

The Christian Visitor,

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NOTICE.

To Correspondents, Subscribers and Others.
Items of Religious Intelligence are solicited from all parts of the world; also, communications upon other subjects of interest, especially educational, social, and industrial topics. Correspondents should write upon only one side of the paper, and make their letters as brief as the facts and circumstances will permit. As a rule, all matter to ensure being published the week of issue, should reach us not later than Monday noon.
When you desire to discontinue taking the Visitor it is necessary to pay all arrearsages if any, and notify us by letter or post card. It is not enough to send back the paper marked refused, as in most instances we have no means of finding out the address without much searching.

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The Christian Visitor.

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During the month of March every dollar owed the "VISITOR" is needed to meet bills maturing for publishing the paper. Will not those who owe make an effort to send us a remittance? We thank those who have promptly responded. Now let us hear from others.

EVOLUTION.

From Adam to Abraham justice and mercy come more and more into view. First there is a dark promise of cursing and a dark promise of blessing. The flood illustrates the former and the ark the latter. Then the overthrow of the cities with fire and brimstone and the deliverance of Lot are repetitions of the same illustrations. Then mercy is further held out to view in the rescue of the Abrahamic family from the oncoming deluge of idolatry and its concomitants. God makes promises, the patriarch believes them. This cements a friendship between man and his Maker.

The promise given to man after the fall, indistinct at first, becomes plainer in the days of the wandering patriarch. At first, it was a hint; but it takes form and grand dimensions. A man is chosen and is informed that the destinies of the world are in his life and labors. He is assured that the favor shown him will be perpetuated to his remotest descendants. The plan, concealed in the mind of God from the beginning, is by degrees made known to the world. Order comes out of disorder, light out of darkness, and form out of chaos. From the fall to Enoch the inquiry arises, What will God do? How will he enforce justice and show mercy? There is no answer. From Enoch to Noah the same question arises, but still no reply. Again the same interrogation forces itself to the lips and a reply is made in the call of Abraham. God elected a man through whom he purposes to bless the world. To him and his posterity promise upon promise is given. Now we see what had been shut up in the eternal councils of God. Here is the doctrine of Paul not formulated, but in practical illustration. God chose Abraham. Why did he not take Melchizedek instead? Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate. For this reason the patriarch was raised up. We stand at Abraham's side and look back, and all is uncertain; but if we look ahead all is bright. The plan of God rises to our sight higher and firmer than Babel's tower. Now we know what God intends to do. His purpose is to bless, not only the descendants of Abraham, but all the nations of the earth—they are all to be blessed through this patriarch. Floods of water and fire and brimstone are not after the heart of Jehovah; but blessing rather. More light falls in Abraham's day on the sacrificial service. Slain beasts and flesh consumed on

the altar remained unchanged for fifteen hundred years; then a stronger light was turned upon this rite. The old patriarch was commanded to offer his own son instead of the lamb. This he proceeded to do. He went through the struggle of giving up his son to the altar. The knife was in hand to take his life. His faith staggered not. He, as we learn from the New Testament, believed that God would raise his son from the dead. The world, according to God's promise, was to be peopled and blessed through Isaac. The faith of the father was an intelligent faith.

In belief and purpose Abraham took the life of his son Isaac; and after that received him back again from the dead. This is not only a fresh and severe test of the patriarch's faith: it adds greatly to the typical significance of the burnt offering. An only son is given up—a son who is to bless the world. He is devoted to the burning altar. He is raised from the dead and thereby becomes doubly dear to the father. His seed multiplies as the sand of the sea-shore and as the stars of the heavens. By this experience the burnt offering is brought out into a clearer light. Typically the giving up of God's only begotten Son, his death and resurrection, are foreshadowed as they could not be merely by the slaughter and burning of animals.

In another respect there is a clearer unfolding of the work of man's salvation. The pleading, permitted by Jehovah on the eve of the overthrow of the cities of the plain, marks progress in the religion of the Bible. Up to that time, nothing of the kind had been permitted. Abraham pleads with God for the cities, as a man would plead with his fellow man. The yielding to the interceder was a plain approval that God would admit intercession as if he were a man. Not only upon the sacrifice was more light shed, but the doctrine of personal intercession was marvellously illustrated.

The intimate relations into which God will take the faithful was made known, as it could not be by a simple declaration of the doctrine. Shall I hide the thing I am about to do from Abraham? No, he would not conceal it. So Jehovah took the patriarch into his confidence and told him he was about to destroy the cities of the plain. As one friend would give a secret to another, so Jehovah gave this secret to Abraham.

EVANGELISTS AND THEIR WORK IN THE CHURCHES.

The more we observe the work of the Lord in our churches, the more we are convinced that mistakes are made in not keeping all our brethren, who have the gifts and graces of the evangelist, on the move, from church to church and from place to place. The reports from Upper Aylesford and the adjoining mountains, last year, where the evangelist, the Rev. Mr. Young, labored with the pastor, the Rev. J. L. Reed, and the reports from Berwick and its neighborhood, where Bro. Young and the Rev. E. O. Reed have worked together for the last month or more, are only additional instances that God does wonderfully bless the employment of this order of talent in going from place to place.

There are other brethren in our ministry who have the love and gifts of the evangelist in a high degree, and yet their time is mostly spent as if they were teachers and shepherds. We do not wish to be understood as believing that a revival can not take place in a church without the help of an evangelist; but experience and observation are teaching us that it is one of God's chosen means of advancing his kingdom in the world.

Much depends upon the way in which the evangelist is received. If the church members, the deacons and minister, if the church happens to have one, unite heartily with the brother who comes as a co-laborer for a time, there will certainly be good done. Strength will be infused into the church and souls will be converted.

It might be a wise move for the Home Mission Board to give their influence in this direction, as they are

now doing. We see that they have given one of our most devoted evangelists, the Rev. Isaiah Wallace, a commission to go among the churches. We are persuaded that this is a sound and wise policy. There are other brethren who could greatly multiply their usefulness, if they should spend a part of their time at least in evangelistic labor.

The appearance of a laborer of this order in a field calls up the attention of the entire community to the important matter of religion: other denominations will share in the blessings. They will more readily attend the meetings and the administration of the ordinance of baptism. We are glad to know that brethren Wallace and Young are in the field. They have both been greatly blessed in gathering sheaves. Special prayer should be made by the churches for a blessing upon their arduous labors.

PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIANITY AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF MATERIALISM.

Henry Mandsley, M. D., author of "Body and Mind;" "Physiology of the Mind" and "Body and Will," in the latter work sums up his apprehensions of the future of this world in the following paragraph:—

"If the force at the back of all growth, all complexity, and all change on earth is that which the sun has steadily supplied to it through countless ages, and still supplies, it is plain that when this force fails, as fail it one day must, there will be a steadily declining development and a rapidly increasing degeneration of things, an undoing by regressive decompositions of what has been done by progressive combinations through the succession of the ages. The disintegrating process may be expected to take effect first upon the highest products of evolution, and to reach in deepening succession the low, lower and lowest organizations and organic compounds. The nations that have risen high in the complexity of development will deteriorate and be broken up, to have their places taken by less complex associations of inferior individuals; these in turn will yield place to simpler and feebler unions of still more degraded beings; species after species of animals and plants will first degenerate and then become extinct as the worsening conditions of life render it impossible for them to continue the struggle for existence; a few scattered families of degraded human beings, living, perhaps, in snow huts near the equator very much as the Esquimaux live near the pole, will represent the last wave of the receding tide of human existence before its final extinction; until at last a frozen earth, incapable of cultivation, is left without energy to produce a living particle of any sort and so death itself is dead."

This then is the heaven to which the materialistic philosophy points the human family! It is a dreary outlook—a gloomy prospect. Let us see what a Christian philosopher under a high and holy inspiration tells us. The following is the prospect he paints:—

"Because the Creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God; for we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together, until now."

Doctor Mandsley's vision of blackness makes a good background against which to see the vision of Paul who beheld the earth and all God's redeemed children delivered triumphantly from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of God's children.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE Library of McMaster Hall now contains about 4,500 volumes, and is rapidly increasing.

THREE of the students of Toronto College every Sunday hold service in the jail, and others are at work in mission stations in the city.

ANY Baptist Church in Nova Scotia desirous of a pastor, will do well to communicate with the Editor of CHRISTIAN VISITOR immediately, who is prepared to recommend a worthy brother, who is anxious to locate in Nova Scotia.

HERBERT SPENCER, in an article in the *Nineteenth Century* on "Religion a Retrospect and Prospect," in referring to the different views the Bible presents of God, says:—"By a convenient obliviousness, a deity, who in early times is represented as hardening men's hearts so that they may commit punishable acts, and as employing a lying spirit to deceive them, comes to be mostly thought of as an embodiment of virtues transcending the highest we can imagine."

Now, if Mr. Herbert Spencer misrepresents the facts of science as he here does those of the Bible, he could

make science teach anything that ever entered into the head of man. The heart hardening, we suppose, refers to the case of Pharaoh. That is in the Exodus: In the Romans, a revelation given after Christ went to heaven, the heart hardening of Pharaoh is adduced to illustrate the sovereignty of God. There it is said that God raised up Pharaoh for this very purpose. The deity of the Bible is the same from the Genesis to the Revelation. In all the books of the Scriptures he is tender and loving to those who fear him; but he everywhere expresses his abhorrence of sin. Jehovah was as familiar with Enoch, Noah, Abraham and Moses as Christ was with his apostles. The same attributes are exhibited from one end to the other of his Holy Word. It is strange that these learned men, who make great pretensions to exactness of scholarship, and fidelity to facts, are so often found publishing the grossest misrepresentations of the plain facts found in God's Holy Book. The argument Mr. Spencer had in hand would be helped, if the God of the Bible had appeared as a half human, half superhuman being to those who received the first revelation, as the Greek gods did to that nation in its earlier periods, and because it would serve Mr. Spencer's purpose, Mr. Spencer makes it just as he wants it; but the open Bible shows that Mr. Spencer misrepresents the teachings of Scripture on this subject.

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY MEETINGS.

Some months ago the Central Board of the N. B. W. M. A. Societies determined to hold monthly meetings with the churches of Saint John and its vicinity, with a view to stimulating missionary zeal and increasing the general interest in missionary work. Arrangements were accordingly made, and the first meeting was held with the Carleton church in November. On account of storms the meeting appointed to be held with the Portland church, in December, was sadly interfered with, but the succeeding meetings in January and February with the Brussels St. and Leinster St. churches, respectively, were well attended and were full of promise of encouraging results to the churches, as well as to the local Aid Societies connected therewith. As these meetings take the place of the regular prayer meeting, they necessarily partake of a devotional character, whilst the reading of extracts from missionaries' letters, addresses by missionary workers, the display of curiosities from the foreign field, musical and other exercises, give variety and sustain the interest. The collections taken, which average between \$7 and \$8 at each meeting, go to swell the contributions of the Aid Society with which the meeting is held. The next gathering will be with the Germain Street church.

Aid Societies located near each other in other parts of the province would find mutual benefit from occasional reunions of this character, and the pastors of churches could render efficient aid, by uniting their efforts in the arrangement of an interesting programme.

For the Visitor.

BENEVOLENCE.

BY REV. C. H. WETTERBE.

The meaning of the word benevolence has become so much contracted, by popular usage, that its real wealth of signification is lost sight of, to a great extent, nowadays. It is commonly understood to mean that which pertains to the gift of many, or its equivalent, whereas, it is far more comprehensive, in its signification. Primarily, it means the disposition to do good. Then, out of this thought, and closely connected with it, come the ideas of love, mercy, kindness, tenderness, and generosity. Hence, the idea of contributing money, or something of a material or commercial character, to any object supposed to need such a contribution, is one which does not meet the demands of the word. Indeed, such a view treats the word with great injustice. It belittles the grand ideas which inhere in that noble word, and give it a character at once divine and dignified. Suppose

the popular conception of the word be applied to the character and conduct of the Saviour.

How utterly unsuited and fallacious is such a partial and paltry application of the term, in reference to the truly benevolent Son of God! When he appeared upon earth, in infantile form, the angelic announcement was: "Good will toward men." This signifies that Christ came, as a benevolent being, in behalf of men. As such, he came to confer upon mankind that which is immensely superior to mere money, or temporal goods. He came to unburden the affluence of a loving heart, and fill men's souls with its rich grace, and sweet fragrance. And, through his whole ministry, he impressively illustrated true benevolence, by deeds of mercy, and acts of kindness, and exhibitions of deep tenderness, and displays of far-reaching generosity. By his unselfish devotion to all classes of people, he has exhibited to us, the highest, and broadest, and best sense of pure benevolence. Along with every effort to effect men, there has flowed a current of love. Love has ever been the unsullied altar, on which there has been offered a profusion of genuine kindness, tenderness and mercy.

But, at no time has this been done at the expense of justice. In fact, he could not give expression to that broad benevolence, which he possesses, without being loyal to the principles of justice, or rightness; for justice is nothing more, nor less, than rightness. It is right to be benevolent, and the more truly benevolent a person is, the more nearly he approaches the correct standard of justice. But, let us concern ourselves with the question whether much of what we denominate benevolence, is truly such. Can we say, when we make a personal application of the matter, that, even in relation to giving money, our *good will* accompanies the gift? Do we give, not only because we love to give, but also because we love the object for which contribution is made? Is there any real piety for the object? Is there any conscious tenderness of heart towards those for whom the offering is made? If we cannot answer these questions, in the affirmative, we have reason to think that we have not yet attained to a personal and practical knowledge of true benevolence, and, therefore, fail to truly comprehend the mind of Christ. He had a disposition to do good, and, therefore, as might be expected, "He went about doing good." The giving of money is secondary, in comparison with the good will, the love and kindness, which should form the grand motive of all efforts to aid and elevate our fellowmen. And, in proportion to our possessing these characteristics, will our selfishness cease, and our hearts expand.

Correspondence.

Pastorless Fields.

With the assistance of the brethren who have kindly replied to my inquiries, I have succeeded in preparing a list showing the different fields of labor, as they are or ought to be arranged, in N. S. and P. E. I., together with the parties laboring on them, the date of their settlement, etc. A brief statement of some of the points brought out by this arrangement may be interesting and helpful to our cause.

1. We are pleased to find that for the most part the fields of labor, as at present occupied, are according to the natural and convenient grouping. In a few cases, however, this is not the case, and some little churches seem to be out in the cold. Who is to blame for this we are not prepared to say. It is greatly to be regretted, and should be remedied at once.

2. There are in N. S. and P. E. I., 112 fields of labor. Each requiring a pastor and each able to support one, either by themselves or with the assistance of the H. M. Board. These fields are in some cases single churches—in others groups of churches or mission stations. Some of them are larger than we would arrange had we more men and money.

3. Of these 112 fields 24 are at pre-

sent without pastors, and several of them have been without for some time. This is not due to indifference or to inability to support, but because the men cannot be obtained.

4. The prospect for pastors for these 24 vacant fields is by no means bright. Six of them may be able to secure men in the near future without robbing other churches. For the remaining 18 there may be one or two more from Newton, one more from Toronto, and perhaps one from Acadia that will be eligible for settlement in a few weeks.

The Board are corresponding with a brother in England with a view of securing a few men, but so far the prospect is not encouraging.

NEW BRUNSWICK.

Of the needs of N. B., I am not able to speak so positively, as I have not yet completed my classification or arrangement of the fields, partly because some have not answered inquiries addressed to them concerning the best method of grouping the churches, and partly from the existence of a large number of weak churches and the irregular manner in which they are at present supplied.

I know of some six or eight fields, however, that need men, and expect that a fuller survey will show that three times that number are needed.

THE LABORERS FEW.

In view of the foregoing may it not well be said "The laborers are few?" Surely there is need to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into his harvest.

STUDENT LABORERS.

There is one source, however, from which a temporary supply, for many of the fields, can be obtained in a few weeks. I refer to the students who will want employment during vacation, which for most of them will commence May 1st. Fields that have no prospect of settling a pastor, in the near future, will do well to avail themselves of these supplies, as they will thus obtain laborers for five months or thereabouts, and at the same time render assistance to the young men who are striving to prepare themselves for the work of the ministry.

If fields wanting student laborers will communicate with me, I will do all in my power to secure them suitable men. Dr. Welton informs me that he is authorized to say that, "if all the Maritime men do not return for mission work during the coming summer an equal number will be sent."

Send forward your applications at once. Last year some failed to secure men because they were too late in applying.

A. CONOON,

Cor.-Sec'y H. M. B.

Hebron, Feb. 28, 84.

Notes from York County.

To the Editors of the Visitor:—

Bro. Blackadar with myself began some special meetings at Prince William on the 13th of this month and continued them until the 22nd, when we were obliged to leave for our other appointments, not however without some good being done. I have been labouring with the Prince William Church one quarter of my time since the first of October and shall continue so until the first of May. Our meetings will be continued there this week. Rev. T. W. Saunders, the former pastor and resident minister of this place, is quite ill, having received a fall on the ice some weeks since, and is confined to his house, but is enjoying the consultations of the gospel. On the 20th we attended the funeral of an aged and worthy brother in the Lord, John D. Loundsburg, in the 92nd year of his age. This brother was born in the parish of Gagetown, Queens Co., and was baptized by the late Benjamin Coy 48 years since, and became a member of the Baptist Church in Canning. Sometime after he moved to the parish of Dumfries, in York county. I had no acquaintance with this brother, but he was spoken of by all who knew him as a devoted Christian. During the latter days of his life he worshipped with the Free Christian Baptist, there being a place of worship near his residence of that order. Rev. Mr. Traf-ton preached a very impressive sermon on the occasion. He leaves a