

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 arrearages 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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THE CHURCH PORCH.

There are in every Baptist community a goodly number in the church, a limited number in the porch, and a large number out of doors. No explanation is needed from these in the house, to account for their presence in that place. The open Bible warrants their entrance and defines their position. Their doctrines, duties and relations to the world are well understood. Equally true are the sentiments and connexions of those in the wide world. They decline to accept the faith and manner of life of those bound by personal professions of religion. It is true, they are responsible for all that God requires of them, but they have never professed acceptance of it. Those in the church and those outside the church are alike required by the Bible to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and walk in all his commandments and ordinances blameless. Church members acknowledge this in their baptism before the world. But what of those in the porch? By what authority do men and women crowd the entrance to the church porch, troubling all within and blocking the way against those who are without. They rise for prayers, sing the praises of the sanctuary, seek the company of the pious, especially that of the minister, aid by their means and their presence the work of the church, and still they come no further than the porch. Ask them why they remain so long at the entrance of the house of God, and they will give an endless number of reasons. The worldliness of the deacons, the shortcomings of many who profess religion, are some of the first excuses brought forward. Then turning to themselves, they say, we do not want to unite with the church till we can live more consistently than those do, who are now in the church. It seems not to occur to them that they are disobedient and inconsistent. The positive command to repent, believe and be baptized, is treated by them, as if they had power to condition it, so far as they are concerned, by excuses. One would suppose they had found authority in the Bible for disregarding the plain commands of God's holy word. They take a position between the church and the world, a trouble to the former and a stumbling block to the latter; and there they remain, in some cases, through a long life. Persons taking this relation forget that disobedience is as the sin of witchcraft; and that to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. This deliberate rejection of the positive requirements of the Saviour after they had been enlightened, must be very offensive in the sight of God. Judging from the effects upon the disobedient, the character of the sin is alarming. Any resolutions that they may at first have indulged of going forward in the way of the Lord,

become weaker and weaker, till at length they appear lost to the claims of gospel ordinances. They have no growth in grace, and their usefulness in the world is of a very doubtful character. The correctness of their lives, contrasted with the laxity of many who profess religion, helps the world in its belief that the world and the church are not essentially different. The church porch is simply an entrance. It is not a dwelling place. It should be kept free for any who might wish to come in.

SCATTERED BY JEHOVAH.

It sometimes happens that a centralized community is scattered abroad by royal mandate for the purpose of making the people better citizens. God's purpose was of this character when he dispersed the human family from their chosen centre—the great city and the great tower of Babel.

The brevity of the history is such that we do not know just what the forms of evil would have been had men been permitted to go on with their grand scheme. This much, however, is certain, pride and a sense of security and greatness would have led to forgetfulness of God. After the flood God commanded Noah and his family to replenish the earth. This indicated his will. The whole earth was made for man. His welfare depended upon conformity to God's will in this respect.

The pre-existing Christ is watching over that race, for which in plan and promise his life had already been given. Their welfare was as dear to him then as the welfare of the world was to him when he sojourned among the people of Palestine. His delights were with the sons of men. The world's purpose was to become great in material wealth and strength. Then, as now, Christ, out of kindness, came down and put an end to a work on which the people had set their hearts. The one speech and language is confounded. The tower and city building is brought to an end. Plans and labors are brought to a stand still in the confusion of sounds where there had been plain language. The ambition for perfecting the great tower and city gave place to the spirit of emigration and adventure. There are the city walls and the tower unfinished, forsaken by the multitudes of workmen. There it will remain for all time to come, a monument of the vain ambition of man. From the top of Babel the confused streams of humanity may be seen flowing in several directions. It seems from the facts, deduced by linguists and ethnologists, that the three Noabian families were held together by blood, and by language saved from the wreck of the common tongue. The Hamites, understanding each other, flowed away to the East and West, to Canaan and to the Nile and northern Africa. It became "the land of Ham." The descendants of Japheth held by similar bonds turned their faces toward the West, and drifted along through Asia Minor, over to Europe and so to Germany and the British. The Shemites went South and West and North-west.

In the mounds of the East around the Euphrates are buried the ambitions, plans and hopes of the whole human family. Instead of having a great rallying centre, they, by a sudden judgment were rent asunder and dispersed over the face of the earth.

A curiosity is here awakened to know what would have been the outcome, had the ancient world been permitted to work out its scheme. How high would that tower have been carried, and what would have been the dimensions and character of the city of which Babel would have been the centre and ornament? If the work had gone on to completion, and had it been preserved as the Egyptian pyramids have been, it would have in all time been the central point to which all tourists would have turned their steps. What volumes would have been written about Babel. But it was among the many ancient monuments doomed by God to overthrow.

There is in this fragment of history some means of knowing how much

man had advanced in civilization. Bitumen and burnt brick were used in the building of the city and the monument. There is much implied in these plain facts. Art and science have made a great degree of progress where cities are built. Government, luxuries and various products of skilled labor are involved in a city and city life.

In the Book of Job, which it is believed belongs to this period, is seen with a good degree of clearness the conflict of economic, social and civil life. At this point in the Book of Genesis, the restless ambition of the young world is evident. There has been apparent a vigorous energy and an unrestrained courage from the days of Adam till now. The people previous to the deluge were daring and headlong in wickedness. Very soon after that event, the great Nimrod led his followers in the chase and in founding an empire and in building cities. The great plan then took possession of the race. Now that is destroyed, but emigration and adventure give and outlet to the ambition of the restless population. Over it God presides. Every movement and every disappointment unfolds plans of his purpose, grace and mercy. The kind Father follows his wandering family, and, by disappointing them in their worldly and sinful courses, endeavors to lead them to himself. How different the history of man would have been, had the counsels of the Lord been sought, and had he guided the early generations. He would have led them as a great shepherd leads his flock. But in these early times, as in all the generations since, man has chosen his own way. Mercy and judgment have been mingled in the dealings of God with his people. Up to this time, nothing of open idolatry has appeared, but it has been working. It is probable that even before the flood its elements had been at work among the people. The condition of mind that begot the plan to build Babel, will soon produce idolatry. So soon as God is forgotten, something must be put in his place. They did not like to retain God in their knowledge. He will be pushed into the background. If man indulges in great and vain purposes, he does not like to have them examined by a present, holy God. This God is therefore dismissed. It is of great importance to find the earliest signs and forms of idol worship. At the dispersion, it almost seems that idolatry was taking form, and the visitation of God's judgment was intended to arrest the thoughts then tending downward, and lift them to heaven again.

For the Visitor.

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

CHICACOLE.

On October 9th, 1883, Rev. J. R. Hutchinson started for a tour in the direction of Akalatampara, in company with three of his helpers,—Paulos, Juggiah, and Sookriah. In the ten days they spent on the field they visited thirty-one villages, in some speaking several times. Rev. Mr. Hutchinson says:—"We avoided discussion. Our aim was to preach the gospel of Christ. To do this in such a way that our hearers might get an intelligent idea of the whole, we divided the 'old, old story' into a number of parts, e. g., The creation and Fall of Man, The Birth and Life of Christ, Salvation and how we can get it. Each speaker took one of these subjects in order. In all the villages but three, the people listened with attention and respect. Nowhere did the preaching degenerate into a profitless war of words. The Spirit seemed to have prepared our way. May it abide now that we have gone, and sanctify the truth."

"Let me tell you something of Sookriah, the latest addition to our staff of helpers. He is an Oriyah man, who studied for a time in the Berhampore (Hindoo) College. He was converted to Christianity in Berhampore, and coming to Chicacole shortly afterwards, fell in with the missionary of the London Society, and was received into that church. His wife had already been baptized in Berhampore by a Baptist missionary. These events occurred about five years ago. Sookriah, although in a

pedo-baptist society was a Baptist at heart, and made a number of efforts to unite with us. For years he felt dissatisfied with his position and condition. At last he reached the point where he felt that to have any peace of mind or conscience he must join the Baptists. Although I knew from conversation with others the state of his mind, I had not talked with him personally on the subject, until about two months ago. He then told me at some length his desire to be a Baptist—to follow the commands of his Saviour—and asked me what he should do. As the safest course that presented itself to me, I advised him to pray and follow the light which God would give him. A few weeks later he went without my knowledge, to Vizianagram, talked the matter over again with the missionary of the London Society, and resigned his work—that of a colporteur, which he had been doing in a satisfactory manner for nearly a year. As far as my knowledge goes no one had advised him to take this step. I certainly had not; nor had he any hope of work from me. He then came to Chicacole, asked for baptism, was received by the church, and baptized on the morning of the 4th (Oct.). The same afternoon he and his wife were welcomed into church fellowship. Ever since I came to Chicacole these two had been constant in their attendance upon the meetings, and had contributed regularly to the funds of the church.

I do not, as a rule, favor the reception of converts from other missions; but in this case the circumstances were of such a peculiar character, and the man so well known to us all that I had no doubt of my duty.

About the last of the month the wife of colporteur Juggiah obtained work with a Eurasian woman living at Urlam, a village some four miles from Chicacole, and a desirable location for one of our helpers. Accordingly I have moved Juggiah to the place which he will make his home for the present. He and his wife are to come to Chicacole on each communion Sunday."

"On the 10th of November I started on a tour by Calingapatam and in the direction of Tekkali, with all the helpers—four preachers and a colporteur. I expected to spend the remainder of the month on the field, but was soon turned back on account of severe illness. This was a great disappointment; but the men went on and spent eight days in preaching which will be undoubtedly blessed. An aggregate of sixty days was made during the month. On the 4th three women were baptized at Akalatampara, by Baganan Bayrah, and one backslider was restored to church fellowship. On the 18th three more were baptized by our good brother at Tekkali, and the Lord's Supper administered to the little band of rejoicing believers there."

"At the station the month has been full of work. In addition to the time necessarily given to the study of the language, I have met the men since their return once each day for Bible study, besides our regular Sunday school Bible lesson. I want to take the men through a course of Bible study, between this and the next hot season, of such a nature as will prepare them for a couple of months' stiff work there in the same line. Just now we are studying the Acts. This is of course extra effort for me as well as for them; but in this deliciously cool weather one seems able to do twice the amount of work of the hot season. The month has been one of advance upon the whole. By the blessing of God seven have been added to the church, and the general work of the station has gone on smoothly and prosperously."

"The W. M. Aid Societies ought at an early date to send out one or two lady missionaries. The need of reinforcement is urgent."

For a club of five new subscribers to the *Record* at its subscription price 50c each we will send the party getting up the club a gold dollar. For a club of twelve with cash subscriptions we will give a half sovereign, and for a club of twenty a sovereign. Boys and Girls try the work and let us hear from you.

For the Visitor.

CONFIRMING THE CHURCHES.

BY L. E. W.

The ardent zeal of Paul is universally recognized. His record leaves no possibility for classing him amongst the "double minded." His convictions were strong and unequivocal, and his industry and energy were sufficient for the carrying of them out in practice. His was a disposition that might rather need restraining than spurring into activity.

With this New way but lately opened up to the disciples' understanding, and the responsibility committed to them of making it known to the world which knew it not, it was certainly an important question how they might employ their time to best advantage in the work.

They have already learned that God was no respecter of persons, that no limits of race or country were to bound the efficacy of Christ's atonement, and they had received the commission to carry the good tidings to every creature. With so broad a field before them, and conscious of the brief time which is allotted man to work, we might easily suppose that they would have hastened on, and, so fast as the Gospel obtained a footing in one place, have sought another, revisiting no city where a church had been established, until all—so far as they could carry it—had heard the truth.

With all their evident zeal, however, to accomplish this, they decide to go over the scenes of their former labors before extending their field. Paul understood the necessity of driving a nail in a sure place, and of clinching it there. He knew that work half done is often little better than work undone. He was aware that his unfinished task must be committed to others, that his influence must live as it was transmitted through other lives and labors, and he elected to give sufficient time to make those centres sure, from which and through which the light should radiate until the fulness of the Gentiles should be illuminated. That men had received the word, and churches had been organized, was not enough. The brethren must be confirmed, must be built up in the most holy faith, must now fully have the faith that was to make them free, and fit them to be used in extending that freedom, when Paul and Barnabas no longer lived, save in their works.

The lesson which this decision of the Apostles teaches, is emphasized by the conviction that their wisdom was inspired and approved by the Holy Spirit. No interposition was made to stop the execution of this plan, though later, when designing to begin another work, the Spirit suffered them not.

While we may learn here the importance of confirming the brethren, of teaching, as well as preaching, yet we need not look for any support of the idea that we should affix territorial limit to the proclamation of the gospel, or wait till all our fellow-countrymen have accepted it, before we carry it abroad. So soon as he has assured himself that the churches which he has established, hold the faith aright—even though they be but oases in the desert around—Paul listens to the call of God given through the vision of the man of Macedonia, and proposes to go thither.

ACADIA SEMINARY.

We are pleased to learn that this Institution is doing its work this year in even more than its usual satisfactory manner. The staff of instruction is very complete, affording an opportunity to young ladies at a very moderate expense and under the best of social and christian influence, to secure a thorough mental outfit, whether the desideratum be the usual solid branches of a general education, or what are sometimes called "the accomplishments."

We think we may justly say that Acadia Seminary gives prominence to all those studies that go to make modern culture in its broadest sense. Systematic and efficient instruction is given in English, French, mathematics, science, music, instrumental and vocal, painting and drawing and elocution, and the faculties for teach-

ing these several subjects are such as should command the confidence of all patrons of the school. Besides six lady teachers giving all their time, and two others giving a part of their time, the Institution avails itself of the instruction given in the Academy, and enjoys the same advantages for teaching and illustration in Chemistry and Physics that are enjoyed in the College.

During the present academical year there have been in attendance 72 pupils in all. There are at present 58, of which number 30 are boarders.

The staff of instructors has lately undergone some change. Miss O'More has taken Miss Gourley's place, and we learn that she is giving excellent satisfaction. Miss Hitchens, a pupil of Mrs. Morrill, of Boston, gives instruction in vocal music and vocal culture. She is doing superior work, using the Italian method by which the voice is strengthened and has imparted to it a peculiar resonance, which distinguishes the results of this method from those of the common one. Eighteen pupils are studying under Miss Hitchens and are enthusiastic in their work. Miss Dodge still has charge of the instrumental music, but she requires assistance this term. There are 28 in this department, and we feel assured that at no school in these Provinces can they get better instruction. Miss Wallace, a pupil of Prof. Marshall, of Boston, is giving instruction to 38 pupils in elocution. This branch is deservedly popular and the results thus far have been very encouraging. At the last entertainment given by the Pierian Society and at the closing exercises of last term the fruits of this training were very apparent.

The Principal, Miss Graves, must be considered largely responsible for the efficient condition of this school and for the healthful, moral and intellectual tone that prevades it. We understand that she is aiming at still greater efficiency and is steadily raising the standard of graduation. The class to be graduated next June, take, we learn, a very high rank.

It is very strange that with all these moral and intellectual advantages provided for our rising womanhood, many parents should send their daughters to convent schools, where the training in all fundamental subjects is notoriously superficial, merely that they may be made more proficient in a few subjects that are of very little substantial advantage.—*Com.*

Correspondence.

HELPS OR HINDRANCES, WHICH?

To the Editors of the Visitor:—

The denomination has been reminded more than once of late that our treasuries are empty. In order to cure this evil, agents have been appointed by our different Boards to visit the churches and ask for aid in this time of need. Far be it from me to doubt but that they consider this the best means for the removal of the difficulty. Some are not sure that agencies give us the best possible results. It appears to me that *Systematic Benevolence* is the remedy for empty treasuries. It may be said that all our churches are not working upon a system, hence the necessity for agents to visit them. Very well, then, let the agent understand that it is his especial work to look after such fields. We have pastorless churches whose contributions are very small, but according to the Year Book we have churches with pastors who give almost nothing into the benevolent funds of the body. Let the agent operate upon these. My observation leads me to the conclusion that agents generally visit the churches most accessible, and in most cases they are the very ones, working by a rule—a principle.

We sometimes feel shut up to one of two courses in this matter of christian giving, either commit the work of collecting funds for denominational work entirely into the hands of agents, or do it ourselves. The latter seems to me to be the wiser one, for two reasons:—

(1) When churches are working upon the principle of systematic giv-