

THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

HOLD FAST THE FORM OF SOUND WORDS—Paul.

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For the Visitor.

North-Western Correspondence.

BY BOREALIS.

Since the late winter from this quarter, some weeks have now passed, and time has been moving on, making history. The whole country has been in the usual ferment about election times; even away in this cool northern territory where the Presidential vote is denied to the "new settlers," there is considerable excitement on the question, and the suspense, in connection with the election, is felt more than a little. It seems now to be the general conviction that the Democratic candidate by "hook or by crook" is the coming man. This "free nation" requires a very much higher moral status with the masses, to make its chosen form of government safely workable. Corruption of the lowest kind, seems to be very prevalent, irrespective of party, and the only cure seems to be the moral elevation of the masses. At present the suspense and suspicion existing on both sides, is anything but agreeable, and may yet lead to most disastrous consequences. Every item of news from headquarters is watched with anxious solicitude.

The immense harvest in this quarter has been secured in good condition, and the greater part of it is now threshed, and is being rapidly shipped off to parts unknown. Frosts, that in other northern countries are reported to have greatly injured crops, here, did little or no harm, and the grains of different kinds, both as to quantity and quality, make a most wonderful exhibit. But prices are so depressed that the cost of producing exceeds the prices realized by a good deal, and farmers who came into the country with but little capital, are placed in very straitened circumstances, many of them being in danger of losing their all in the struggle to meet liabilities. Between railroad monopoly and millers' monopoly the poor farmer is pretty badly abused. It is to be hoped, however, that time will assist in curing these evils, and that, ere long, the honest and laborious tiller of the soil will be protected, so as to receive value for his labor.

Since my last writing considerable progress has been made on some of the fields north of this point in religious work. Several of the churches have had additions by conversion. The special meetings have been temporarily discontinued, partly because Brother Grant, the evangelist, has been laid aside for a little by illness arising from over-work, and partly because he is now undertaking the charge of a new field of labor, which will, at the first at least, need his best and most constant energies to meet its requirements. However, it is anticipated that, after a few weeks, he will be in a position to give some time and attention to evangelistic work, for which he is so well adapted, among the churches in this part of northern Dakota.

Here in Grafton there seems to be "a sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees." Some have of late professed an interest in the loving Saviour, and others are inquiring. We hope soon to dedicate our new baptistry to its intended use, by the baptism of some believers into the likeness of the Saviour's death and resurrection.

Many interesting and inviting fields are opening up for missionary enterprise in this wide territory, but scarcity of laborers, and what is still more paralyzing, lack of financial means seriously hinder. An alarming depletion (and even an over-drawing) of the funds for this work is reported, that makes a very unwelcome halt necessary, both in taking up new fields, and in building new church edifices. It is to be devoutly hoped, however, that friends of the good work here, living in the East, will

yield to the appeals made in behalf of the work, and assist in perpetuating the good record of work that has existed during the past three years. My letter would not be complete without some reference to last week's meeting of the North Dakota Missionary Convention, held in Fargo City. There was a good representation present of missionary pastors, and delegates, and most profitable seasons were enjoyed, and important work was done for the forwarding of the Master's work. Rev. Dr. Crawford, of St. Thomas, (late of Prairie College), preached the sermon. A constitution and by-laws, submitted by a previously appointed committee, was carefully examined and, with such amendments as the body thought best, adopted for the direction of its future work. The officers appointed for next year are, President, Rev. G. W. Huntley, General Missionary, 1st Vice-Pres., Rev. J. A. H. Johnson, of Fargo, D.T.; 2nd Vice-Pres., Rev. A. McDonald, of Grafton, D. T.; Secretary, Rev. J. H. Hartman, of Bismark, D. T.; and Treasurer, C. T. Clement, Esq., of Fargo. The next annual meeting of the Convention is appointed at Bismark. The writer is appointed to preach the opening sermon, with Rev. R. J. Deckard, of Bismark, as his alternate. Where the builders on the walls are so far removed from each other as they are here, such meetings are truly refreshing as well as helpful to the carrying on of the good work. In connection with our meetings at Fargo, or rather as a part of our programme, was the ordination of a promising young brother, S. W. Stevens, to the work of the gospel ministry, and pastor of the First Baptist Church of the City of Fargo. Brother Stevens underwent a creditable examination, proving himself to be thoroughly orthodox, and eschewing the so-called "new theology," which is not all new, and heartily endorsing the old Pauline theology, which is adapted for all climes and ages of the world, alike.

Brother Stevens is a graduate of Rochester University, and of the Rochester Theological school. He is of good safe and sound Baptist stock, his father and mother having been for many years and being now honored missionaries in India. The City of Fargo, numbering some ten thousand inhabitants of mixed character, affords our young brother ample scope for his talents and culture, and will try his mettle more than a little, but I trust he is the man for the place, and by God's grace will be equal to the occasion.

For the Visitor.

Westmoreland County Baptist Quarterly Meeting.

Pursuant to a notice that appeared in a recent issue of your paper, a few of the Baptist pastors of this county met with the church at Shediak, on Tuesday, the 17th inst., for the purpose of organizing a Westmoreland County Baptist Quarterly Meeting for the mutual religious benefit of the pastors and churches, and for the fuller development of our benevolence for denominational work. The absence of so many of our pastors was, to those present, a cause of regret, but the presence of the blessed Master, who gives his blessing to the few who meet in his name, made our meetings pleasant, and, we trust, profitable.

On Tuesday evening Bro. G. O. Gates, the deservedly popular pastor of the Moncton church, preached from the "Golden Text," of last Lord's Day's S. S. Lesson. The sermon was an earnest plea for Christian consistency, and clear instructions as to how to attain to it. On Wednesday morning the Quarterly Meeting was organized by Electing Rev. T. M. Munroe, President, and the undersigned Secretary-Treasurer. At 2.30 p. m. a covenant meeting was

held with the church, which proved to be "a season of refreshing." In the evening the undersigned had the privilege of preaching the blessed gospel to an attentive audience. Throughout the meetings were good and the little church seemed to be delighted and strengthened by the visit of their brethren. As it is the desire of the Quarterly meeting to meet with our smaller churches who cannot accommodate Associations and Conventions, we hope that such in this county who desire to have the brethren meet with them on the 1st Monday after the 15th of January next, will correspond with Rev. G. O. Gates, of Moncton, who is a committee to locate the next meeting. Collection taken for our benevolent work amounted to \$7.25.

D. G. MACDONALD,
Sec.-Treas.

Sackville, Nov. 22, '84.

Case of Persecution Near Swatow.

About thirty miles from Swatow is a town called Chiu-huan-nia. Some three years ago a young man from this place heard the Gospel at a chapel three miles distant. He became a believer. He made the doctrine known to his friends, some of whom also accepted it. In course of time the number included the inmates of seven families numbering about thirty persons in all. They met regularly for worship, sometimes going to the distant chapel and sometimes holding meetings in one of their own houses.

This stirred up the wrath of some of the villagers. Chief among them was a certain man who acted as master of ceremonies at idol processions, and who handled the funds contributed on such occasions. It was the story of Demetrius and the craftsmen in Chinese surroundings. "This thing of becoming Christians must be stopped," said the man, "for," said he, "our village is small. We have all we can do now to raise money for the processions, and here thirty persons refuse to contribute longer. If we allow this thing to go on, others will believe. Our contributions will fall off, and by and by we shall have no processions at all. So this must be stopped."

The saying suited the villagers. It was resolved that "the thing should be stopped" thoroughly. Measures were at once taken. A series of grinding persecutions at once commenced. The people pledged themselves to have no dealings with the Christians. They would not buy and sell with them. They would not speak to them in the street. They would not let them have water from the public wells. They insulted them, frequently pelted them with stones, and ostracized them on all occasions. The disciples put up with this quietly, accepting it as a part of their heritage as Christians, and did not swerve from their faith.

The villagers proceeded to stronger measures. They invaded the fields of the believers, pulled up part of the growing crop and carried it off, trampling the rest under foot to render it worthless. The loss was heavy. They also forbade the manager of the joint stock sugar mill from grinding any cane for the believers. The cane having been cut before this interdiction was known, another grievous loss was sustained. It became evident that the disciples could no longer delay seeking protection. The magistrate was unfriendly but he was the only resource. They sent in their complaint, stating the circumstances of the case. The magistrate cross-examined them roughly. "Was it indeed so that they did not worship their ancestors," he asked them, "and that they did not contribute to idol processions?" They replied, they were taught to honor

their parents while living, but they did not worship their tombs after they were dead. Further, they did not contribute to idol worship for it was wrong. The magistrate snarled an answer, saying he would send and inquire. It was evident that he intended them no good. Several constables were sent to the place, knowing well what kind of a report was desired by their master. They came back and reported that the story of the Christians was all a lie. There had been some trouble but it was on account of their own misconduct. "Exactly so," said the magistrate, and he threw the complaint aside.

Thus encouraged, the villagers now entered the patches of woodland owned by the disciples, and cut down all the trees some of which they sold for fire-wood and the rest of which they boldly stored in their own village.

One fresh attempt the Christians made for redress. Again they sent in a petition to the magistrate, humbly imploring him to protect them from the continued robbery. According to usage, the magistrate must take some notice of such petitions. Again was re-enacted the farce of sending constables. The latter were soon hobnobbing with the villagers, partaking of a feast to which they were invited, and pocketing the small sums they received. They made a report like the former. The stories were pure inventions by the Christians. No trees had been cut down and there was no occasion for any further inquiry. The Christians renewed their petition, all signing it with the mark of their thumbs dipped in ink by which they are sure to be recognized. They re-affirmed their story. They begged the magistrate to send a special Deputy not in league with the villagers, and if he found that they were telling a lie, they offered themselves to undergo any scourging the magistrate might choose to inflict. The magistrate told them tartly he would send no such Deputy. He would not believe their story and drove them away.

There was no chance for the Christians. The spring of the present year dragged away. The houses had been plundered, and the men themselves became afraid to enter the village. Their situation was deplorable. They were suffering for food, and several times received relief from their brethren in other places. It was not simply poverty but starvation that stared them in the face. Still they remained to them some rice fields some little distance away. A crop of rice was slowly coming on. The villagers allowed this to remain, intending to cut and appropriate it themselves. As the ripening drew near the anxiety of the disciples was great. If they could only save their rice their families could get along until better days would come. Some three or four brethren from other villages volunteered to come and help them out in time to save it.

One disciple who ventured back to look after affairs was seized and severely beaten. He went to the Yamen to ask the magistrate to examine his wounds and to grant redress. This is a usage at all Yamens and one which a magistrate cannot well evade. But the villagers were ready with an expedient. It was arranged that one of their number should receive a slight cut on the forehead. Smearing over his face the little blood that came out to make the most of it, he too hurried off to the Yamen and reported that he and others had been assailed by this man. This was enough. His tale was at once accepted. The Christian was told that if he would first pay thirty dollars the magistrate would examine his bruises. Otherwise he would not. The Christian had no money to pay and so had to go his way.

Up to this time, we here had taken no part in the matter beyond advising the disciples to be patient, rendering them some assistance from time to time as their needy circumstances required. Though the Treaty has an Article against persecution we do not think it expedient to avail ourselves of it except in extreme cases. Such an extremity seemed now to have come. We addressed a note to the courteous Baron von Seckendorff, German Consul, now acting as United States Consular Agent. He addressed a note to the magistrate, calling his attention to the gross violation of the Treaty by the villagers. To this was returned an insolent answer, declaring that the statements of the Christians were false and unfounded. At our request the Baron sent in a Chinese *attache* of his own Office to make observations and report to himself. The man went in. At that time the grain was ready to be cut. The owners of it with the help already mentioned hastened to gather it. The villagers led on by the procession manager, turned out and seized them all, including the Consul's messenger with his guide and one of our preachers who were simply witnesses of what was going on. The Consul's messenger made himself known but he was treated with derision. The Mandarin, said the villagers, was on their side and they did not care for Consuls. The men's hands were tied behind their backs by the thumbs and then drawn upwards by ropes over the limbs of trees, and while in this position of torture, with their toes barely touching the ground, they were pounded and bruised without mercy. This completed, they were imprisoned in an empty house. The Consul's man managed privately to bribe a messenger to bring word to the Consul of the sad condition he was in. The Consul lost not a moment in sending two indignant protests to the officials, and likewise demanded the instant release of his messenger. This letter arrived at the Yamen in the night. The underlings of the magistrate, who were in full sympathy with the villagers, at once hurried off a private messenger to notify them of impending trouble which they must guard against. They villagers saw that they must release, at least some of their victims. But before they did so, and before the victims knew of the help that was coming, they trumped up three confederates of their own who were to come in as outsiders to settle the difficulty. These three fellows went to the prisoners, saying, "We will help you out of this, but you must sign a paper that you will make no trouble about it after you are out. If you do not sign the paper we shall go away and the villagers will kill you." The frightened guide and preacher signed the paper. The Consul's man who felt sure of his master's intervention, refused, asserting that he did not know how to write. The villagers had no time to lose. They completed the transaction in haste as best they could and set the Consul's messenger, the guide, and the preacher at liberty to pursue their way back to Swatow. After they were gone but not till then, came the constables sent by the magistrate to inquire if these things were so. The villagers denied everything and said the men had gone away of themselves. Answer to that effect was returned to the magistrate who knew perfectly well that it was a lie.

But now the thing was, to get up an answer to the Consul. Some of the men had been released. Perhaps that would pacify him. But then he might insist upon an explanation. Various devices were discussed. A favorite Chinese trick in such cases is to get up a counter-charge. It was arranged that some woman of

the village should come forward and testify that these men had committed a violent assault upon her person, and that for this they were beaten by the indignant villagers. A score of persons offered themselves as witnesses, and details of the story they were to tell were decided upon.

Meanwhile, it was evident the Consul was terribly in earnest again writing not only to the magistrate but to his superior. So something had to be done. The false evidence of various kinds was duly sent in, and from it the magistrate framed another insolent reply. In it he alleged that the Consul's messenger had been guilty of various kinds of gross misconduct at the village and had suffered in consequence, abundant proof of which, he said, he had at his Yamen.

But while sending this, the magistrate was afraid that the Consul himself might come in and demand an investigation and a trial. So he decided to forestall things a little by hurrying up the trial on his own account. The injured disciples and their persecutors were summoned to the Yamen. The constables were advised to re-cook their report to adapt it a little to facts which had become notorious. They now reported that a very few trees had been cut down but they were of no great value, and that one pig had been carried away, and some trivial annoyances inflicted, but beyond this nothing. All this was done with the knowledge of the magistrate. The day for trial came. The Christians were asked to state their grievances. They made a full and clear statement of all they had suffered and of the losses they had sustained. The magistrate ridiculed them. However he would adjudge them something and offered them ten dollars. They begged him to consider what an inadequate compensation that was when their losses had been two thousand dollars. "Well then I will make it fifteen," said the magistrate. Again the disciples begged for justice. He became angry and said, "I understand you once settled this case by three negotiators, and signed a paper to drop the matter. Now if you do not accept an award of fifteen dollars in full, I will send for these negotiators and on their testimony I will punish you." The disciples pleaded that they had no voice in selecting these negotiators, and therefore, according to custom, they had no right to act. "No matter," said the magistrate, "I will send for them and act on what they say." The brethren were required to give bail for their appearance while their persecutors were sent away in triumph, and there the case stands at the present time. The disciples are now considering whether they might not as well, first as last, leave their village, give up their homes to their implacable enemies, and start out in the world anew.

This story is somewhat long, but it shows what Chinese justice is, and what of late our converts have to go through continually in seeking redress for grievances at their own Yamens.

W. A.
Swatow, 15th September, 1884.

Underrate not the value of Church Organization. What the husk is to the kernel, what the casket is to the jewel, what the lamp is to the oil, what the body is to the spirit, that the outward form is to the inward life.—Garland.

No teaching which is merely intellectual or moral can ever know Christ, nor can any statement of Gospel truth, however forcible and clear, be effectual unless accompanied by the power of the Holy Ghost.—G. S. Bower.

If you cannot be great, be willing to serve God in things that are small.—S. F. Smith.