

The Christian Visitor.

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

VOL. XXXII.

SAINT JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 1879.

NO. 12.

THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR,

The largest Religious Weekly in the Maritime Provinces,

IS PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY

AT

No. 85 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. 85 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. 85 Germain Street, St. John.

THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR,

As the representative paper of a large and growing denomination, is a most

VALUABLE MEDIUM FOR ADVERTISING.

It circulates, more or less, in all the Provinces of the Dominion and United States.

For special terms and yearly contracts apply at the

CHRISTIAN VISITOR OFFICE,

No. 85 Germain Street, ST. JOHN, N. B.

Poetry.

The Refiner.

'Tis sweet to think that he who tries

The silver takes his seat

Beside the fire which purifies,

Less too intense a heat;

Raised to consume the base alloy,

The precious metal, too destroy.

'Tis good to think how well he knows

The silver's powers to bear

The ordeal through which it goes;

And that with skill and care

He'll take it from the fire when fit,

With his own hands to polish it.

'Tis blessedness to know that he

The piece he has begun

Will not forsake till he can see

The gracious work well done—

An image by its brightness shown.

The perfect likeness of his own

But ah! how much of earthly mold,

Dark relics of the mine,

Lost from the ore, must he behold!

How long must he refine,

Ere in the silver he can trace

The faint resemblance of his face!

Thou great Refiner! sit thou by

Thy purpose to fulfil;

Moved by thine hand, beneath thine eye

And melted at thy will.

Oh! may thy work for ever shine

Reflecting beauty pure as thine.

is Sinai Extinct.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.

We have just laid down the fascinating

biography of the late Dr. Eadie of Scot-

land—the erudite commentator, and one

of the most robust Scotchmen of his time.

The Dr. describes a wonderful night which

he spent at the foot of Mount Sinai during

a protracted thunderstorm. For hours

the whole atmosphere was ablaze with

lightning and the ancient mountain roared

as if the chariots of Jehovah were

coursing through its granite pinnacles. It

was a most vivid reproduction of that

scene when there were thunders and light-

nings on the summit, and all Israel waited,

trembling in the camp beneath.

As we read the striking narrative the

thought arose in our mind, Oh that the

people of our times could be made to hear

more distinctly the solemn voices of Sinai,

uttering forth the sacred authority of law,

the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the

sure retribution of a wrath to come! Never

was there a time when there was a more

urgent necessity of preaching God's holy

law in all its scope of righteous demand

and just penalty. Never was there a time

when the popular conscience needed a

more thorough toning up. Never has

there been a time when that sharp sword

of the Spirit—which Finney used to wield

—was oftener required to cleave sinners'

hearts and to bring them to repentance.

Some people imagine that Sinai is ex-

tinct. Certain pulpits appear to be pitched

so far away from the sublime mountain

that its august peak is no longer visible,

and its righteous thunders against sin are

no longer audible. With this school of

rose-water ministers, the theology of law

is voted obsolete and barbarous; the world

is to be tamed and sweetened and sancti-

fied entirely by a theology of love. They

preach a one-sided God—all mercy and no

justice—with one half of his glorious at-

tributes put under eclipse. Even sinners

are not to be warned with tears and en-

treates to flee from the wrath to come.

They are to be coaxed into holiness by a

magical process, which makes nothing of

repentance and simply requires a "faith,"

which costs no more labor than a snap of

the finger. This shallow system may pro-

duce long rolls of "converts," but it does

not produce solid sub-soiled Christians.

Sinai is not an extinct mountain in Bi-

bble theology. Not one jot of its holy law

has been lowered or repealed. In one

very vital sense no Christian is "free from

the law." It would not be a "happy con-

dition" for him if it were so, any more

than it would be a happy condition for

New York or Chicago to disband their po-

lice and turn their criminals into the

streets. So far from being kindness it

would be cruelty to any man or commu-

nity to place them beyond the reach and the

just penalty of divine law.

This is especially an unfortunate time

in which to preach a limber-backed theo-

logy which has no stiffening of the word

"ought" in its fiber, and which seldom dis-

turbs men's consciences with the retribu-

tions of sin. Society will not be regener-

ated with cologne-water. We need more

of the sacred authority of law in our

homes—more enforcement of law in the

commonwealth,—more reverence for God's

law in our hearts—more law preaching in

our pulpits, and more law-work in the

conversion of souls which are to represent

Christ by keeping his commandments.

Such successful workers as Lyman Bee-

cher, (would to God that his voice could

again ring in certain pulpits!) and Charles

G. Finney, and Kirk, and Daniel Baker,

made much of the moral government of

God. They never capped Sinai. Under

their plain, bold preaching of the guilt of

sin, and its deserved retribution, the hearts

of sinners were pricked through with sharp

convictions. Being thus convicted of their

own guilt, sinners came to know why they

needed an atonement, and they understood

why they must flee to a glorious, all-suffi-

cient Saviour. Such preaching of the truth

broke up the fallow ground and produced

great crops of thorough Christians.

Set it down as a truism that the minis-

ter does the best work who emphasizes

most forcibly the depravity of the human

heart, the majesty of the law, and the com-

plete sufficiency of Christ's life as our

model, and Christ's death as the atoning sacri-

fice for sin. The apostles preached law as

gospel. Peter "pricked the hearts" of

three thousand sinners with the naked

blade of truth, and they were converted to

Christ before sunset. Paul reasoned about

righteousness, temperance, judgment to

come, in the very teeth of a licentious

governor. All the best revival discourses

of Whitfield, Edwards, Nettleton and Pay-

son emphasized the holiness of God, the

guilt of sin, and indispensableness of obey-

ing Christ's commandments. The only

criticism that I have to make on the

preaching of my beloved friend Moody, is

that he does not make enough of repen-

tance before a sinner trusts in Christ, nor

enough of holy living as a proof that he

has trusted Christ. Brother Moody glori-

ously exalts the cross, but "Christ cruci-

fied" is not the whole of the Bible after

all.

It is not only in awakening sinners that

God's law plays a vital part. It is equally

vital as an element in healthy, vigorous,

well-developed piety. Sweet and devout

emotions are very pleasant in their place.

But Christianity is a great deal more than

a rapture. It does not begin or end in a

song or sacrament. It is a living loyalty

to God. Holiness really signifies a willing

submission to God, a constant obedience to

him. Christ cannot be sincerely loved ex-

cept by the disciple who keeps his laws.

Then, dear brethren, in a time of laxity

and license, when men break trusts and

varnish over frauds, and deride strictness

as "puritanical," and make a mock at God's

law, let us direct their eyes toward Sinai,

as well as toward Calvary. Knowing the

terror of the Lord, let us persuade men to

repent and flee to that crucified Jesus whose

blood cleanseth us from all sin. He who

thundered on Sinai invites to Calvary.—

Advance.

Conscientious Separation.

We know some ministers who do not

believe the doctrine of the church to which

they belong, and yet for reasons best known

to themselves they remain in that commu-

nion, and undermine the very foundations of

the faith which they profess to preach.

How this can be made to be in accordance

with morality we know not. Surely it

would be more like common honesty if

they would at once show their colors, and

no longer pretend to be what they are

not. Some Christians, too, who never en-

ter a pulpit, are equally guilty, for they are

recognized as members of churches against

whose teaching they frequently protest.

They support evil systems and know them

to be evil. They dissent in their hearts,

but yet consent by their actions; for fear

of giving offense to men, they are constant-

ly offending God and their own conscience.

Whatever their excuses may be, are they

not resolvable into doing evil that good

may come? Of course, it is not to be de-

sired that men should be perpetually vexed

with scruples upon minor points, and ready

to quarrel about anything or nothing, be-

cause their conscience is morbidly sensitive;

but surely it cannot be right for a truthful

man to be a member of a church from

whose confession he widely disagrees; his

position is a protest against his own con-

victions, and his convictions make his pro-

fession a falsehood. We ought to be in-

terensely anxious to be so clear in the whole

of our religious standing that under the

light of the day of judgment no glaring

contradictions shall be discovered in our

lives; otherwise we may not only be guilty

of "something not very different from

hypocrisy," but we may fall into hypocrisy

itself. A little tampering with conscience

is a very dangerous thing, it is very like

the dropping of a stitch which may lead to

the unraveling of all the work. We used

to say in our childhood—

"He who steals a pin,

Will live to steal a bigger thing."

The rhyme was bad, but the doctrine was

true. If we violate conscience, even upon

the smallest matter, we may come at last

to have no conscience at all.

Mr. Carlyle's advice is thoroughly sound,

and his adjuration is none too strong, "Be

virtuous, and have done with it;" speak

the truth and stand to it; profess the faith

which is revealed in the Scriptures, and

neither by word of mouth, nor by act, nor

by association, nor even in thought, con-

tradict the eternal verities of God. We

have had too much of concession in order

to win a hollow peace from philosophic

rationalists on the one hand, and supersti-

tious Romanizers on the other. The thing

will not work, and if it would it is wrong

and ought not to be attempted. Who

gave us the right to yield an atom of truth?

Are the doctrines of God's word yours or

mine to do as we like with, to give up this

and modify that? Nay, verily; we are

put in trust with the gospel, and it is at

our peril that we dream of compromising

the least of its teachings. A straightfor-

ward, decided line of testimony is the best,

is most consistent with true charity, and in

the end will most promote peace.

The trimming, hesitating policy of many

reminds us of Luther's words to Erasmus:

"You desire to walk upon eggs without

crushing them, and among glasses without

breaking them!" This is a difficult game

to play at, and one which is more suitable

for a clown at a theatre than a servant of

Christ. When you are attempting a com-

promise, you have to look around you and

move as cautiously as a tight-rope dancer,

for fear of offending on one side or the

other. A little too much this way or that

and over you go. A cat on hot cinders is

in no enviable position. No true-hearted