

acy of the gospel, and its invulnerability to human attack. Whatever development natural science has reached, or may attain, mental philosophy can look for no further limit than it reached at Athens, and that limit stopped short of "finding out God," while it furnished nothing to combat the revelation of him as we have it in the gospel. Did we seek proof or refutation of the gospel, we would interrogate, not the phenomena of matter, but of mind, so, if the gospel supplanted and survived the teachings of Epicurus and Zeno, we need not fear for it the sneers of modern skeptics or the assaults of modern scientists.

Correspondence.

Our English Letter.

To the Editors of the Visitor:—

One of the features of English life, which invariably attracts the attention of visitors from the New World, is the existence of institutions or modes of life which have come down from distant ages, and which still flourish in undecayed vigor amid all the new life and restless changes of the present day.

I do not know a more striking evidence of this conservative tendency of the English mind than that afforded by the appearance, in the busy streets of modern London, of the boys of Christ's Hospital, or as it is generally called, the Blue coat School, in their picturesque dress which has been preserved unaltered since the days of Edward the Sixth. To some of your readers no doubt the Blue-coat boys are familiar as they walk the streets looking like apparitions from the middle ages, but as many may not have had the opportunity of seeing them I may describe their appearance. The coat is a long dress of blue cloth, something like a modern ulster, gathered in at the waist by a belt of red leather; with white bands at the neck such as are worn by barristers in court; while knee breeches and bright yellow stockings complete the costume; literally, for they never wear any hats or caps of any kind in any weather. This quaint garb is precisely that worn at the time of the foundation of the school by the pious boy-king Edward, and is adhered to so strictly that even when the pupils go home to different parts of the kingdom for their holidays, they are obliged to wear the costume of the school and no other. And let it not be supposed that there are any symptoms of decay in the institution, and that it merely preserves a sickly existence amid the progress of the nineteenth century; it is as full of vigorous life and energy as any school or college in the kingdom; there are seven hundred boys in the school in London, and upwards of five hundred in the preparatory branch in the country, and nominations for boys are eagerly sought for by parents all over the kingdom.

While on this subject let me mention another instance in which the past and the present appear to confront each other in a striking manner. The church of St. Saviour's, Southwark, is one of the most interesting, after Westminster Abbey, in London. The principal portions were taken down and rebuilt a few years since, but the Choir and Lady chapel still remain and in a wonderful state of preservation. There are many ancient monuments, some with life-size recumbent figures, of a most interesting character. But the Lady chapel itself possesses an interest almost unique, from having been used in the days of bloody Queen Mary, by that old persecutor of the saints, Bishop Gardiner, as a court for the trial of heretics. More than three hundred years have elapsed since then, and what a happy contrast is now witnessed! I went last Sunday to hear the Rev. W. Hay Aitkens, of whom some of your readers have doubtless heard, preach within those venerable walls, and it was impossible, at least for a colonist, not to be struck with the mighty change that time has wrought. Mr. Aitkens is one of the most powerful preachers in England; his earnestness is almost terrible and his appeals to his hearers seem to be irresistible, nor is there any uncertain sound in his message; it is the

gospel in all its simplicity and integrity. Had he preached such a sermon in the days of Mary his transition from the pulpit to the Lady chapel, and thence to the stake, would have been swift and inevitable. What a blessed change from those evil days to our own times of civil and religious liberty!

Let me in closing refer to a movement which is essentially modern and which no doubt all your readers are interested in; I refer to the mission of Messrs. Moody and Sankey which is now being followed by such remarkable results in the outskirts of London. I had the opportunity of being present at several of their meetings a few days ago in Clapham, and they were scenes never to be forgotten. The vast hall was filled to its utmost capacity an hour before the appointed time, and at the close of Mr. Moody's address in every instance, such numbers as may fairly be characterized as great crowds of men and women, rose and went into the inquiry rooms, apparently and no doubt in the vast majority of cases, really under deep and heartfelt conviction.

One of the most interesting features of this movement is the Christian spirit of unity which it has evoked; ministers of all the evangelical churches are seen in numbers on the platform, aiding heartily in the work. When I mention two men who in outward denominational characteristics are so widely separated as the Rev. Marcus Rainsford, of the Established church, and Lord Radstock, of the so-called Plymouth Brethren, as being two of the most earnest and indefatigable assistants of Mr. Moody, you can readily judge of the blessed spirit of union which prevailed among all real Christians in connection with the wonderful work of the great American evangelists.

I went last Sunday evening to the Metropolitan Tabernacle to hear the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, but his return from the Continent had been delayed by the state of his health; and although to some extent I was disappointed by his absence, I heard a most admirable sermon from his son, who, if he were not overshadowed by his greater father, would be considered one of the most earnest and powerful preachers of the day. I remain, Yours very truly,

VIA TOR.

Concerning Book Rooms, Etc.

To the Editors of the Visitor:—

A few weeks since you made some remarks about the Baptist Book Room in Halifax and its agency work in New Brunswick. I think you expressed the opinion that private enterprise was sufficient to sell Baptist literature, furnish books to Sunday schools and for distribution by colporteurs; in this I fully agree with you. Books can be sold as cheap or cheaper, as the management is better, by private operators than through the machinery of an organized society, as to colportage it can be carried on by the Home Mission Board without the need of a new organization. An agent may be sent into our churches whose loquacious, persistent, and persuasive advocacy of his pet scheme may draw money from the purses of those ready to contribute to the first benevolent project put before them, in consequence, the agent can collect enough to meet his own salary, and probably a surplus to help pay expenses of management at head quarters. But it may be a question if the money so gathered, is not an amount taken from the treasury of other Boards that are suffering for funds to carry on their necessary operations. The Foreign and Home Missionary Boards are reluctantly permitted to send their collecting agents into the churches of the Lower provinces; whilst the Book concern is allowed and even encouraged to put forth unrestricted measures in this matter of raising funds. It is asserted that the vote of the Convention endorse this scheme of a Book depository? We will not dispute but that a partial endorsement of the measure has been obtained, still I am sorry to say that our Convention lets many matters come before it for its sanction, that had better be left to their own operations.

In the year 1880 at the Convention

at Hillsboro, a recommendation was passed, that uniformity might be had in our churches, to adopt the Baptist hymn book, published by the Baptist Publication Society of the United States. This did not seem to please those who had in view bringing out something different, so without rescinding this vote, at last Convention at Halifax, a committee was appointed to assist in publishing a new book to suit the wants of the churches. Why not leave private enterprise to step forward and publish what it thought proper, and if better suited to our wants than former productions, then let the Convention adopt the work and not otherwise. But this would not suit those who desire to get a recommendation in advance.

Similar to this was a vote passed by the Convention in 1882, saying that it would be of advantage to publish one Baptist paper rather than two. It must have struck others as it did me that this was directly infringing on the rights of private enterprise. Two papers were being published, the proprietors asked no endorsement of the Convention, nor would they permit any control of that Body. Any parties wishing to purchase the papers could do so by treating simply with their owners, and could publish one paper if they chose and make it much better if they could without consulting any one or interfering with any vested rights. When this was accomplished it would be time enough to ask to have the scheme adopted by the Convention. What guarantee had the Convention that the anticipated paper would be stronger, better conducted or sounder on the doctrines of the denomination? But they were asked to and did vote approval, when they knew nothing of the intended editor or where the paper would be published, and asked no pledge that it should testify fully in favor of denominational interests, these might be taken for granted; but it is not the way business men and business corporations usually act. The proprietors of the two papers were the best judges when to sell, and the purchasers needed no vote to authorize them to buy. I hope our Convention will be more guarded in future in allowing so many matters to come before it foreign to its original design, and I trust will be careful to allow private enterprise to conduct its operations without interference.

S. N.

The Day of Prayer for Colleges.

To the Editors of the Visitor:—

The article in last week's VISITOR, from the pen of Dr. Sawyer, is most timely. I trust that the suggestion made to our churches will result in their devoting some portion of the day named to prayer and supplication for a revival of religion in our institutions of learning.

At Wolfville and in St. John are numbers of young men and women pursuing various branches of study. Every day adds to their store of knowledge, and serves to make each one a stronger influence in the world for good or evil. Shall we not pray that God's grace may sanctify their youthful hearts, that in the coming years their labors may stand as memorials of Christian culture.

Parents send children from the home roof and expose them to the temptations of school life. Pray that the Holy Spirit may dwell richly in these schools, moving with hallowing influence the hearts of teachers and students, that the strength of the tempter may be overcome by the strong hand of his power.