, as might be said, *Frankfort on the Rhine*, for it is situated at the confluence of these two rivers. Frankfort dates from the time of Charlemagne. In 794 that emperor held a convocation of bishops and dignitaries of the empire in the royal residence from which the city takes its name (*Franconofort*—ford of the Franks). Louis the Pious granted the town certain privileges in 822, and from the time of Louis the German, who frequently resided here, it gradually rose to importance. At the present time it is a city of great wealth and of extensive commercial relations, the head House of the Rothschilds being here.

The principal attractions of the city to the tourist are the monuments of Gutenberg, Goethe, and Schiller, the Kaisersaal, Dannecker's Ariadne, and the Palm Garden. Our comparatively short stay in the city—for we were hurrying onward to Leipzig,—forbade us giving as much attention to these several objects as we wished to give them, but my own desires in this respect were gratified on two subsequent occasions, when I passed through the city to and from Paris.

THE MONUMENT OF GUTENBERG,

almost the first object which arrests the eye on entering the town from the Railway station, is very fine. It was erected in 1858, and consists of a galvano-plastic group on a sandstone pedestal. The central figure with the types in the left hand is Gutenberg, on his right Fust, on his left Schoffer. On the frieze are portrait-heads of thirteen celebrated printers, with Caxton the Englishman among them. In the four niches beneath are the arms of the four towns where printing was first practiced, namely, Mainz, Frankfort, Venice, and Strassburg. On four separate pedestals are Theology, Poetry, Natural Science, and Industry. The heads of four animals, which serve as water-spouts, indicate the four quarters of the globe and the universal diffusion of the invention. How great the indebtedness of the world to the art of printing, and what astonishing improvement has been made in it since Gutenberg's day! He used none but wooden or cut metal types, and the earliest printed edition of the Bible which appeared in 1450 took seven or eight years for its completion. Now the London *Times* is so rapidly set up and issued that speeches delivered on the evening of one day in the House of Commons may be read at the breakfast tables of the people on the morning of the next day.

There is reason, however, to suspect that the multiplication of books becomes a means of tempting not a few persons to read too much and consequently, to think too little. If fewer books were read, and of those read, if more were thoroughly digested, there would doubtless be less of intellectual dyspepsy.

THE MONUMENT OF GOETHE,

erected in 1844, constitutes the chief embellishment of the *Goethe-Platz*. The poet holds a wreath of laurel in his left hand, and the reliefs on the pedestal are illustrative of his literary life.

The House in which Goethe was born has many visitors. It bears an inscription recording his birth on August 28th, 1749. The arms over the door, consisting of three lyres placed obliquely and a star, were chosen by Goethe's father on his marriage with the daughter of the Senator Textor, from their resemblance to a horse shoe, the grandfather of the poet having been a farrier. In the attic of this house he lived from 1773 to 1775 and wrote his *Gods* and *Werther*; and in them also occurred many of the adventures which make his biography so interesting.

## Continuous Sin—Permanent Consequences.

Under irreversible natural law there may be in the soul a permanent failure to attain a predominant and enduring desire to be holy. Go to India, open the *Blagvat Gheeta*, a Hindoo book which Emerson greatly reveres; look into the subtlest thought of the Hindoo philosophy, and you will find these two searching sentences, which are all I need in reply to any criticisms I have heard:

1. "Repeated sin impairs the judgment."
2. "He whose judgment is impaired sins repeatedly."

By irreversible natural law all character tends to find permanence, good or bad. In the nature of things a final permanence can come but once. The inveteracy of sin! Have you ever heard of that? Out of its acknowledged inveteracy will not easily arise its evanescence. Out of its prolongation comes its inveteracy, and out of its inveteracy may come its permanence. The self-propagating power of habit, acting in the sphere of the holy affections, places the nature of things on the side of righteousness.

"Every man," says the Spanish proverb, "is the son of his own deeds." "Every action," says Richter, "becomes more certainly an eternal mother than it is an eternal daughter." These are the irreversible laws according to which all character tends to final permanence, good or bad.

Under irreversible natural law there may exist in the universe eternal sin. It is not the best way in which to teach the truth of future punishment, to say that a man is punished forever and forever for the sins of that hand's-breadth of duration we call time. If the soul does not repent of these with contrition, and not merely with attrition, the nature of things forbids its peace. But the Biblical and the natural truth is, that prolonged dissimilarity of feeling with God may end in eternal sin. If there is eternal sin, there will be eternal punishment. Final permanence of character, under the laws of judicial blindness and the self-propagating power of sin, is the truth emphasized by both God's word and his works.

While sin continues, God cannot forgive it without making the sinner worse. In this city, six thousand people were told the other evening, with great depth of thought, that if a child deliberately lies, and you forgive the child before he has exhibited any sorrow for the act, you make the child worse. That is, indeed, a very simple instance of the moral law, but in scientific minds there is no doubt that the moral law is equally universal with the physical. If you will measure a little arc of the physical law, you can measure the whole circle.

If I were to take a flight into space, I should not run beyond the knowledge that I have acquired here of the law of gravitation. That law is one in all worlds, so far as science knows. So, too, if I understand the properties of light here, I understand them in Orion and the Pleiades. A good terrestrial text-book on light or gravitation would be of service in the North Star. The universality and the unity of law make our earth, although but an atom, immensity itself in its revelations of truth. Now, if I know that a man has deliberately lied to me, I cannot here under the moral law, forgive him before he repents without making him worse. If I know that, then there is reason to believe that God cannot, in the nature of things, forgive a free agent that has incurred personal demerit by the choice of wrong motives, till he has repented, without making that agent worse. The nature of things, gentlemen, it is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. God cannot give the wicked two chances without subjecting the good to two risks. Self-evident truth shows that man is free. Self-evident truth proves that man may attain a final permanence of character, good or bad, and in that state not lose freedom of will. This may occur in the best possible universe, in which all things will of course work together for good to the good, and therefore, of necessity, for evil to the evil.

In the heavens of the soul there ride unquenchable constellations, which assert that we alone are to blame if we do what conscience says we ought not to do. We

are just as sure of the fact that we and only we are to blame when we do what conscience pronounces wrong as we are of our own existence. Our demerit is a self-evident fact. All men take such guilt for granted. We know that we are responsible as surely as we know that we have the power of choice. We know both facts from intuition. Our existence we know only by intuition, and by that same axiomatic evidence we know our freedom. How does sin originate in us? By a bad free choice. Just so it originated in the universe. But God brought us into existence. Yes and he maintains us in existence. Very well; but the axioms of self-evident truth prove that he has given to us free will. The ocean floats the piratical vessels; the sea breeze fills the sails of the pirate; but neither the ocean nor the sea breeze is to blame for piracies.—*Joseph Cook*.

For the Visitor

## "His Appearing and His Kingdom."

No. 10.

Many persons have been brought up in the belief that the promise "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord," (Hab. ii. 14; Isaiah xi. 9), means that all nations and tribes will hear and believe the gospel; that such passages as Ezek. xxxvi. 8-38, taken in connection with Rom. xi. 25, etc., are prophetic of the conversion of the Jews, after the general evangelization of the Gentiles; and that all this is to take place before the second coming of Christ. They suppose the Bible teaches this, but that this is "mere theory," may be proved both negatively and positively. The first two propositions are only examples of the symbolical method of interpretation,—or at least this may be said of the second. A plain prediction of the restoration of the Israelites to their own land is understood as "fortelling in figurative language," their conversion to Christianity. It is a wonder that in this, as in many other passages, "Israel" is not taken to signify the Church, and the land of Canaan to be only a symbol for heaven.

The negative proof of the incorrectness of the theory is that the Scriptures nowhere indicate such a sequence of events. Is the doctrine to be found in the 11th chapter of Isaiah, or the 35th, or the 49th, or the 72nd Psalm, or the 4th of Micah, or in any of the passages commonly deemed most appropriate to be read at missionary meetings? Not one of them says anything of the kind. Who will bring forward proof to the contrary? It cannot be done. That the Lord Jesus Christ will be king over all the earth,—that all nations will serve him and call him blessed,—that there will be joy and gladness, and peace and goodwill among men,—that the earth will be filled with the glory of God,—all this and much more that is well fitted to make the Christian rejoice in hope, is clearly foretold. But that our Lord will come again to the earth and set up his kingdom before all these things are fulfilled, is just as plainly to be learned from the prophetic word, ("to which ye do well that ye take heed." Read carefully 2. Peter i. 16-21.)

"When the Son of Man comes will he, find the faith on the earth?" Luke xviii. 8.) No, not on the part of mankind in general for "as they were in the days before the flood, eating and drinking marrying and giving in marriage, and knew not until the flood came, so shall be also the coming of the Son of Man." Some of those then living will be "taken" up out of the world, to be at rest with all the saved; while others will be left in the world to have their portion with the unbelievers, (Matt. xxiv. 37-42 2 Thess. i. 7-10). Instead of a rapid growth of true religion in the world until all shall know the Lord, we are led to expect in the latter days, an unprecedented development of iniquity. (See 2 Tim. iii. 13; 2 Thess. ii. 3-12; Rev. xiii. 4-14, etc.) "When they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory," all the tribes of the earth, far from being ready to welcome him as their long expected king, will mourn and wail because of him in despairing terror. (Matt. xxiv. 30; Rev. i. 7.)

Let those who desire further proof read Acts iii. 17-21. Peter called upon his un-

believing countrymen to repent and turn so that the Lord might send forth Jesus Christ (the second time), who was before appointed for them, but who must remain in heaven until the set time for the restoration of all things,—the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. That period is commonly called the Millennium, (see Isa. lxx. 17-25.) Now how can we suppose that the second advent of Christ will be deferred till after the Millennium, while it is said that he is to be in Heaven until that time?

Again, the belief in the Millennium—"the thousand years of peace"—is largely based upon Rev. xx. 4-7, where we are told that certain will live and reign with Christ a thousand years; and we learn from Rev. v. 10; Is. xxiv. 23; Mic. iv. 7; Rev. ii. 26-27; 1 Cor. vi. 2; Ps. ii. 8, 9; Dan. vii. 18, 22-27, and other passages, that Christ and the redeemed will reign on the earth. Surely then they will come down to the earth before they can reign on the earth, (Zech. xiv. 5; 1 Thess. iii. 13; Jude 14.) "Blessed are the meek," we are told, "for they shall inherit the earth." (Mat. v. 5; Ps. xxxvii. 9, 11, 22, 29, 34.) May we be of the number.

LUKE.

Dec. 3, 1879.

### Items of Interest.

A Philadelphian has offered to give \$50,000 towards paying off the indebtedness of the various Baptist churches in that city provided the \$200,000 which they owe in the aggregate shall be provided for.

Mr. L. G. Heilmer, a convert from Catholicism, has been ordained to the pastorate of the First German Baptist Church of Pittsburg.

In all, forty-nine Afghans have been hanged for complicity in the massacre of the English Embassy.

In Rockford, Ill., all blinds and screens have been removed, by order of the authorities, from drinking saloons, so that the public can see what is going on within.

The *Missionary Herald* counts up over \$3,000,000 given to the missionary enterprises of the Presbyterians, Episcopal, Baptist, Wesleyan and Congregational churches by only a dozen givers within the past year.

Mr. Spurgeon's health is far from good. On a recent Sunday he showed a lameness in walking and during a part of the services rested one knee upon a chair. He will probably go to Mentone again this season, but he has decided to remain a month longer at his post in London before doing so.

President Robinson, of Brown University, recently said at the Sabbath Convention: "The pulpit sustains a relation to the national life here in America such as is shown in no other nation. It must be relieved of some of its work. It is idle to expect two sermons. Few men can preach two sermons a Sunday worth listening to."

The Mennonites, as is well known, hold to close communion. Their reasons for so doing are given in their organ, the *Herald of Truth*. They believe that those who commune together should be of one mind and one faith. Their objections in communing with members of other denominations are: 1st. They uphold war. 2d. They indulge in the pride and fashion of the world. 3d. They swear oaths. 4th. They belong to secret societies. 5th. They defend infant baptism.

The Romanists are sending missionaries promptly into Afghanistan, three having left the Roman Catholic college near London, for this "arduous and untried field of apostolic labor."

The Scriptures have already been translated into no less than two hundred and fifty tongues. One of the latest has been made by the Rev. John Ross into the language of the Corea, a country to which the new native church at Japan has resolved to send a missionary.

The trivial round, the common task—  
Will give us all we ought to ask—  
Room to deny ourselves; a road  
To bring us daily nearer to God.