

The Christian Visitor.

Saint John, N. B. April 30, 1879.

Moral Character.

The basis of moral character must be truth. Error or evil received by the mind will sooner or later make itself manifest in acts.

It is frequently said it makes no matter what a man believes so long as he does what is right. This remark proceeds upon the principle that there is no vital connection between belief and acts.

It is now generally conceded that any creed is preferable to none. In all creeds there is an element of truth which blesses man to the extent of its belief.

Strong family likenesses in personal appearance may be traced for generations. This is no less true in respect to moral characteristics.

Editorial Notes.

We issue the VISITOR one day earlier this week, as we are moving into our new quarters, 99 Germain St.

Edward Masson, M.A., translator of Winer's "Grammar of the New Testament Diction," and formerly Professor in the University of Athens, says: "The rite of baptism, according to the Greeks always comprehended katabasis and anabasis, the one representing death and the other resurrection."

A writer from Burma, in the Daily News (London), says of Havelock: "He had an eye, in an architectural sense, only for a barrack or a Baptist chapel."

glory of the Kingdom of God a Baptist chapel was better than a decorated cathedral, whether it be Pagan, Papal, or Anglican.

Rev. Isaiah Wallace reached this city by last Monday's boat, and attended a meeting of the N. B. Baptist Home Mission Board on Thursday evening.

Our brother is advised by the Board to begin his work in the country, in Albert and Westmorland Counties, and will probably visit our mission stations in the Northern sections of the Province at an early date.

We hope to hear from him often in regard to his progress.

Short Bible Studies.

No. 1.

The word of God has a wondrous wealth of meaning. We may read it over and over again, and the last reading, to the devout and thoughtful mind, will bring out some fresh treasure from the exhaustless storehouse.

Island of Tana, New Hebrides.

More than two-thirds of the New Testament has been translated into the Tanese language by Rev. Thomas Nelson, of the Free Church of Scotland Mission, also the books of Genesis and Jonah in the Old Testament.

Eight to twelve thousand people live on this island; of whom about fifteen hundred attend the Mission service with more or less regularity; as yet, however, the mass even of these still follow the superstitious and degraded practices of the heathen around.

They believe in the power of sacred men to cause the fruits of the earth to come to maturity; they present offerings and worship to evil spirits; they practice and believe in witchcraft, and that it can cause disease and death; they practice tribal revenge, extending over many year and generations; they practice circumcision; their ordinary conversation is obscene, whilst murder, adultery, theft and lying are rather praised than blamed.

The Upper Provinces.

Our Baptist brethren have just been holding interesting denominational meetings at Woodstock Ont. The Home Mission Society is still burdened with a debt

of nearly \$4,000. The Treasury of the Foreign Mission Society is empty, and a deficit of \$6,000 appears in the working expenses of the Institute. The "Consolidation Scheme," has been adopted by about one third of the churches.

The Theological Institute has just graduated a class of four, and the examiners report most satisfactory work done especially in Old and New Testament exegesis.

The Trustees report that the plan of working the Institute now employed, viz., the having of two Principals, one for the Literary, and another for the Theological department, is working well; and that most gratifying results are secured.

Lecture by Prof. Jones.

Prof. R. V. Jones delivered a very interesting lecture before the Acadia Athenæum, Wolfville, on Friday evening last. Subject—"The Land of Scott." The learned lecturer treated his audience to a very vivid, and at times amusing, description of his progress through scenes rendered immortal by the genius of Sir Walter.

Further Testimony.

Of all modern critical commentators on the New Testament, H. A. W. Meyer is acknowledged to stand at the head. While for some purely doctrinal exegesis, I might prefer Alford or Ellicott or among the older commentators Calvin or Beza, yet for the strict, exact, impartial interpretation of words and explanation of grammatical constructions, no one of these approaches Meyer.

Mark vii. 4, in the received version is rendered thus, "And when they come from the market, except the wash, they eat not." The word here translated "wash" is baptizo in the middle voice. On this Meyer comments thus (I translate from the latest German edition): "This is not to be understood of the washing of hands; but of immersion (Eintauchen); WHICH THE WORD IN CLASSIC AND NEW TESTAMENT GREEK ALWAYS (DURCHWEG) SIGNIFIES. Hence it means here, to take a bath. So also in Luke xi. 38. Having come from the market, where in the crowd they may have touched unclean things, they eat not, without first having bathed themselves."

Again, in commenting on Acts xvi. 15. "And when she (Lydia) was baptized, and her household," etc., Meyer has the following: "If, in the Jewish and heathen families converted to Christ, there were children, the baptism of these is to be assumed in those cases where they were so far developed that they were able to believe on Jesus as Messiah, and actually did believe; SINCE THIS WAS THE UNIVERSAL AND ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY PREREQUISITE TO THE RECEIVING OF BAPTISM."

It should be borne in mind, in reading the above testimonies, that Meyer was a member of the State church in Hanover. I cite two more testimonies. The best Greek-English Lexicon now in use is that of Liddell and Scott (both gentlemen members of the established Church of England). They define baptizo thus: "to dip in or under water; of ships, to sink them; to bathe; soaked in wine; over head and ears in debt; drowned with questions; to draw wine from bowls in cups (of course by dipping them); to baptize." I copy from the sixth edition revised and augmented, Oxford.

Of later and mediaeval Greek, the best lexicon is that of E. A. Sophocles, of whom President Woolsey remarked to me thirty years ago, "I consider Mr. Sophocles the best Greek scholar in this country."

Sophocles defines baptize thus: "to dip,

to immerse, to sink, to be drowned, as the effect of sinking.—Tropically, to afflict; soaked in liquor; intoxicated; sunk in ignorance. Middle, to perform ablution, to bathe, to plunge a knife, to baptize." Sophocles adds to the above: "There is no evidence that Luke and Paul, and the other writers of the New Testament, put upon this verb meanings not recognized by the Greeks."

It should be remarked that Sophocles is not a Baptist, and gives the above definitions simply as a Greek scholar.

In the above article I have cited only the most recent and critical opinions.—Standard.

Thanking God for Trials.

Ease is what most persons long for. A young man setting out in life commonly looks forward with intensest desire to a position of ease through acquired property, and would be ready to stop work as soon as he attained that position. All the accumulations of the professional or business man have an added value in their supposed hastening of that good day when their possessor can retire from toil and be at ease. Parents who can leave a fortune to their children, so that the latter need not be compelled to work for a living, think that they have given a good start to their offspring. Most mothers would pray that their darlings might be spared trial and suffering in life, and that no rough winds of adversity should blow upon them. Yet there is no stalwart manhood to one who has not struggled; and no man, young or old, will struggle unless he has to; hence any position of ease which takes away from a man the necessity of a continued struggle is incompatible with a progress in manhood to its highest earthly attainment.

The Bible is explicit in its oft-repeated declarations on this point. "Blessed are they that mourn;" not Blessed are they that never know grief. "Happy is the man whom God correcteth;" not Happy is the man whom God never disturbs. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth;" not whom the Lord loveth He spares from trial. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy;" not they that sow in smiles shall have the richest harvest. "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;" not Count it all joy when ye have an easy time in life. "Many sorrows shall be to the righteous;" not Many delights and no sorrow shall be to the children of God.

Nor is it alone into the kingdom of God in the heavenly rest that we must enter "through much tribulation." In the life that now is we cannot have truest joy, highest blessedness, greatest beauty of character, supremest refinement of nature, fullest maturity of soul, without that tribulation which worketh patience, that patience which in turn worketh experience, and experience which in time worketh hope. A heart that has never sorrowed has its tenderest depths yet unstirred, and can never thrill with the richest emotions of joy.

There must be the tightest tension Ere the tone be full and true.

We never look up admiringly to one who has not been tried. We never rest confidently on one who has always lived a life of ease. Why then should we pray for ease for ourselves, or for those whom we love? For what, indeed, have we greater reason to thank God than for our trials

unless, indeed, it be for strength to bear them, and for grace to improve them?

Father, hear the prayer we offer Not for ease that prayer shall be, But for strength that we may ever Live our lives courageously.

S. S. Times.

A Blessed Covering.

BY WM. LAMSON, D.D.

"And I have covered thee in the shadow of my hand." Isa. li. 16.

These are very tender and very precious words. How near they bring the Infinite One to him who can by faith appropriate them! It is Jehovah who speaks. We do not conjecture here. In the connection he says: "I am the Lord thy God. I have covered thee in the shadow of my hand. The passage brings before me the image of a tender mother sitting beneath a burning sun, without a shadow to screen her, and spreading her loving hands to screen the eyes of her little one from the fiery rays that would otherwise burst upon them. So tenderly, so lovingly, does our God present himself to the trusting soul. Fiery suns may send their burning rays, but they have a blessed protecting shadow.

Storms may gather and tempests may rage, but it is sheltered beneath the Infinite hand. It is safe. Its hiding place is secure. All through life, in the sunshine and in tempest, the hand is outspread to protect it. Come what may, it has a hiding place—a strong protection to which it can flee.

And who in this world of change does not need a hiding place? Other refuge may fail. The exigency may be one that earthly friendship, however strong or sincere, cannot meet. Weak, deserted, alone, the soul may be on the border of despair but how blessed then to feel that the paternal hand is over us and its shadow encompassing us. Now, fellow-traveller, these are no unmeaning words like those of a changeable mortal. It is the Lord our God who utters them. But is it not too great a promise for you or me to claim? It is not strange if it seems so. But it is unbelief that suggests the doubt. It is looking at ourselves, our littleness and our unworthiness, instead of looking to God that makes the words seem incredible. We have not risen, we cannot rise, to a full conception of the paternal love and tenderness of our God. Rich as the assurance is, it is like Him to give it. It is only one of many just such assurances scattered through His word. We may take it, appropriate it, make it all our own. I look up at the stars of night and send my thoughts out among the vast worlds and systems with which the boundless spaces are filled, and the Creator of all these seem so great and mighty that I am but a mote in his vast universe. The thought comes, can he care for me? But I open his word and find the assurance, "I who made and who uphold these worlds, I have covered thee in the shadow of my hand." I am not overlooked, not lost to His eye for a moment.

Blessed assurance, blessed shelter, let us rest in it. Reader, know you what it is to feel that that sheltering hand is over you?

It is a beautifully tender figure which our Lord used when he uttered his touching lament over Jerusalem, that of a hen gathering her brood under her wings. But it seems to me the expression used by Jehovah of the shadow of his hand is even more tender and impressive.—Watchman.

Tabernacle Notes.

For a long time my mind has not been quiet at ease respecting the CHRISTIAN VISITOR, for its welcome is just as cordial under the new, as under the old Editorial management, and I wish this, as also every other effort for God and the right prosperity.

To strangers and pilgrims a VISITOR in the desert journey of life is specially pleasant, and the kind and friendly counsel of experience of a true Christian Visitor is like good news from a far country, and to many a tired traveller news concerning Zion, the City of the great King, is as cold water to a thirsty soul.

And it has always seemed to me that it was my duty, not only to gather up glad tidings for myself, but to gather up the fragments and sweep up all the crumbs of comfort I can, and pass them on by the nimble fingers of the press to others. Knowing if this be done in faith, the Master can so multiply and bless the effort that those who have sought crumbs of comfort shall be fed with food convenient, and that which was looked upon as broken bread, shall fill the basket of some seeker.