

The Christian Visitor,

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EDITORS:

REV. J. E. HOPPER, - St. John, N. B.
REV. E. M. SAUNDERS, - Halifax, N. S.

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.

Established 1848.

Wednesday, April 16, 1884.

We have been and are sending out statements to subscribers of the amount of indebtedness due the "VISITOR." Will those who receive them please do us the favor to remit at any early day, and thus help us to honorably meet our maturing liabilities on the paper.

SCIENTIFIC HOPE AND FAITH.

The winter is disappearing and hope and faith begin to take possession of the hearts of husbandmen. Heat and moisture supplant cold and ice. The frigid grip of winter is relaxed, and imprisoned nature breaks forth in joyous freedom. There is light in the cold winter, as well as in the balmy spring; but light without heat gives no freedom, no development. Forest and field may be bathed in floods of wintry light, but no bud opens, no twig expands. It may shimmer and flash over valleys and hills o'erspread with whitest snow, but there is no life in this light. When heat and moisture unite with light, then winter retreats and spring comes in its place. When these elements are combined, then a revived nature, a growing summer and a fruitful autumn are matters of hope and faith. The eye of the former looks for the first appearance of the tiny grass blade, the first indication of the swelling bud. He casts his eyes over the country, and discerns spots of green appearing on the grey, barren fields. Day by day he observes the forest changing from shade to shade nearer and nearer to vernal beauty. He stirs the soil, sows his seed, and plants his fields in happy communion with nature, and in sure and certain hope, that his expectations will not be disappointed nor his faith in her promises made vain. The barns and cellars are now about empty, but he believes they will be again filled. Where now he beholds but the first indications of verdure, then he expects to see a heavy fleece of waving grass. In place of the opening buds there is in the vision of his hope and to the eye of his faith golden fruitage on prudent branches of well laden trees. All this is in trust, because the conditions are favourable. His hopes and faith are so strong that he is scarcely conscious of their existence.

Shall the seeds germinate, bulbs burst, buds open and nature rejoice in a universal revival, and the higher form of life remain in the embrace of cold, dead winter? The spiritual world too has a sun far more glorious than the natural sun. From him emanates heat that revives but never scorches. Moisture descends from the spiritual heavens in refreshing showers to water the weary heritage. Why not have faith and hope for a spiritual harvest? The living word of God is not bound. This is life eternal to know the only true God

and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Coming into fellowship with the Almighty through Jesus of Nazareth, drives winter from the heart of man. Then it is past, and the singing of birds is heard in the land. The mellow notes of the turtle dove proclaim spring. The barns will be filled and the vats burst with new wine. Life is in the world in all its gradations. The plants, quickened with their principle of life, absorb and assimilate inorganic matter; animal life absorbs vegetable life and thrives thereby; man touches the natural world at various points, and makes larger appropriations to himself; and beyond and above all this human bodies and human souls are in contact with God, and through Christ appropriate to themselves the life that is in the eternal One himself. This is life eternal, the highest, broadest and most productive of all the forms of life. It is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

THE LABORERS.

The general in command gets the honor of the victory; he awards praise to his officers and men. It is not possible to know just how much each man, each subordinate and the commanding officer have contributed to a successful battle. Sometimes complaints are heard that the soldiers and the officers of lower rank do not get their meed of praise and share of honor. Thoughts of a kindred character are occasionally expressed, relative to the victories gained in religious battles. As in military literature the name of the leader is chiefly recognized, so in revivals of religion only the name of the minister is mentioned in connection with the work. If in earthly warfare, it is impossible to know how much each actor contributes to the victory, how much more in spiritual warfare.

The variety of agencies employed makes any attempt to determine by whom the work is done impossible. Every prayer offered, all instruction in Scripture, all warning, have entered into the aggregate of means by which a soul is turned to God. These labors in some instances spread over many years before they issue in leading those influenced to humble themselves before God and accept salvation in Christ. Some of the prayers have been offered in secret and some in public. The secret prayers may have been the effectual ones. Labors that contribute to the salvation of a soul may, like seed, be buried long before they appear in good results. What is done by one in secret may be supplanted by another in public, and thus the work of one melts into the work of another, till no one unless it be Omniscience can know just how much each worker had done in leading a soul to Christ. But whether we regard the work of man or the workers, it is plain that Paul may plant and Apollos water, but it is God who gives the increase. It is not of works lest any man should boast. The Spirit of God can work in connexion with or apart from human agency. It is therefore erroneous to infer, that the minister or evangelist, who happens to be in the field when the final surrender is made, is the only one who has been instrumental in the salvation of those who have declared themselves saved in the Lord. In some cases all the work, except a decision to make a public profession, has been done for years before baptism. All that was done at the time of a public profession was the revival of hope and faith long enjoyed and the open acknowledgement of Christ.

All are workers together with God. Sometimes ministers and Christians can trace their words directly to end of convicting sinners; but even in those cases the prayers of some one living or dead may have been the prevailing cause of the presence and power of the Spirit to convict and change the heart.

From such a view of the subject as this, all should learn to spend and be spent for Christ, and to take no praise or honor; but to say we are but unprofitable servants, having done only that which was our duty to do. Every talent should be used, and every gift employed. There is room for evangelists, pastors and teachers. The

gifts of exhortation, of conversation, reasoning and declaring truth should never be left unused. The vineyard is abundantly large for every laborer. The day is short. Here the rewards can not be evenly distributed; but when all appear at last before the great Judge, then those faithful over a few things, as well as those faithful over many things, will be rewarded.

CHINESE GORDON AGAIN.

While the whole world is waiting with deep anxiety to see the result of General Gordon's mission to the Soudan, we may return to him again. We are more and more convinced that trust in God is the secret of this wonderful man's power. It may be that he made mistakes; doubtless he has done so in several instances where he has failed to accomplish his undertakings; but it is evident that he has wielded an influence for justice and truth which places him at the head of contemporary philanthropists. Ti-Ta—the highest rank given in China—was conferred on him by the Emperor of that country. He was made Pasha by the Khedive of Egypt and has high rank in the British army.

General Gordon is 50 years old, and has for ancestors distinguished military men. One of them fought under Wolfe on the Plains of Abraham. He worked in the trenches side by side with the present Lord Wolsley, and there gained a reputation which led to his being appointed to settle the boundaries of Russia and Turkey. In 1860 he was ordered to China; and was present at the attack on Peking and the sack of the summer palace. It will be remembered that a terrible and cruel rebellion, threatening the destruction of China was in progress at that time, led by a fanatical schoolmaster. Hundreds of thousands of ferocious men had gathered to his standard and were overrunning and destroying the country. The Chinese army could not stand before these wild and terrible rebels. An appeal was made to England for a general to lead the imperial army against the rebellion. General Gordon was named, and undertook the difficult and perilous task. He led the celestial troops carrying no arms when he went into action, except a small cane. With this he indicated the points he wished attacked. His genius and calmness inspired confidence and his army was everywhere victorious over the rebels. After the rebellion was crushed, the Emperor forwarded to him fifty thousand dollars. He left China as poor as he entered it, having distributed the fifty thousand dollars amongst the troops who fought under him.

On returning to his native land, he refused to be honored or feted. He settled at Gravesend where for six years he superintended the Thames defences. Here he devoted himself to neglected children. He took them out of the gutter, cleaned and taught them, and got them employment on the sea and on the land. The workhouse and the infirmary were places to which he constantly visited. The sick often sent for him instead of the clergy to minister to them in their dying moments. He sent the gold medal given him by the Emperor of China to be used for the cotton sufferers in the cotton famine in Manchester.

After spending two years as English commissioner, he consented to undertake the administration of the Soudan, but would only take £2,000 per annum. He followed Sir Samuel Baker. In this country he was a terror to the slave traders, a wonderful organizer and a successful governor. He gave three years to this work. His "charmed life" is simply a life of entire trust in God. Difficulties and the imperilling of life itself are as nothing to him when something for God and humanity is to be done. Previous to leaving the last time for the Soudan, he had spent a year in Palestine. The world is now watching in feverish expectancy to see what will be the result of General Gordon's daring act of going into the midst of fanatical tribes to restore order and advance civilization.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

THROUGH the *Watchman* we learn the following in reference to the finances of the American Baptist Missionary Union. It looks more encouraging than many hoped for:—

At the time we go to press, the accounts of the Missionary Union were not all in, but according to the best estimates which the Treasurer is able to give, the deficiency will amount to not more than \$38,000. Further remittances which are known to be on the way may reduce this estimate some thousands of dollars. A large legacy, not looked for, of \$9,000, came in on Monday last, with sundry liberal donations; and had a much larger legacy been seasonably realized, as was hoped, the above deficit would have been fully met.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED STATISTICS of the Methodist Episcopal Church give the number of infant baptisms for the year last past as 55,876, a decrease from the year before of 929, the adult baptisms at 61,862, an increase of 4,621, making the total number of baptisms for the year 117,738, an increase over the preceding year of 3,692. These figures show pretty conclusively that infant baptism in the Methodist denomination in the United States is dying out, and that adult baptism is rapidly taking its place. In this we rejoice because it shows on the part of a most worthy people a nearer approach to Christ's command and apostolic practice.

A WRITER in the Boston *Watchman* calls the editor of the N. Y. *Evangelist*, who prophesies about believers baptism being destined to pass away into forgetfulness, an "ecclesiastical Wiggins." Well that's pretty hard on our Canadian prophet to put his predictions into the same category as those of the *Evangelist*. The former foretold great storms and much water, the latter predicts agreement over little water. If our weather prophet were not a Pedobaptist we would advise him to institute legal proceedings against the *Watchman* for defamation of character. We believe however that a Wiggins storm is coming that will sweep away all sprinkling bowls.

REV. DR. McARTHUR, of New York, has been visiting Chicago and lecturing to the Theological Seminary students and addressing the Baptist Social Union. Dr. McArthur is an intense worker, and believes that the Kingdom of Heaven is to be taken by violence. He abhors lazy people but sounds the praises of those who "strive" to enter the strait gate and "strive" to run in the narrow way. There is always inspiration in his words. He has the happy faculty of imparting his spirit to his audience. His own church is thoroughly imbued with his fervor, and self sacrificing spirit. It is no small honor to be pastor of the most benevolent church in New York, and that honor Dr. McArthur enjoys. He is a gift of Canada to the States, and Uncle Sam is appreciative.

REV. A. McDONALD, formerly pastor of Winnipeg Baptist Church, our North Western correspondent, is now located at Grafton, D. T. Through his courtesy we are indebted for papers setting forth the capabilities of the North Western country. Bro. McDonald has seen some pretty hard pioneer life, but we judge from a notice of his work that these days are not ended. He preaches three times a Sabbath, and sooner than disappoint a congregation in another town, walks through rain and mud (and such mud as Western Prairies produce can hardly be dreamed of by Blueseas), rather than disappoint his congregation. Grafton has a good Baptist Church with favorable prospects for growth. The town has already some 2,000 inhabitants and is growing rapidly.

We are in receipt of a catalogue of the Richmond Institute, of which Rev. C. H. Corey, D. D., is president, and Mr. E. A. Corey, A. B., a professor. These gentlemen are both New Brunswickers. The Institution reports in all 114 students of whom 66 have the ministry in view. In the past the school has been both literary and theological. Hereafter it will be theological only, and the Home Mission Society, under whose direction it is managed, will seek to make it perform for the Colored ministry of the south what the Theological Seminaries of the north are doing for our ministry. The location of the Institution for this

purpose is the best possible, as Richmond is largely a Baptist city in the midst of Baptist surroundings. Dr. Corey has the requisite scholarship and zeal to make this new departure a success and we heartily wish him God-speed.

DR. HOWARD OSGOOD, than whom there are few more learned and honest Biblical critics, in an article in the *Religious Herald* takes Prof. Lyon and the modern school of Biblical critics to task rather sharply. He shows that they claim, as proved, that which the majority of the best scholarship shows to be entirely unproved and fallacious. Take for instance the authorship of Isaiah, 40 to 66 chapters. The destructive critics claim that it was not written by Isaiah, and such men as Hengstenberg, Keil, Delitzsch, Alexander, Payne Smith, Plumptre, assert just the contrary and they are unsurpassed as scholars. Of Prof. Lyon and the destructive school Dr. Osgood says:—

These extreme critics assure us most positively against plain facts of to-day in their own sphere. This is not an encouragement to follow them blindly 2,500 years off. They tell us in their own writings that they have prejudged the very points in dispute, miracle and prophecy, and that they are calm, impartial spirits. Our heads whirl with these impartial contradictions. And we conclude that it is safest for us not to depend on the arm of contradictory flesh, but to study our Bibles with earnest prayer to God, that he would fulfil his promise to lead us in to his truth.

For the Visitor.

But Meat Commendeth Us Not to God.

BY L. E. WORTMAN.

The principle here enunciated is made prominent in many expressions of Christ and the Apostles. It is, indeed, an essential element of their teaching, a truth plainly and repeatedly set forth, for the evident reason that it constituted such a radical difference between the Christian, and all other forms of religion—between even the old dispensation of law and continual sacrifice, and the new one of faith in a completed sacrifice.

I suppose the Apostle's full meaning would allow us to substitute other words for meat. Is it not possible that some men expect that the erection of a church building at their own cost, will commend them? I wonder if some may not suppose that giving to the support and spread of the gospel will furnish the commendation, or that they will surely gain God's approval by "observing times and seasons"—by denying themselves at one time something in food or in other enjoyment, which at other times they freely permit to themselves.

I do not wish to appear, or to be, cynical or suspicious. I do not accept or sympathize with the idea that the man who gives largely for religious or charitable purposes ought to be regarded as thus seeking to commend himself to God, until he proves the contrary. It would better accord with even the charity of British law, which considers a man innocent until proven guilty, to believe that this benevolence is but the outgrowth of that consecration of heart which God accepts. Perhaps in this age this is always the case, although in the past men vowed shrines for deliverance or erected them for penance. In the matter of meat at certain times, and abstinence at others, I can understand how difficult it must have been for those in Christ's day to throw off the old ceremonial that appealed so directly to their senses, and accept the new doctrine of faith and obedience; and I can, I think, understand the inclination of some men, who are earnest and devout, to retain somewhat of the old form. It is most natural to bend the knee in prayer. The position does not honor God or secure his blessing, but it is an attitude suitable to feelings of reverence, humility, gratitude and entreaty in the heart—tends somewhat, perhaps, to induce and strengthen these feelings—and hence is commonly accepted as befitting the suppliant. So, certain restraints on appetite or inclinations, it may be argued, help to bring the heart into such a frame of submission and worship as God will approve.

The proposition at sight seems reasonable, yet it strikes me there are grave objections to be urged. If certain physical conditions must be observed at stated times, to fit us for the worship of God, it would seem to

imply that we may ordinarily attempt that worship under disadvantages, or present it in circumstances that must render it less acceptable—that we observe only at certain seasons such conditions as enable us to "draw nigh to God." It seems to suppose ordinary indulgence in some excess, rather than to enforce the maxim that the wise man eats to live. It might in some minds awaken or strengthen the idea that occasional penance can furnish excuse for habitual indulgence.

Truly Christian and devoted men may find in such observance only an aid to faith and a form for its expression, but is there not danger that many may come to regard it as a substitute for that essential principle? It is only too natural for men to look at that which is tangible and material rather than to seek after what is invisible and spiritual. Thus is it not possible that the devout man who himself can discern and discriminate, may place a stumbling block in the way of his less discriminating, or less devoted fellows? May not that which is to him a means, become to others an end, and instead of furnishing a medium through which they shall look to Christ, constitute a veil that shall hide him from their eyes? Instead of bringing the wounded heart to the Healer, supply a soothing salve that shall be mistaken for a cure, and keep the patient from the Great Physician? Man in his natural inclination to worship has ever shown a tendency to content himself with outward observance. The gospel teaching is constantly directed to the overthrow of this error, and it is certainly most desirable that nothing in Christian teaching should be susceptible of construction into its encouragement.

For the Visitor.

Perseverance in Converts.

The marked spiritual awakening and the large ingathering of precious souls among our churches of late, have been greatly cheering to all true Christian workers. Pastors have been encouraged and strengthened; churches have manifested new life; families have been made glad in the conversion of sons and daughters, fathers and mothers; and the whole land is filled with a feeling of gratitude on account of the revival influences which have been experienced so widely.

In all these pleasing features of our present religious efforts we rejoice in common with our brethren throughout the Provinces; and it is our sincere prayer that the good work may become more and more powerful and wide-spread until not an unsaved soul shall remain.

Meanwhile a most important inquiry passes upon our attention. What is being done to hold the converts already received into our churches? We fear that some zealous workers are not careful in relation to this matter. They act on the theory that our chief business is to bring new converts into the church and then let them take care of themselves. The grand old doctrine of the perseverance of the saints slips in conveniently as a sufficient guarantee of the wisdom of this course. But this will never do; and we are profoundly impressed with the idea that if the lamentable declension of spirituality in our churches, during periods of religious apathy, and the number of those who go back into the world were published as fully and as regularly as the results of revivals are given to the public, our humiliation would more than balance our present joy.

We believe in the perseverance of the saints, but we must always feel sure that men are saints before we can get much comfort from the application of the good old doctrine to their individual cases. Our young converts should be taught to persevere. They have but begun the Christian race, and they should not feel contented in merely entering into the arena. In other words, their spiritual culture and development should be regarded as being quite as important as their spiritual birth. They should feel daily that they are now living for Christ, working in his vineyard, "growing in grace and in