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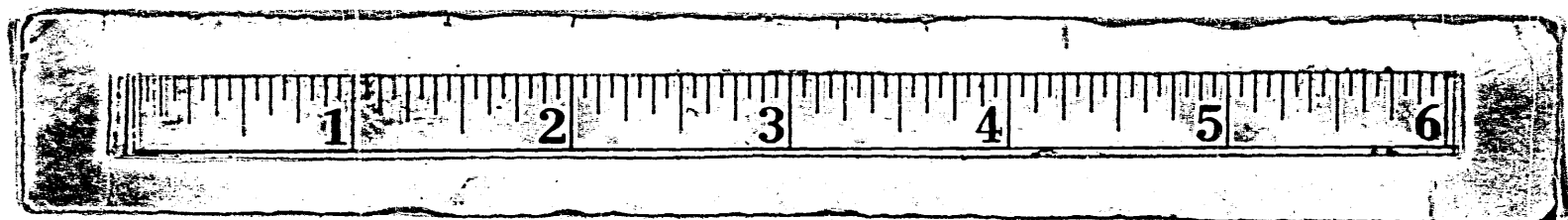
SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

127 NINTH AVENUE, NORTH • NASHVILLE 3, TENNESSEE

**THE
COMMISSION**

1856-1861

PUB. NO. 455



WE WANT THE BEST...
 Each one of these...
 subscription...
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THE COMMISSION.

1856.

Why Publish a Magazine.

Many of those to whom we send this number of the COMMISSION, will, we doubt not hail it as a friend whom they have long desired to see. But others may be disposed to ask, "Why publish a magazine?" To such a brief statement of the reasons which have influenced us may be desirable.

In attempting to carry out the commission of our Redeemer as it relates to heathen nations, the Foreign Mission Board is of course dependent upon the churches. From them must come the missionaries who are to labor, and from them the means to sustain these missions, and to meet other expenses incident to the work. The work of converting the world belongs, not to the Board but to the CHURCHES which they represent. The Board is only the agent of the churches. It can do nothing but what they choose to do through it. It is the duty of the Board to seek to interest them in this work, and judiciously to apply the means placed at their disposal for accomplishing it. To interest the churches in this enterprize they must be made acquainted with the facts of the case. No man can be interested in that of which he is ignorant. But something more than a mere knowledge of facts is necessary. The moral

bearings of these facts must be pointed out and urged upon the attention, and the duties which they enforce explained and pressed upon the conscience. Now, how can this be done?

The officers of the Board, whether Secretaries or Agents, can see comparatively few of the members of the churches; and when they do meet them they can have but little opportunity of imparting information. Their visits are necessarily transient, and their attention must be given mainly to collecting funds. However valuable the influence exerted by these officers, it cannot be expected to be permanent unless followed up by some instrumentality which shall serve to keep the subject before the mind, and deepen the interest excited. To effect these objects we must rely mainly upon the press. By this means only can we reach the pastors and other members who give character and direction to the efforts of the brotherhood. And only through the pastors and the class of members referred to, can we reach the masses of the membership.

Unless we can interest the pastors of our churches sufficiently to cause them to realize their personal obligation to bring their members into co-operation with us, our work must languish. The contributions of a few

giving regularly from principle and the occasional donations of others, stimulated by the presence of an agent, will never afford funds sufficient for the worthy prosecution of our missions. Nor will our brethren and sisters sufficiently realize the obligation to personal consecration to the salvation of the heathen to induce them to offer themselves as missionaries. And again, under the existing state of things there will never be that *united, earnest, prevalent spirit of prayer* in the absence of which we have no reason to expect a large measure of the divine blessing.

To impart information, to enforce duty, to keep the subject of missions constantly before the minds of Pastors and brethren, to induce self-devotion to missionary work, to excite and guide the spirit of prayer with reference to missions, we need the aid of the press.

But, why will not the Home and Foreign Journal do? The Journal we regard as a valuable auxiliary.—We could not afford to dispense with it. We hope that those who may take the Commission will not on that account stop the Journal. But will our brethren think that twice a month is too often to have us talk about sending the Gospel to the Heathen? Especially when both our papers will cost only \$1.25 per annum? The Journal is doing a good work, and we trust that instead of fourteen thousand subscribers—the present number—it may soon have thirty or fifty thousand. But the Journal alone does not afford sufficient space for the publication of much that ought to be spread before the minds of our reading brethren. Besides, we need something of a more convenient and permanent form for preserving the history of our Missions, and of our con-

vention. We desire something suitable for binding. We trust that many who take the magazine will have the volumes bound for their libraries. And we are placing no vain dependence in our *own abilities* when we say that all such, apart from the letters and Journals of our missionaries, will thus add to their libraries annually a volume rich in gems of thought and pious influences. *The Magazine shall be such a volume.* THE HEADS AND THE HEARTS OF OUR ABLEST BRETHREN WILL BE BROUGHT INTO REQUISITION TO MAKE IT SUCH IF IT IS POSSIBLE TO SECURE THEIR AID. Of the practicability of this we do not doubt. Take the COMMISSION and see if this pledge be not redeemed. P.

To Southern Baptist Pastors.

DEAR BROTHERS.

I. The word of God Promises that this world shall be won, willingly to submit to the reign of the Messiah. Not even concerning the incarnation, the sufferings, the cruel death of the son of God, are the explicit prophecies so numerous as are those which foretell the universal extension, perpetual duration and extatic blessedness of the spiritual kingdom of Christ. "In Him all nations shall be blessed"—"the ends of the earth shall fear Him"—"the heathen shall become His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth His possession." "The spirit poured out from on high" shall transform "the wilderness into a fruitful field and the fruitful field into a forest"—"the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea"—"the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and all nations shall flow

unto it." And that *this* world, and not a new one created out of its ashes, as Millenarians contend, shall be spiritually regenerated, St. John in enraptured vision distinctly foresaw ;—"great voices from heaven, said, the kingdoms of **THIS WORLD** are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever." Bounds not every pious heart with rapture at the assurances of such joy to our world?

II. Through the agency of the churches of Christ is this sublime purpose to be effected. "Out of zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." The last words of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as He stepped into the cloud-chariot that bore Him from their sight, were, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature ; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; he that believeth not shall be damned."

Upon the churches that day represented on Mt. Olivet, was imposed a solemn charge never to be abrogated, while the object specified remained unfulfilled. That charge was intended to be perpetually binding upon the churches. If the first disciples so far obeyed it, that "their sound went out into all the earth and their words to the end of the world," yet any subsequent necessity in the condition of our race, must re-impose the obligation and demand a similar zeal and devotion from the churches. It is in the nature of things as suitable and necessary that the nations of the nineteenth century should hear the gospel, as it was that the nations of the first century should hear it. We have no warrant to conclude that our Lord meant to enact any special provisions in favor of the first ages of the church. The gospel is as necessary

to men now as it was then, and by similar methods is the knowledge of it to be diffused.

III. The Southern Baptist churches are not to any adequate extent, obeying these commands of Jesus, or ministering to the spiritual wants of the world. We say this with sadness and grief, yet the truth ought not to be concealed nor its humiliating force evaded by palliations. With more than five hundred thousand enrolled members of our churches, of whom at least three hundred and fifty thousand are whites, we have at this time only eighteen preachers of the gospel, and some twenty-five assistants in the foreign field and are contributing for carrying on the great work of the church, only some \$30,000 annually out of the bounties which God in His Providence so liberally confers ; our communicants have contributed an average of less than six cents, or after deducting the entire black population, an average of less than ten cents each. If our liberality is to be taken as an indication of our interest in this great work, then is this statement a most humiliating one to every Southern Baptist. But not only is this amount absolutely insignificant, it is in proportion to our numbers and means less than that contributed by any other prominent christian body professing to be engaged in the work of missions. We know that according to the scriptures, what others do is no rule for us. The true law of benevolence is—"every man according to his several ability." Yet by comparing our own efforts with those of others, we may perceive our own deficiencies, and "provoke one another to good works." Our English Baptist brethren, only about one fifth in number, give more than three times the sum for the prosecu-

tion of their enterprize. With little over one hundred thousand communicants, and a large proportion of them poor, they contribute annually over \$100,000, and maintain in foreign fields over fifty preachers of the gospel and three hundred and fifty assistants. Our Northern Baptist brethren, scarcely equal in numbers, and if we are to believe the statements of those supposed to be best qualified to judge, far less able pecuniarily, yet contribute annually \$120,000, and support about sixty missionaries and two hundred and fifty assistants. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, representing bodies, the Congregational, New School Presbyterian, and Dutch Reformed, numbering all comined less than the white Baptist communicants in our Southern churches sustain one hundred and fifty missionaries in Foreign lands, by an annual contribution of about \$300,000; while the Presbyterian Board representing less than 250,000 communicants of the old school, are sustaining nearly seventy missionaries and expending for this purpose annually \$150,000. We have no heart to pursue this comparison further, nor is it necessary. If it only excite the earnest enquiry among our brethren, why are these things so? and induce a solicitude to find a remedy, our object in referring to them will be answered. The truth cannot and ought not to be concealed, that we are not doing what God requires of us, what the world demands from us, nor even what is our honorable share in connection with our christian brethren.

Nor can we reasonably excuse this want of efficiency by the plea that ours is comparatively a new society and has accomplished as much in the same term of years from its origin

as any other. It is not a new society, it is only a new organization of an old body in which we have been interested for more than forty years. The Southern Baptists, commenced their Foreign missionary work in 1814, not in 1845. The attempt to awaken an interest in our churches in behalf of the heathen world is not of so recent date, as to palliate any half-hearted measures.

IV. We do not attribute this meagerness of labors and results to any essential lack of piety or benevolence among Southern Baptists. There are among them probably as large a proportion of sincere and devout christians, who fear God and aim to be controlled in all things by His word and spirit as in any other communion. We know that there are obstacles to the concentration of our efforts.—Sparsely scattered over a vast territory it is perhaps more difficult to combine their energies, in any single enterprize, than those of any other people. But without doubt, the most serious impediment to greater efficiency, is the want of information and opportunity, among our brethren.—We do not mean that they are less intelligent than others on all ordinary subjects, but simply that there has been no sufficient diffusion of information in relation to the great work of the church in this age. Knowledge is the only sound basis of earnest and persevering zeal. Passing impulses will not induce a steady and reliable consecration. There must be conviction of the importance of the work, and a clear perception of the means by which it is to be accomplished; of the relations of individual responsibility to the great end, and a sense of personal indebtedness to the heathen world and of personal accountability to God, in order to se-

cure sincere prayers, and systematic benefactions for the mighty work. Our brethren need first of all to be instructed, and thus intelligently interested, in all that pertains to our missionary operations. A fervent appeal can arouse only a temporary and fitful interest in the heart unless there be knowledge to perpetuate that interest. Taking it for granted, that piety produces the same essential characteristics in all hearts, we humbly conceive that the great want in our Southern Baptist churches is the want of instruction and opportunity.

V. If it be granted then, that intelligence and piety in our churches, are essential in order to the vigorous prosecution of the missionary work which our Lord requires of us, then the important question arises: How is this intelligence to be disseminated and this piety to be enkindled? By whom are our churches to be instructed and urged to engage more heartily in this sublime enterprize? Not by agents or secretaries. Their influence we do not undervalue, but they cannot get close enough to churches, into that sympathetic contact with the people that is necessary to inspire and guide and perpetuate their zeal. THE PASTORS OF THE CHURCHES are primarily responsible for the cultivation of the missionary spirit among their people. By whom shall knowledge be imparted and motives be impressed, if not by them? They sustain a divine relation to the people over whom "the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers." "Their lips are to keep" and communicate "knowledge." They are to "teach" the people "all things" that Christ has commanded. Official agents may aid them, but so far as their influence tends to relieve Pastors from a sense of personal responsibility, to promote

a benevolent spirit among their own people, they are rather an evil than a blessing to the churches. If Pastors did but perform the duty, that first of all rests upon them, there would be no need of any other agencies to awaken the zeal and secure the benefactions of the churches.—The necessity for agents, is a standing reproach to Pastors. We are relying too much upon them, requiring more of agents than they can perform, when we expect them to fulfil the Pastor's duties in instructing and exhorting their flocks. It is in the power of the Pastors of the Southern Baptist churches this very year, to excite an interest, and secure a co-operative liberality from the people, that shall leave nothing to be wished for in the departments of christian benevolence. And that power resides no where else than in them, and no compensation can be provided for the lack of its exercise. Through their active influence cheering and constant progress is certain, without it, impossible. This truth is so clear to common sense, that its simple statement is its proof. We know that it is within the power of Pastors, in the exercise of the influence with which God has intrusted them, and for which they are accountable to Him, to give a new and retardless impetus to the benevolence of the churches. And this power no other men can exert.

VI. Is it not an obvious truth, humiliating as the acknowledgment must be, that the Pastors of our churches, to a most afflictive extent, have failed to exert a positive and official influence in favor of our missionary operations? We shall not be deemed uncharitable or harsh in asserting our belief, that there are not a few ministers of Christ's benevolent gospel, who for whole years have never

pressed upon the consideration of their people that grandest of all themes of which the Bible is full, and for the securing of which Jesus died, the subduing of the world to the cross of Christ. They have scarcely told their people that the race is to be regenerated by preaching a crucified Redeemer, through the agency of the churches; that the work is in progress; that their brethren are standing in the streets of Heathen cities, proclaiming the glad tidings in their name and behalf, and asking for bread while engaged in their work. We presume there are members of our churches that do not even know that we have missions; or if they have heard this, do not know where they are, or what is effected by them. There are members of our churches that never have been told that they are expected to co-operate in this great work, never have been exhorted to pray for its success, never have had a call or opportunity to contribute for its furtherance. Why is there not a more universal and intense interest and co-operation in this grand work of the world's regeneration? We implore the Pastors of the churches honestly to answer—why!

VII. Can the Pastor who makes no effort to enlist his churches in this great work be faithfully fulfilling the duties of his vocation? What is his vocation? "*To preach the gospel.*" To whom? "*To every creature.*" Yes! to every creature to whom he can gain access. This commission embraces the world. And if his bodily presence is limited to a neighborhood, need his soul be thus limited too? Will he confine his prayers to his own flock? And why not send his influence as far as his prayers if it be possible? Is it not a part of his vocation to promote the usefulness, to

incite the benevolence of his people? Can he "declare all the counsel of God," without declaring the duties of Christians to the world? Without urging them to participate with their brethren in sending the gospel to every creature? That Pastor wrongs and injures his flock who fails to cultivate their benevolence and to point out to them how they may be useful in the kingdom of Christ. He withholds from them the commands of their Lord and the calls of the world, the blessedness of doing good, and the rewards which Jesus has promised to Christian devotion. Their "growth in grace" is retarded when the benevolent graces of the spirit are not called into active exercise. Is that church educated in apostolic principles, imbued with the apostolic spirit in which is not cultivated an active aggressive piety, a diffusive love for man which stretches out its arms to all the world? What true man of God, would consent to remain the minister of a church whose members so far repudiated the principles of the gospel and the spirit of Christ, as to live year after year, without attempting any thing for the enlargement of His kingdom?

VIII. Suppose brother Pastor, that you were called personally to go to the Heathen world and bear the messages of salvation to the perishing? Probably you have had some impressions of duty in that direction? Perhaps you ought to go! *Why not you* as well as any other minister of Christ? And if you were there, in the forests of central Africa, on the coasts of China, would you think your brethren loving or faithful to you, and to Christ, if they manifested no warmer interest in your work, than you now cherish for theirs. It would be well for us often to imagine

ourselves in the places of our brethren in Heathen lands. What aid and sympathy and prayer we should solicit from them, we should now be willing to give for them. The neglect we should ourselves bitterly feel we have no right to inflict. "As ye would that others should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." Or suppose that the call of God should now reach your heart, and you should be constrained to offer yourself as a missionary of the cross for service in a Heathen land. Suppose you should go to a brother Pastor and ask him what he would do toward sending and sustaining you there, and his cold reply should be—*nothing*. Would you not think it heartless, cruel, unchristian? Yet are there brethren now waiting to start upon this merciful errand, and when we ask our pastors what will you do, by your influence in your churches toward sending and sustaining these in their holy mission, *from more than a thousand* of them is returned the response, not less emphatic because unuttered—*nothing*. Are such men fit to be "Teachers" of a church of Christ? Do they not rather need that "some one teach them what be the first principles of the oracles of God."

IX. From these considerations is it not evident that the Pastors of our churches, must take a more active interest in our missionary work before it can be efficiently prosecuted and enlarged? No means can be devised to compensate for their lack of service. This is the one great need of our Southern churches. Our private brethren do not pray for the success of the gospel, feel as intense an interest in its promulgation, or give as liberally for its propagation as they ought. Why do they not? One reason, and we believe the most impor-

tant, is, that they are not instructed as to their duty nor urged to its performance by their own chosen Pastors. It is not possible for Missionary Boards, to reach the people to any adequate extent, except through their Ministers. And the glorious work never will be prosecuted with the vigor and zeal which Jesus our Lord requires, until there shall be a revolution in this respect.

We have tried to speak strongly but kindly. To the consciences and hearts of our brethren we appeal if we have not spoken truly. After admitting all the palliations that can be urged, is it not still undeniably true, that in the mightiest struggle of the age, a struggle for the supremacy of a pure christianity over effete idolatries and inane superstitions, a struggle in which all Heaven and all Hell are interested, in the issues of which the heart of Christ is engrossed, and the Spirit of God is striving, *MANY OF CHRIST'S OWN MINISTERS* are manifesting so little interest and exerting so little influence as scarcely to be felt at all. The treasury receipts show that our thirty seven hundred ministers, with all the labors of agents to aid them, do not secure from the churches contributions equal to an annual average of \$10 each. And if such meagre contributions, then are we not warranted in fearing, that but few earnest prayers are offered, but little pious solicitude felt for the enlargement of the kingdom of Christ?

Will not each Pastor, whose eye may glance over this article, give a solemn hour to reflection upon its statements, honestly ask himself how far his neglect has contributed to their dreary truthfulness, and resolve by the grace of God that this cause shall henceforth be as dear to his heart, as he believes it to be dear to

the heart of Jesus, and shall elicit from his lips pleadings somewhat corresponding to the pleadings of the Son of God, "who ever liveth to make intercession for us."

J. L. B.

For the Commission.

THE YORUBA MISSION.

One of our peculiarities in this country is a disinclination to write. This, it is true, is no great failing, but I have thought that we have not given the brethren so much information as we ought, considering how little is known of this country and people. Though I consider myself less qualified than almost any one else to write descriptive articles, I have determined to try, at least till I get tired of the attempt. I will begin this month by saying something about the three towns now occupied by our missionaries.

LAGOS.

This town is situated on a small island in Lake Ossa, about three miles from the sea, and six miles from the anchorage for large ships. The present population is about 20,000; but as the climate is better than usual, and the natural resources of the back country exceedingly great, Lagos is destined to become one of the largest towns in Western Africa. Down to the year 1852 it was in full possession of the slavers, and no honest man was permitted to enter it. From all I could learn however, I was convinced that it was a very important point, and in some of my letters I mentioned that this region offers advantages to colonists, which cannot be found in any other part of the Continent. Since that time my increased acquaintance with the interior has enlarged my views and con-

firmed my opinions. From Lagos to the Niger, a distance of 180 miles, there is a broad belt of fertile and healthy country, which is now almost a wilderness, though it once nourished the people of *three or four hundred towns*, some of which were ten miles in circuit. Who knows but that the wars which have desolated this country have paved the way for the regeneration of Africa. Forty thousand virtuous, industrious American blacks might be settled in this country, in eight or ten towns placed about twenty miles apart, the first of which might be near Lagos, and the last on the Niger. As the country is mostly prairies, it would not be difficult to open roads from town to town, and the result would be, that these few civilized towns would draw in the trade of two or three millions of people who live on each side of the depopulated districts between the Niger and the sea. But I must not enter into details at present.

Lagos is occupied by several English merchants, among whom is a consul, and several missionaries, all of whom have good success in their respective callings. Our lamented Brother Dennard was so much impressed with the importance of this place as a missionary field, and as a means of sustaining our interior missions, that he ventured to occupy it. Last July, a little more than a year after Brother Dennard's death, our efforts to find a proper colored man for Lagos, were crowned with success by the arrival of Brother J. M. Harden, from Liberia. Lagos is now one of our stations, and one of the most important in every respect, temporal and spiritual. The people are Yorubas, and speak the same language that extends from the sea almost to the Niger. The Yorubas, who are divided

into several tribes, as Egba, Iketu, Ijebu, Ijesha, &c., are far superior in everything to the generality of natives on the coast.

IJAYE.

Ijaye is two and a half days N. E. of Abberkuta, and five from Lagos. Population, as we guess, 35 or 40,000. The town is six or seven miles in circuit and thickly inhabited. The surrounding country is well watered and fertile. Here I have rode for miles together through fields of luxuriant indian corn, contrasting the actual state of the country with the too commonly received opinions of people at home. The rocks are gneiss, and a kind of iron stone, both of which are abundant, and excellent for building.

Our first station was begun at Ijaye, in October, 1853. We have frequently been much encouraged by the attention of the people to the word, but there are many hindrances, and some strong opposition. As yet only five have been baptized, three of whom are men. Our buildings at Ijaye are capable of accommodating half a dozen missionaries or more during the process of acclimation. The station is now in charge of Brother Clark, who will probably repair to Ogbomishaw soon after the arrival of other brethren. Our house is in the southern part of the town, within half a mile of the English station. If any town is to be occupied by one man only, Ijaye is the place, since it will be the chief resort of transient brethren, and is occupied by other missionaries.

OGBOMISHAW.

By the present road, Ogbomishaw is two and a half days N. E. of Ijaye, but the road through Awyaw, now closed by the enmity of the chiefs, is a day shorter. Brother

Clark came to Ogbomishaw last February and selected it as his station. About two weeks ago I came up to occupy it temporarily if Illorin (one day to the N. E.) will receive me, or perhaps permanently as a colleague of Brother Clark, if Illorin should reject me. I am pleased and encouraged with the attention of the people to the gospel. The Mohomedans however are mostly an exception, being bigotedly opposed to Christ.

Ogbomishaw is delightfully situated in a rich and well watered country on the highest table-lands of Yoruba. It covers a little more ground than Ijaye, but is not quite so populous. The surrounding country is open, and timber is scarce. Here for the first time, we meet with prairies which we can walk over with pleasure, the grass being only about knee high, while at Ijaye, &c., it is twice as high as one's head. The difference is not so much in the soil as in the species of grass.

Ogbomishaw is seven or eight days from Lagos, though the journey commonly occupies ten or twelve. Indeed I could not now arise and take my wife to the coast in less than fifteen days. It is affirmed however that there is canoe navigation from Lagos to a point on the Obba river, only twenty miles from Ogbomishaw.

T. J. B.

OGBOMISHAW, Oct. 10th, 1855.

It has been beautifully said that "the veil which covers the face of futurity is woven by the hand of mercy." Seek not to raise that veil, therefore, for sadness might be seen to shade the brow that fancy had arrayed in smiles of gladness.

"The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

"A certain man on the Malabar coast, had enquired of various devotees and priests how he might make atonement for his sin; and at last he was directed to drive iron spikes, sufficiently blunted through his sandals; and on these spikes he was to place his naked feet, and walk 250 coss, that is about 480 miles. If through long blood, or weakness of body; he was obliged to halt, he might wait for healing and strength. He undertook the journey, and while he halted under a large shady tree, where the gospel was sometimes preached, one of the missionaries came and preached in his hearing, from these words, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." While he was preaching, the man rose up, threw off his torturing sandals, and cried aloud, "This is what I want," and he became a lively witness, that the blood of Jesus Christ does indeed cleanse from all sin."

REV. C. F. SWARTZ.

Whatever may be said on the question of the "unity of the races," in these times of scientific developments, one thing is clear—there is an entire harmony of moral characteristics, which indicate, that all men naturally belong to a brotherhood of sinners. "Death hath passed upon all men, in that all have sinned." There is a universal consciousness of guilt. A sense of transgression is a universal instinct of humanity. And as the man, who has fallen into the stream and is exposed to a painful death, catches at the first means of rescue, either real, or imaginary, that offers itself, so the sinner, lashed by the heavings of his own conscience

seizes hold of the very first expedients which a blinded judgment and a darkened understanding may suggest. "What shall I do to be saved?" is the deep yearning of our spiritual nature. And the heathen in his blindness is ready to prosecute his pilgrimage over the sharpened spikes if he may but secure a triumphant entrance into the Elysian fields which his fancy desires in the distance. But heaven is not thus gained. Sin is not thus pardoned. God is not thus reconciled. "The blood of Jesus Christ" alone cleanseth from all sin." This is the only true expedient for pardon and salvation.

Who then, that feels his heart glow with a light and life divine, will not, by his sympathies, prayers, money, and influence, announce this great fact to the perishing, that have never yet heard it? Who will not, either by himself, or his representative, say to the deluded heathen, fainting through the torturing of his sleepless conscience and a sense of coming retribution, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin?" How can a man, who feels in his own bosom the hope of heaven, neglect this duty, which he owes to Christ, and a perishing world? Christian! pray for the outcast. Throw your sympathies around the sinking and the lost. Increase the treasury of the Lord by the bounties of his providence, which he has placed at your disposal, that the faithful herald of the cross, may bear forth every where the message of salvation, inscribed with imperishable letters: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

KAPHIA.

Jesus, thy blood and righteousness,
Thy beauty are, my glorious dress.

The Success of our Missions.

The opinion very generally prevails that the Missions of the Board have been *peculiarly unsuccessful*; and as a consequence, there is a feeling of discouragement which very much impedes the success of our operations. We think this opinion erroneous. That, on the contrary, we have abundant encouragement, and cause for devout thanksgiving to God for the blessing which has attended our efforts.

Before exhibiting the evidences on which this conviction is grounded, it is proper to advert to some of the sources of the error to which we have adverted.

1st. The Southern Baptist convention was organized in 1845. At this period the "Board of Commissioners" had been in existence for thirty-five years, and other missionary bodies for considerable periods. These societies had, from feeble beginnings, grown into power and consequence, their missions had been established and enlarged, missionaries multiplied, churches constituted among the heathen, and plans for raising funds thoroughly organized and brought into efficient action. The Southern Convention was without missionaries, without funds, without plans of operation or agents, and with a constituency scattered over an immense territory, (itself abounding in destitution,) but little trained to active and systematic liberality. It had to begin the work of preparing materials and erecting a building when other societies had not only built, but even enlarged and beautified their structures. But the public mind, overlooking these facts, has compared the success of our missions with theirs. Such comparison is unjust. It would be

much more equitable, and lead to far juster conclusions to compare the first ten years of their existence with ours. They had their infancy, their youth, and now have their manhood. We have been expected, at one bound, to pass from birth to manhood.

2nd. Another source of error is, that the discouragements attendant upon our efforts have been obvious and striking, while our encouragements have to a great extent, failed to attract attention. The deaths of some missionaries, and the return of others to this country, are facts which every one has noticed. They have forgotten that similar disasters have attended all missions. Our China mission has chiefly engrossed their attention, and without properly considering the difficulties arising from the structure of the language, the inveteracy of the customs, and the stolidity of the general character of the Chinese, they have been impatiently waiting for the only results which they are prepared to appreciate—the conversion of the natives. The work of preparation which has silently progressed in China, and in which our missionaries have borne their full shares, has been overlooked.

3rd. Our Liberia Mission has not assumed in public estimation the importance to which it is justly entitled. That all our missionaries in Liberia have been colored men, and that they have laboured chiefly among the colonists have caused this mission to be undervalued. True, a number of churches have been founded, a number of converts, colonists and natives—have been baptized, but the reports of these facts have elicited but little interest. The enquiry has still been, "What news from China? What are the missionaries accom-

plishing in China?"—Asked rather as implying a conviction of their inefficiency than a desire for information.

4th. With regard to the Central African Mission, the enthusiasm awakened by the return of Bowen was soon chilled by the loss of missionaries, which the mission encountered. And now that the reports of our brethren show a field of almost unlimited extent and unparalleled promise inviting our labors, a feeling of *incredulity* has seized upon many minds.

We will now state a few facts which show that the idea of *peculiar discouragements* is erroneous. The American Board of Commissioners was organized in 1810. They report for 1820 "cash received in donations—\$36,582,64. They had, exclusive of their missions among the North American Indians, sent out forty two male and female missionaries and assistants of whom two had died. The greater part of these had been sent out the preceding year. They report with not a single native communicant, and mention only some three converts. The Triennial Convention was organized in 1814, and adopted as their missionaries Mr. and Mrs. Judson who had arrived in Rangoon the preceding year. Up to the year 1824 they had sent out to Burma in addition to these, about 8 male and female missionaries of whom two had died. I am not possessed of means of stating the amount of receipts for the year 1823—4, but up to that time not more than some four or five Burmans had been baptized. Such was the discouraging aspect of this mission in 1816, that Judson, in a letter to Rice says, "If any ask what success I meet with among the natives, tell them to look at Otaheite, where the

missionaries labored for nearly twenty years, and, not meeting with the slightest success, began to be neglected by all the Christian world; and the very name of Otaheite was considered a shame to the cause of missions; but not now the blessing begins to descend. Tell them to look at Bengall also, where Dr. Thomas had been laboring seventeen years * * before the first convert; Krishno was baptized." And although before the period to which we refer above some fruit had been gathered, and every thing then looked cheering, it was not long before dark clouds gathered over the mission, and a long and a dreary season followed. But now, what wonderful results have sprung from the Burman Mission.

Let us now turn to the history of our own missions. The receipts into the Treasury, with such fluctuations, are incident to such funds, have increased from \$11,735,22, the first year of the Board, to \$30,066,60; the amount reported last year. We have sent out at different times thirty eight male and female missionaries to China and Central Africa of whom seventeen are now in the service of the Board. In China ten baptisms have been reported, and five in Central Africa. In addition to this we have sustained missions in Liberia, as the result of which about 800 have been reported as baptized. We had at the time of the last report twenty three missionaries and assistants engaged in this mission. Thus it appears that within the first ten years our receipts had reached within some \$6000 of the amount received as donations by the American Board of Commissioners in 1829—ten years after their organization—and that, with smaller means, and fewer mis-

sionaries, and notwithstanding our losses by the death and return of missionaries, (which have been very heavy,) we have reported more than *one hundred and sixty times* as many accessions to our communion within ten years, as *both* the Board of Commissioners and that of the Triennial Convention did within the first ten years of their existence, (exclusive of their missions among the Indians of North America,) and of these, it may be remarked not less than 115 were converts from heathenism! And this is want of success! These facts should discourage us? No, we have reason for deep gratitude to God for the blessing which has attended our labors, and should feel impelled to renewed zeal and increasing liberality and energy.

Regarding our losses by the death and return of missionaries, it is sufficient to quote from a letter of brother Pearcy published in the report of the Board for 1855. "It has been almost nine years since I received my appointment as missionary to China, and nearly eight years since we arrived in Canton. Nearly all the American missionaries that were then in the field have either died, or been compelled to return home in quest of health. You have doubtless observed, that other missions have suffered in this way quite as much as our own."

The length of this article forbids the insertion of other facts bearing upon the subject.

P.

The Importance of Immediate Action.

The importance of immediate and decided action on the part of Christians of the present day, in relation to Christian Missions.

The signs of the times admonish

the christian, that, whatever he intends to do in promoting the kingdom of Christ in the world, must be done without delay.

The dread commotion upheaving the social fabric of all nations, the rapidly unfolding scenes in the great drama of the world, the activity of christians, the success of the gospel both in christian and heathen lands, the prophecies fulfilled and fulfilling, respecting the kingdom of Christ—these wonderful developments of Divine Providence combine to impress the conviction, that, whatever is to be done in converting the world to God, must be done *quickly*.

Christianity is rapidly pressing on to her ultimate triumph; and whether we labor, or whether we fold our hands in idleness—with or without us the victory will soon be won, and all necessity for our action, together with all opportunity will cease forever. Already the light of salvation has been kindled in nearly all the dark places of the earth. The period is no longer future when many shall run to and fro increasing the knowledge of the Lord. The darkness that has so long covered the earth, and the gross darkness that has rested upon the people, are rapidly disappearing. The gentiles are coming to Zion's light, and kings to the brightness of her rising. The isles that have so long waited for the law of Christ, wait now no longer. Ethiopia, not in vain, has stretched her hand to God. Zion is travelling and nations are ready to be born in a day. From Greenland to India, from Lapland to Burmah, in Continent and Island, in fields of snow, and burning plains, the ambassador of peace has reared the standard of the cross, and is gathering around him the long-lost aliens from God, pointing them to the sacrifice

on Calvary, and proclaiming in their ears the glad tidings of salvation. On heathen hills and plains, temples are rising to the living God. Heathen knees are bowing in prayer. Heathen voices are singing the praises of Jesus. The morning light is shining upon the gilded pagodas of the East. "The joyful sound" has been heard in the wigwags of the West. From the East, and from the West, they are coming to sit down together with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God. The great field is white for the harvest. The reapers will be commissioned ere long to put in the sickle. The shout will soon reverberate from earth to heaven, from heaven to earth,—the kingdoms of the world, have become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ!

Scarcely less does the rapidly advancing condition of the world in all elements of improvement, intimate to a serious mind, that we are approaching that solemn period when the treasure for which the field was purchased, will have been obtained; and the dissolving fabric of the world will be succeeded by new heavens, and a new earth, the everlasting abode of righteousness. The discoveries in modern science, the improvement in the mechanical arts, the inventions by which mind is asserting, to so great an extent, its supremacy over matter,—the mighty agencies which are effecting so great a revolution, in both the moral and physical condition of mankind—all stand in intimate relation to God's purpose of mercy to our fallen world. They are in fact, his appointed means of establishing his kingdom in the earth. In all these influences, the earth is helping the woman. The statesman sees only in these things the means of national aggrandizement. The philosopher is interested in them, as a proof of the power of mind, and as furnishing problems for curious speculation. The philanthropist is gratified, because they promise to humanize society, to diffuse knowledge and virtue, and to bring mankind into more intimate and friendly relations. The *Christian*, occupying a position above them all,—seeing all they do—sees also much more. What others regard as *ends*, he understands to be *means*. What seem to them isolated streams of separate and independent existence, he beholds as so many *tributaries*, flowing together to form and swell the great current which is to overflow the world with universal knowledge and holiness.—The steam-ship, proudly careering among foaming billows, the locomotive, as it dashes along its track, the flash of the telegraph, all proclaim themselves the servants of the God of sovereign dominion; employed, together with others in a ministry whose object is to redeem the world from its present condition of bondage and corruption, and reinstate it in more than its original brightness and glory. They are in fact all missionaries of heaven, not less so than the devoted men and women who have laid down their lives for the heathen. These mighty agents all harmonizing their action to the attainment of one great end, give us the assurance, in the activity and power of their combined operation, that the work in which they are employed must be accomplished at no distant day. They tell us as they pass, that their mission is important; that they cannot wait; and that if we will work with them, like them, we must work with speed.

The church, too, is marshaling her hosts for her last decisive battle. Her

prayers are ascending to God, that, according to his promise, the heathen may speedily become the inheritance of his Son; that he, whose right it is to reign, may establish his throne in the earth, and extend his righteous and peaceable dominion from the rising to the setting sun. She is opening her coffers. She is consecrating her talent to the Lord. She is training her young men to take the field, and push on the conquests of Christ, until the subjugated world shall own him her Lord. All around us is proclaiming, though the end is not yet, it is not far distant. In a regenerated world, Christ, our lord, shall soon see of the full travail of his soul, and rest forever satisfied.

What then, christian, do you intend to do, in this great work? If you wish to share in the glorious enterprise of evangelizing the world, no time is to be lost. Whatever you intend to do, *now* is the time to do it. If you have a heart to pray, *now* is the time, that you should be pleading with God, day and night, "Thy kingdom come." If you have talents, *now* is the time to consecrate them to the glory of Christ, and the salvation of the world. If you have money, *now* is the time to pour it into the treasury of the Lord. From millions upon millions of dying heathen, comes up the thrilling appeal—if you will help me, *now* is the time. China, with her teeming population, stretching out her hand to you is crying—if you intend to help me, help me *now*. Poor lacerated Africa is supplicating,—if you have mercy for me, O! send it *now*. Disregard not these cries, lest unhappily, while you are tardily whetting your scythe, you shall look up and *Behold!* the harvest is reaped

W. H. J.

Our Church Polity. Ardent piety necessary to its efficiency.

It is sometimes said, that our ecclesiastical organization is not so efficient, because not so consolidated and centralized as that of some other christian denominations; that we can command no such moral influence or authority as is vested in Conferences, Presbyteries or Conventions; that neither our pastors nor people can be reached by such authoritative instructions and appeals, and that this want of ecclesiastical combination prevents our cooperative efficiency. Are we willing to admit this? Is it true, that men can so improve the church polity that Jesus Christ has established as to render it more effective for attaining the great end of its organization? Are the commands and instructions of Jesus himself, of lighter force, than those of ecclesiastical corporations? or is their moral power augmented, because re-enacted by the statutes of some churchly guild? Is the power of personal love for Christ and His Kingdom, less mighty than that of synodical edicts? Is the pure voluntary principle, taught in the New Testament, of sustaining the institutions and diffusing the influences of Christianity a failure? We do not believe it. No human wisdom can improve our Lord's plans, and therefore we believe that there is more power in the enthusiastic voluntary combining of christian sympathy and love, than can be concentrated by any ecclesiastical legislation. But then there must be the sympathy and love to combine. Centralized authority may be necessary to preserve and discipline a formal christianity, but an earnest, enthusiastic christianity, can be perpetuated and propagated only

by individual devotion and love! We believe that a higher character of piety is necessary to the efficiency of independent churches than to that of any others; but that with this piety they are more efficient than any others. The locomotive whose force is within itself, is capable of a mightier momentum, than any carriage with externally harnessed steeds can gain. But the steam must be generated, or the engine lies a cumbrous clumsy thing which any plodding ox cart may pass. Earnest piety is to our church organization what steam is to the locomotive, the internal propelling power.

J. L. B.

Hasty Judgment about Missions.

"Judge not according to the appearance; but judge righteous judgment." John 7, 24.

"I think very differently of your foreign missions from what I use to when I was a *Sophomore* in College. Your good Christians are very sincere, but very simple. They don't know what is going on where their missionaries are abroad." So said an intelligent and interesting young officer in the navy, who in College, had been hopefully converted and had professed religion; but who now had just returned from his first voyage, in which he had visited the Isles of the Pacific. Then he stated his reasons.

That young man had gone forth with youth's imperfect idea of the struggle that is going on in the world between the old man of sin and the new man in Christ. He had therefore been painfully disappointed; his mind and heart had reacted and gone to the opposite extreme; and now he was as far from the truth as he had been before. Yes, farther from it.

Christ said to his own disciples when he saw, how imperfect, how short sighted, and how extreme their views, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven." If John, the beloved disciple, mistook the character and christian work of one that followed not after his company, it would not be strange if young Christians now should. If John's error prompted that remark of Christ just quoted, the hasty judgment of many in the present trying, turning period of the work of missions requires a similar check. The simple-hearted views, the child-like confidence which young converts have as to the progress of Christ's cause, may meet with a revulsion when they first meet the difficulties which worldliness interposes; but true disciples of Christ will come back from this wavering and wandering, and be little children in faith, hope, and love again.

What had stumbled this young man? What difficulties and objections had he met? They were *two*; and into those two all the objections ever met in Christ's work resolve themselves. Christ's commission is, "Go preach my gospel to every creature," and his added promise is, "Lo I am with you always even to end of the world." The apparently limited success of missionary work, the seemingly inadequate fulfilment of the *promise*, is the first difficulty suggested; and the *second* is the imperfection of men, the agents to perform the *commission*. It was most interesting to observe that these were the young officer's objections.

Said he, "When our ships went into the ports of those Sandwich Islands where the missionaries are thought to have carried every thing

before them, there was as much lewdness and debauchery on shore and on ship board as ever." But the reply was manifest and most conclusive. "Stop, my young friend. Did you go back into the country? Did you ever go up into the city from the wharves? Did you visit the schools, the churches and see the *people*? You know that in New York or London there is just as much that is vile and depraved gathered down to the seaport as you will find in foreign ports, with the single exception that the habits of tropical and less refined nations make indecency more open. There stands, however, the fact that within less than fifty years, the mass of the people in city and country have been truly converted; a larger proportion of the population are consistent Christians than even in our States; their religion reacting on their social habits has led them to adopt the habits of civilized life, with its industry and thrift; while their government, by the silent working of principle alone, has been changed from an absolute despotism to a representative popular sovereignty. Am I not right in all these suggestions?" The young man admitted *all*; and with a single exception or two he allowed them all their force. If there is any work on earth more promising than this, more heavenly in its blessings to wretched men, then we may well turn from the mission cause to engage in it. But it will be very difficult for the good-hearted, simple-minded lover of his race, and of the Saviour of his race to be persuaded that such a work is unworthy of his sacrifice.

"After all," added the young man, "your missionaries are not the self-sacrificing men you suppose. They are perfect nabobs. They proceed very differently from the Catholic missionaries. You will see the Jesuit dressed like the people, and living with them in their filthy huts. But your Protestant missionary has his nice little frame house, and his wife and children with him; and then there is a neat little fence about his house and garden; and none of the little heathen brats are allowed in there." That was a subtle objection; most calculated to disappoint at first glance; and yet how, after all, is this very fact the expression of the real power of the gospel as seen in its humanizing and refining influence. Mark it. John, Christ's forerunner wore a rustic dress and lived on coarse food; but Jesus had a rich coat and fared often so sumptuously that the caviling called him a glutton. Is it the tendency of true religion, the gospel of the soul's salvation by Christ, to keep men unrefined and rude in manners and habits, or to refine and elevate? Let any man think through this question, and then the following facts will not surprise him. Roman missionaries went to Ireland more than 1000 years ago, and degraded Christianity to the level of the people; and the Irish are as ignorant and superstitious as at first, and still they eat potatoes and live in mud shanties. This is not precisely the case with Protestant England, and Scotland. The Jesuit missionaries preceded and accompanied Protestant missionaries in different parts of the world; and while the Esquimaux, and the Mexican Indians, and the Chinese under their influence are precisely what they were at first, the Greenlanders, and Cherokees, and Sandwich Islanders, the Karens, the Armenians, where shall we stop,—have become perfectly transformed into intelligent

and refined nations. Why should it not be so. The newly converted barbarian sees in the missionary's family the exhibition of what Christianity will do for man. Full of the spirit of aspiration for the welfare of his family and his country begotten by the love of Christ, he wishes to see his wife his delightful companion; his children educated and refined; his country blessed with the means of securing those facilities for physical, mental, and moral improvement as well as eternal salvation for the soul. Who with such facts would have our missionaries cease to be *men*, though men of God! Even Jesus Himself must become in all these things *like us* to be *our example*.

A.

Missions contemplated in the light of eternity.

'Tis immortality gives consequence to man. Regarded simply with reference to time, how insignificant is humanity, with all its bustling activity, and ambitious aspirations. A bubble floating upon the stream of life, radiant it may be with the reflected glory of the heavens, but soon to break and disappear forever. And all human energy is devoted to a purpose as ignoble as the toil of the beaver—the labor of the frugal ant—the preservation of a precarious life. To live, and eat, and die—to be no more forever! Reason has no higher object than to grapple with brute force and animal instinct for a short lived ascendancy; imagination is all a dreamy illusion cheating the poor victim with the conception of a glory not his own, conscience no other than a spectre raised by the tales of the nursery.

And yet the relations and interests

of time so absorb our attention and engage our feelings that we have little of heart left for those of eternity. All around us are men living only for this life; no thoughts of God, and death, and judgment, and eternity enter their minds; or if they do, they come as unbidden and unwelcome guests. In the race for wealth, honor, or perhaps, for a bare subsistence every power is exerted, every sacrifice encountered. Or, controlled by the virulence of appetite, or victims to an easy seductiveness they are immersed in animal indulgencies that at once preclude the opportunity for reflection, and incapacitate for just exertion. They live—and O God—they die!

How many who profess to be christians are pursuing these courses? Upon such we cannot expect the cause of missions to make any impression. From them we look not for aid. But those who have learned to value their own eternal interests, and to estimate things as they are connected with the immortality of man, we would earnestly entreat to contemplate this cause in the light of ETERNITY. "If," remarks the editor of the Western Recorder—

"If we would appreciate the labors of a Marshman, a Ward, a Carey, or a Judson, we must go like David into the sanctuary—we must look upon the heathen world as a company of immortals—bound like ourselves to a blessed and unblessed eternity—and whose existence here is the brief but determining segment of a being which is hereafter to be as lasting as the life time of God."

It is only from this point of view that we can gain a just conception of the magnitude of the work, or be made to realize our personal obligations regarding it.

Eternity! Time passes and its des-

tinies change, but eternity ever abides, and its destinies are immutable. The millions of China, Africa and other heathen nations are immortal, and like ourselves, hastening to the bar of God. If they go there without a knowledge of salvation through the cross the gospel throws no ray of hope upon their pathway. "*All the nations which forget God*" are, with the "wicked," to be "turned into hell!" They can only be saved by the knowledge of the truth: "For how can they believe in Him of whom they have not heard;" and "he that believeth not shall be condemned." The missionary goes forth for no lower object than to save souls from eternal death. For this he toils and weeps—for this he prays and dies! How much more noble his ambition than that of the aspirant for wealth, the devotee of pleasure, the slave of a fame. Wealth shall crumble into dust, or be consumed in the furnace of God's indignation—pleasures shall pall and pass away as a dream of the night—the brazen tablet, the marble monument—yea the immaterial structures of genius itself shall grow old and tumble amidst the "wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds," but the soul of the saved heathen shall live for ever! And we too shall live. Who, as he looks back from the throne of God, upon the aims and struggles of time, will not feel that Peter and Paul, Carey and Judson—Ann Haseltine and Sarah Boardman wisely chose their part? Who but will realize that it is far better with the heroic Bowen and the consecrated Clarke to wilt and die under the sun of Africa for the redemption of her sons, than in worldliness and self indulgence to live long and honored in this christian land?

When called to labor in the mission young man, think of *eternity*! When thou art disposing of thy treasures christian, think of the *heathen and eternity*. When thou prayest, remember *eternity*, and then remember *missions*! P

Miscellany.

MUNIFICENT DONATION.—A letter from the President of the American Colonization Society published in the Feb. No of the Maryland Colonization Journal, stated that Mr. John Stevens, of Talbot County, Maryland, proposes to give a ship, costing from \$35,000 to \$36,000, to that Society.

GOD MADE ME A PAINTER.—We see it stated that at a dinner by late Duke of Cambridge, Queen Victoria's uncle, a celebrated painter, Gudin, was present. The Duke gave him a formal bow, but presently a knot of poets, politicians and others, gathered around him. "What—what—what is that? Who—who—who is he?" said the Duke. "That, your royal highness, is Gudin, the great French painter." "How great—great is he? Her Majesty loves pictures. He must go—he must go to court." An attendant whispered that he could not go to court as a painter, but as he had formerly been a lieutenant in the French army, he might be presented as an officer. The Duke made the proposition to Gudin. The painter drawing himself up to his full height replied, proudly, in the hearing of all, "The King of France made me a lieutenant; God made me a painter. I will go to court as a painter, or not at all."

Upon reading this anecdote we were forcibly reminded of Burns' animated impromptu,

"A man's a man for all that!"

There is in true manhood a dignity superior to aristocratic distinctions, and in genius an honor greater than titles can confer. How much more exalted however, is genuine christianity than either manhood, or genius! And would it not be becoming and honorable, christian-like—for every professed follower of

Christ, in reply to all solicitations from his own feelings, or from others, to mingle in society, firmly to resolve, "I WILL GO AS A CHRISTIAN, OR NOT AT ALL!"

I PREFER TO LIVE AND SERVE GOD.—What a beautiful harmony between the extract which we give below, and the spirit which animated Paul when he said "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain." Yes, it would be sweet to die this year; but it will be all the sweeter next year for such a life of active, faithful, zealous consecration to the service of Christ as this Christian lived!

"A few years ago, a layman of one of the churches in New England, sat musing on the eve of the new year, and he said within himself, 'How sweet it would be to die this year!'

"But he checked himself and said, 'No, I prefer to live and serve God, and if it please him *I will live*, and I will labor to bring as many souls to Christ this year as possible.'

"He immediately began by embracing every opportunity to converse personally with whomsoever he met, about the interests of their souls. The first person he accosted, was a very gay and wealthy young lady, who indicated no seriousness at the time, who was wholly irreligious, and who said that she had never been conversed with before in relation to the salvation of her soul. She became serious, sought religion, obtained it, was a devoted Christian, and before the year expired, she did in the Lord.

"In the course of that year he conversed directly upon the subject of their souls' salvation without about sixteen hundred individuals, *more than half of whom* said that they had never before been accosted on the subject."

NEVER SUFFER AN OPPORTUNITY TO PASS UNIMPROVED when you can properly introduce religious conversation with the unconverted. This was the advice to us, of our venerated instructor in ministerial duty, the late Rev. A. W. Clopton. How faithfully we have followed it we pretend not to say. But many a pleasant reminiscence serves to impress us with a conviction of its importance. And why, CHRISTIAN should you not follow it? The unconverted would the more respect you in its faithful observance, your con-

versation upon other subjects would be better guarded, your heart would be refreshed by frequent recurrence to religious topics, and it is scarcely possible that you should fail to effect much good.

P.

A BEAUTIFUL INCIDENT.—We clip the following from the New York Chronicle. It is suggestive of valuable thought. The child's idea of God is that of *goodness*; and Christians as they exhibit this character draw forth the affections of the child towards God, and themselves. They are not God's wives, but they are his children in doing good.

A LADY visiting New York City, saw one day upon the sidewalk, a ragged, cold and hungry little girl, gazing wishfully at some cake in a shop window. She stopped and taking the little one by the hand, led her into the store; though she was aware that *bread* might be better for the child than *cake*, yet desiring to gratify the shivering and forlorn one, she bought and gave her the cake she wanted. She then took her to another place, where she procured her a shawl and other articles of comfort. The grateful little creature looked the benevolent lady up full in the face, and with artless simplicity, said—*Are you God's wife?*

ABUSE OF LIBERTY.—He that resolves to use all his liberty cannot be innocent, so long as there are in the world so many bold temptations and presumptuous actions, so many scandals and so much ignorance in the things of God, so many things that are of evil report; so many ill customs and disguises in the world, with which if we resolve to comply in all that is supposed lawful, a man may be in the regions of death before he perceives his head to ache; and instead of a staff in his hand, may have a splinter in his elbow.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

WHY DO CHURCHES DIE?—For a variety of causes too numerous to mention; but can any one produce an example which the speaker at a Bible-meeting had long sought for but could never find? "Brethren," said the speaker, "I have heard of churches starving out of a saving spirit, but I have never heard of one dying out from benevolence. And if I could hear of one such, I would make a pilgrimage to it by night, and in that quiet solitude, with the moon shining, and the aged elm,

waving, I would put my hands on the moss-clad ruins, and gazing on the venerable scene, would say, 'Blessed are the dead who died in the Lord!' If pastors would reflect, they would see at a glance that avarice destroys its thousands, but charity has no victims; and that the dangers to the prosperity of a church are all on the side of covetousness. The same spirit which leads men to complain of being called upon to give to general objects of benevolence, operates to make them niggardly in their support of the gospel at home. A church which gives nothing to foreign objects, rarely devises liberal things towards its pastor for a very long time."—*Examiner*.

VERY BENEVOLENT!!—Mrs A—was a church member; she thought herself to be exceedingly benevolent. She gave to almost every cause. We will see *how* benevolent she was. She gave six dollars for a pocket handkerchief, and having a dollar left after the purchase, dropped it into the box for "Foreign Missions." She gave forty dollars for a crape shawl, and two dollars the same day to "Domestic Missions"—she gave ten dollars for a pair of ear rings, and a quarter of a dollar to the "Tract Society"—three hundred dollars she expended on a fashionable party, when her daughter Amelia 'came out,' and fifty dollars went towards repairing the church and paying the pastor. Her elegant cut velvet hat, cost fifteen dollars—she paid fifty cents about the same time towards a new Sabbath School Library. She gave three dollars for Eliza Ann's senseless wax doll, and one dollar towards educating a young Immortal in Africa. Which weighed the heaviest in her heart, Christ or the fashionable world? Will God be satisfied with the *drillets* which chance to remain in the Christian's purse, after every elegant taste has been gratified, and that too, when a *heathen world is perishing*.' C. W. B.

—We meet with queer things in our exchange papers. Here is an obituary notice of a prayer meeting:

"*Died*—In Laodicea, the *Prayer Meeting*, aged one year. The health of the meeting was poor, most of the year, and its life was despaired of. But a few anxious friends kept it alive and some times it would so revive as to encourage them. Discouragement, however, at last prevailed and the prayer meeting is *dead*. It died from neglect. Not a Christian was present when it died. Over forty

Christians (!) were living within a mile of it, and *not one* was there. Had *two* only been there, its life might have been saved, for where two are agreed as touching any thing they shall ask, it shall be done for them. Two-thirds of the forty might have been there, had they been so disposed. But they were not, and so the prayer meeting died."

—A GREAT TRUTH.—In vain do we seek to awaken in our churches zeal for missions as a separate thing. To be genuine, it must flow from love to Christ. It is when a sense of personal communion with the Son of God is highest, that we shall be most fit for missionary work, either to go ourselves or to stir up others. If we allow it to become a business of dollars and cents, we shall see no results." "Find preachers of David Brainerd's spirit," said John Wesley, "and nothing can stand before them; but without this, what can gold or silver do?" Let gushing affection to the Lord Jesus become the ruling passion, and it communicates the thrill of evangelical zeal to every member of the electric chain.—*Anon.*

RETURNING TO JESUS.

SHEPHERD divine, thy little flock behold.
Returning to the long forsaken fold?
Be thou to us a Saviour as of old—
Blest Jesus!

Prove now thyself a friend in every deed.
Thou promised refuge in the time of need?
Thy sacred name is only what we plead—
Dear Jesus!

With bitter tears of anguish we lament
So long our time in foolish wand'ring spent;
Thee have we wounded, but anew repent,
Dear Jesus!

O! let us feel again thy warm embrace,
Rejoice in the smilings of thy face;
And trusting in the never failing grace
Of Jesus!

Henceforth be thou our all in all—our aim
Be nothing save the glory of thy name,
Through all the way our song be still
the same

Of Jesus!

So, dwelling 'neath the shadow of thy wing,
Do thou our footsteps to thy mansion bring,
Where we shall ceaseless songs celestial sing

To Jesus!
True Union.

March, 1856.

FALL FLOWERS.

G. W. D.

They smell sweetest by night time,
these flowers; and they are maist aye
seen about ruined buildings.—*Eddie
Ochiltree, in "The Antiquary."*

Sweetest by night: like gracious words

That scent the sacred page;

But freeliest pour their perfumed store,
In sickness, grief, and age.

Seen most by ruins: like the love

That gave itself for all;

Yet closest clings to guiltiest things,
As Magdalene, or Saul.

Our Missions.

SHANGHAI, CHINA.

Letter from Rev. M. T. Yates.

The following letter from brother Yates contains a brief history of the Shanghai Mission for the year 1855. It is dated January 5, 1856.

As the date above indicates, this is a fit time to make a hasty review of the year that has just entered the night of the past. The past has, in some respects, been an eventful year. In February last, when the city fell into the hands of the Imperialists (the particulars of which event it is not necessary to recapitulate), our north gate mission premises, consisting of two dwellings and a small chapel, were in ruins, and our chapel in the city much injured. As we had received from the Chinese government the cost of our dwellings, and as my house, if taken at once, could be repaired without disturbing the old walls, we lost no time in restoring it to its original state. Bro. Cabaniss' house had to be rebuilt from the foundation; this, however, and the wall enclosing the two mission dwellings, have been completed, and we are now comfortably housed. The chapel in connection with these premises, now known as the "Kiaw-hwo-dong," has been rebuilt in a more eligible position. Our chapel in the city had to be re-roofed, some twenty feet of the bell-tower had to be taken

down, besides sundry other repairs both within and without. All these important works have been completed at a cost something less than the amount received from the Chinese government, as you will see from the Treasurer's report. As regards the mission property, I can safely say it was never before in so good a state of repair.

DIRECT MISSION WORK.

With the fall of the city into the hands of the Imperialists, we renewed our attack upon the kingdom of satan. And although we have had an unusual amount of labour to perform in the way of superintending building, repairs, &c., we have never, I think, during any previous year, been able to do so much, apparently, effective preaching, as during the year that has just glided past. We have now four preaching places; and since the completion of the "Kiaw-hwo-dong," (several months ago,) we have maintained eighteen public services per week, with an aggregate weekly attendance of about 2,500 souls. Besides these we hold many private interviews with persons calling to make inquiries in regard to the religion we teach; or rather (I regret to have to say it,) to see if our religion can be made to subserve their temporal interests. But as our business is to sow the seed beside all waters, we make it a point to preach Christ and him crucified, as the Saviour of the world, to all who favor us with a call, and leave the event with God. From these statements you will see that your missionaries are putting forth almost superhuman efforts to disseminate a knowledge of Christ among the multitudes of this great city; with what success, eternity alone will reveal.

SUCCESS.

During the year, our little church has received an accession of four members by baptism, one of whom is a German sailor. Of the three natives two are females. The native male member is a literary graduate

and a very interesting case. Bro. Cabaniss met with him up at the "Sung-way-dong," and being unable to communicate satisfactorily with him, (his dialect being quite different from that spoken at this place,) brought him to me. I taught him as well as I could, for an hour or more. He called again the next morning, just as he was about to leave the city for his native town, about one hundred miles distant. He seemed deeply interested in the plan of salvation. He was furnished with a New Testament, the Ten Commandments and other tracts, and followed by the earnest prayers of the mission for a blessing upon the word of God. Some months later, he returned to Shanghai. He came at once to see us, and stated that he had read the books carefully, that he had read the New Testament through three times, studying thoroughly ten chapters each day, and that his views had undergone an entire change. On examination we found that to the best of our knowledge, he had experienced that change without which no man can see the kingdom of heaven. We willingly admitted him to all the privileges of the church. After baptism and the communion, he returned to his home a rejoicing christian. We have not since heard from him. He said he should devote much time in teaching others. Will not the churches pray for a blessing upon his efforts to teach others the way of life? Wong, who was baptized last year, and the two females referred to above, continue to witness a good profession.

OTHER HOPEFUL CASES.

We have in our connection, two other very hopeful cases—Mrs. Yates' woman and a Mr. Dzung. They may in time be admitted to baptism. Besides these, there are several other enquirers of more or less interest.

MANY ABANDONING IDOLATRY.

But the extent of our success is not to be limited to the number of converts, though this is not to be despised. The impression which the

truth is beginning to make on the public mind, must also be taken into the account. That the constant preaching of the gospel is beginning to have a powerful effect upon the middle and lower classes is apparent to all. Many who have not heartily embraced the truth as it is in Jesus, have abandoned idol worship. A still larger class seem to be fully aware of the folly of worshipping blocks of wood and stone, the images of men like themselves. The people freely state that formerly their idols had the reputation of displaying some supernatural powers, but that of late, since there has been so much preaching they have lost that reputation. Thus the people are constrained, against their will, to perceive that their idols are nothing more than the unconscious images of men of fabulous origin; and that the Chinese are still ignorant of the great Being by whom all things were made and are upheld. Herein we witness the power of the truth, and some of the results of our years of toil.

MUCH PRAYER NEEDED.

But to convince the Chinese of the fallacy of their systems of belief, is but a small, and yet an important part of that work which is to be performed before they are brought into a state of safety. What we now need is such a display of the divine power as shall bring them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. For this we pray; for this we ask the prayers of the Board; for this we ask the united and constant prayers of all the churches. I fear that many churches, in the land of light and liberty, have forgotten to pray for the spread of the gospel among the destitute in heathen lands.

Often when I have looked around me for the reasons why many of the Chinese, who profess to have lost all confidence in their own systems of worship, do not embrace *that* religion, the dissemination of which, had destroyed all confidence in their own, I am led to wonder if the interest in missions, among the churches at

home, has not, from some cause unknown to me, greatly abated; and consequently, the missionary concert of prayer, for the spread of the gospel among the heathen, sparsely attended, or whether, the mission to Africa has not absorbed an undue proportion of the interest of the churches in foreign missions. I seem to feel that there is something wrong somewhere. Will not the brethren generally, look into their own hearts, and see if the China Missions has received that sympathy and prayerful attention which its importance demands? The present position of our work in China, calls loudly upon the churches, for enlarged and importunate prayer to God, for a blessing upon his word. We shall certainly reap a more copious harvest in China, if we all do our duty and faint not.

BOOK DISTRIBUTION.

At the commencement of this year, we had on hand several thousand copies of the last years publications—consisting of Goddard's version of the New Testament—the four Gospels and Acts bound in separate volumes, and the "Two Friends." Most of these have been distributed. We have published during the year, five thousand, "Epitome of the Bible," three thousand, Ten Commandments, with commentary, three thousand of the Two Friends. And now have in the hands of the printer, an edition of five thousand of the entire New Testament. The Epitome of the Bible, gives in a connected form, the most important facts, events and doctrines of the Bible, and is a very interesting and acceptable book of 142 pages. "The Two Friends," a small catechetical work of about 48 pages, is admirably adapted for imparting religious truth. It is written in a popular style, detailing the particulars of several interviews between two friends, one of whom is represented as a teacher of religion and the other as an enquirer after truth. At their several interviews, the existence of God, and the doctrine of the Bible, the church &c. are discussed,

and the claims of the gospel enforced. Of the edition of the New Testament now being struck off 1000 copies have been received. This edition, bound in silk, (the best style of Chinese binding,) costs us about ten cents a book. At this rate, no one need despair of doing something for the perishing millions of China. And for the encouragement of all I will here state that "Je Seen Sang, (the literary graduate, mentioned above as having been baptized this year,) was brought to the foot of the cross, by reading the Testament that cost ten cents. Who gave that ten cents? Was it not a good investment? Who will invest more in the same way?

DAY SCHOOLS.

There are five day schools in connection with our Mission, with an aggregate attendance of 100 scholars, fifty girls and fifty boys.

The past year has been a trying season to most of the missionaries at this place—but few have escaped an attack of more or less severity. Mrs. Crawford had a long and severe attack. The particulars of Mrs. Burtons case you know. She is now, the Dr. thinks about restored. The other members of the mission, at least most of us, have had ague and fever, such a form of that disease as is met with only at Shanghai.

YORUBA, AFRICA.

Letter from Rev. T. J. Bowen.

Yours of the 25th of October came to hand yesterday. I have very little to communicate at present, having been unusually sick for several weeks till lately. Some good impressions, however, have been made in the midst of opposition. In every new town the people are shy and suspicious. It is only within a short time that they would work for me here but now we get laborers enough. The house I am building is small, only 12 feet wide, with three rooms, one for a store to put our trunks, cowries, provisions, &c. in, and another for Bro. Beaumont. By this time, the men are probably at Lagos.

You will be sorry to learn that the ugly Mohammedan priests and the warriors have overruled the wishes of the King and closed Ilorin against the gospel. It cannot continue so forever. For myself, however, I feel that I am done moving. My health is too bad to do anything except hold on. Before long I must beg leave of absence till my liver is restored to better condition.

I have collected and partly arranged a great deal of Yoruba, but cannot think of continuing these exhausting labors at present. It would require 100 days or more close application. Still I hope that Bro. Beaumont and myself can do something toward getting the Grammar and Vocabulary ready for the press.

Translations, or at least, close revision of the Scriptures will be required. There will be time enough, however, for all this. If I have to go home or to England and publish anything, the alphabet must be agreed on in council before I go.

I do hope my post will not be vacated when I leave. If we only had six men in all we might get along.

Letter from W. H. Clarke.

IJAYE., Jan. 23rd. 1856.

Although I have already written at length, you would hardly be satisfied unless you heard something more of our present state. Bro. Bowen, no doubt, as he has already informed you, is progressing tolerably well with his station at Ogbomishaw, though laboring under some great disadvantages. We are making some headway at this station. By the 1st March we shall have a comfortable, commodious chapel, 60 by 35 feet, capable of seating five or six hundred persons—perhaps more. I believe with this advantage, for the want of which we had suffered no little, our congregations will largely increase. One young man, Sierra-Leone, living with us, desires to be baptized; but I have not sufficient evidence of his conversion to warrant

the step. The Sierra Leone part of our congregations appear to be serious, but it appears to me they have been far from a proper apprehension of their natural state. Oh, that wicked abomination of sprinkling and infant baptism, how has it pierced to its very vitals, the church of the living God! Here are deplorable monuments of the fact. And yet to speak against this accursed traffic in souls, is to draw down upon our heads the frowns and indignation of both priest and people. But let them come. We had an interesting case of a young Vey man, who came out as a carpenter some time since. From a narrative of his state and feelings, I have hope he is a child of the Lord. He seemed to have no idea, as he related his story, he was telling the feelings of a genuine christian. An evident change has taken place, and of his own accord he is a most regular attendant on family and public worship. So far as I perceive, there is no diminution of interest in the Word. The chief, attended by a concourse of people, visited us in state a few days since. He was very friendly as for some time past; examined the house, &c., with demonstrations of pleasure, and after sitting ten or fifteen minutes left us. This is the first visit since I have been in Ijaye, though he very frequently sends his salutation.

Domestic Mission Board.

We are greatly gratified to learn by a statement in the Southern Baptist, that this Board have succeeded in paying off the entire debt (\$7,000, or more,) due by the Indian Mission Society, and assumed by the Domestic Board upon the transfer, to them, of the Indian Mission, that the Mission is in a prosperous condition, and that their Domestic Missions have also been very successful during the year just closing—though for the latter there is a complaint of want of funds, which we hope will soon be rendered unnecessary by the liberality of the Churches.

History of our Missions.

We commence in this number, a brief account of our missions. In subsequent issues we shall continue it.

The fact that some months must elapse between the publication of this and the second number of the Commission, justifies the appropriation of a larger space to this purpose than may hereafter be devoted to it. We trust this and the continuation of the history in subsequent numbers will be carefully read. The impression prevails that our missions have been comparatively unsuccessful. A knowledge of facts is all that is needed to correct this impression. *We have done but little compared with what we might have done, but God has signally blessed us in the results of our labor.*

P.

AFRICA—LIBERIA.

The colonization in Africa of free colored persons from the United States and other countries, was prompted by the spirit of a true philanthropy, and has been conducted to results glorious in themselves and most beneficial to both the colonists and the natives of Africa. The beneficent character of this enterprise is evinced by the hostility of the abolitionists. These fanatics, actuated by a fell spirit, reckless of every obligation, social and political, which binds them to the people of the slave-holding states, and many of them contemning, while all of them violate the precepts of Christianity, would, under a pretence of regard to the interests of the negro, drive the ploughshare of desolation over the South, or bury under the ruins of our social fabric, the Union itself, to effect the emancipation of our slaves. But against colonization societies, which not only propose to give, but are giving to the free colored man a home where he can be a citizen, unencumbered by the presence of a

more enlightened and powerful race, they cherish the most deadly hostility and wage a fierce opposition.

The spirit of Christianity prompted, and the counsels of religion have guided this undertaking. Those mainly instrumental in carrying it forward, have sought not to benefit the colonists alone, but through them to evangelize the aborigines of the country. The colony of Liberia, stretching along the western coast of Africa from Grand Cape Mount to Cape Palmas, a distance of some five hundred miles, and surrounded, landward, by a dense population sunk into the lowest ignorance and degradation, forms a base for enlarged and most successful missionary operations. Missions located within the colony, exert a mighty influence in promoting the prosperity and saving the souls of the colonists, while at the same time, ample opportunities for intercourse with the natives are thus secured without the risk of a residence among them. The character of the colonists, elevated far above that of the surrounding inhabitants in intelligence and civilization, gives force to the instructions of the Missionary by a practical illustration of their value, considered with reference simply to temporal interests, and the example and prayers of hundreds of Christian colonists are a potential element of evangelization.

Different denominations have not been slow to perceive or to avail themselves of the facilities thus afforded for missionary effort. Methodists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Baptists, soon entered the field. At first white men were employed as missionaries. But it was soon found that they could not stand the climate. One after another fell at his post.—Some as bright examples of self-im-

molation and Christian heroism as the annals of Christianity afford are chronicled in the history of African missions. Africa is the home of the black man, and experience has demonstrated the propriety of employing colored missionaries in Western Africa. Before the organization of our Board, this policy had, to some extent, been adopted; and hence, they have never sent a white missionary to Liberia. They have succeeded in securing quite a number of colored brethren to labor for them—men of intelligence and piety—some of them very intelligent—whose labors have been greatly blessed. More than eight hundred baptisms have been reported by the missionaries of the Board, and there are frequent notices of baptisms in the letters of our missionaries where the number is not mentioned. The whole would not probably fall short of one thousand. Of those reported, more than one hundred have been of natives; and this within nine years. The condition of the Liberia mission is at present most prosperous and encouraging. A revival had, at last advices, occurred at several of the stations, as the result of which eighty-two had been received for baptism, about twenty-five of whom were natives. The work was still in progress.

In their second annual report, the Board state that after much inquiry for missionaries for Liberia, they had determined to seek them for the present from the colony itself. "They accordingly appointed brother John Day, who for several years had been in the employ of the Boston Board, to labor among the Bassa tribes, and brother A. Jones, a young and talented minister, to be engaged within the limits of the Maryland Colony."—Brother Jones died before receiving

notice of his appointment. Brother Day accepted, and is still under the patronage of the Board. He is our most reliable and efficient missionary, is a man of intelligence and cultivation, an exemplary and devoted Christian, and an efficient minister. As a number of stations have been established in Liberia, it will facilitate the review which we are making to give the history of each station separately.

NEW VIRGINIA,

Is situated on St. Paul's river, a few miles from Monrovia. In 1848, the Board report that Rev. F. S. James had been located at this place as pastor of the Church and school teacher, with instructions to labor, as much as possible, in the vicinity among natives and colonists. The condition of the station was most encouraging. The missionary reports the baptism of twenty persons in connection with the church at New Virginia, forty-seven at Monrovia, and seven at New Georgia. Says the report, "These tokens of the divine favor have filled the hearts of the Board with gladness. Nearly one hundred have been added to the churches within the limits of this station since the last annual meeting. To God be all the glory!"

In the report of 1849, the death of brother James is noticed as a severe loss to this station. The church had been greatly blessed under his labors, as also the regions around. Brother Day states, "At New Virginia is a day-school of 62 children, a most interesting Sabbath school, and a church of between 50 and 100 members, built up principally by his (Brother James') indefatigable labors; besides, he preached at several native villages, and at New Or-

leans he laid the foundation and built up a church. Every thing in his hand prospered as if the Lord delighted to bless him."

From the death of brother James, the church at New Virginia was without a pastor until September, 1851, when Rev. Joseph M. Harden was located with them. The school had, however, been kept up successfully, and in 1851 there were 118 scholars. The labors of brother Harden were not confined to one locality. He had charge of four other churches. Brother H. had but recently arrived in the colony when he received appointment as missionary. Soon after commencing his labors, he writes:—"It has been thought best by the committee that I should take charge of the Virginia station. * * * I commenced my duties at this station on Sunday 21st inst., and with a dependence upon the Holy Spirit, I am endeavoring faithfully to discharge my duty in a meek, patient and humble manner. * * * My education I know is defective, and * * * I have seized every opportunity for improving my mind. To set down contented with my present attainments here in Virginia would be foolish and wicked. * * * The church has suffered greatly for want of a pastor. I feel that there rests upon me a great responsibility, and often do I adopt the language of Paul and say, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' But like that same apostle, I feel that I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me." It may be as well to state here, that the Board have found this brother a valuable missionary. He was, last year, transferred to the Central African Mission, and located in Lagos as agent and missionary. In 1853, brother Harden was still located at New Virginia. His labors were "highly satisfactory;" ten had been baptized. 1854. Twenty-two had been baptized. The school was in "a flourishing condition." One of the scholars, a boy 10 years old, died in the fall of last year, giving evidence of deep interest in spiritual things. The missionary had "been suffering with feeble health, induced by exposure." Writing to the Corresponding Secretary, he remarks:—"Africa is not like America. We have no paved streets or well kept roads to travel on. Vegetation is always green and rank, and having to travel through the bushes during the rains, on foot, you can at almost any time wring as much water out of your clothes as if you had been washing them, and then traveling from five to ten miles in an open canoe through a hard driving rain, will bring on sickness. Dear brother, do not suppose for a moment I am complaining. Far be it from me, for I have long since consecrated myself to God and the Board, and expect to die preaching the glad tidings of salvation. I shall consider it an honor to die in such a cause."—In the report for 1855, the Board say, "This is justly regarded as a most interesting position. The church is in a good condition, and the school is one of the most thriving on the river. * * * Brother Harden has been faithfully engaged in his work, but feeble health has sometimes interfered with it. 'When I look around me,' he remarks, 'and see the multitudes on their way down to death, I can fully adopt the language of the prophet, 'O that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night over the slain of the daughter of my people.' I have an increasing

pleasure in declaring the unsearchable riches of Christ, and could wish the faith of Stephen, the love of Paul, the boldness of Peter, and the eloquence of Apollos that I might be much more prepared to speak the word.' Seven baptized." We are still encouraged by the success of our work at this station.

BEXLEY.

This station, from its commencement in 1846 to 1854, was under the charge of Rev. John Day, and during this entire period enjoyed a course of uninterrupted and constantly increasing prosperity. In the report of the Board in 1848, Mr. Day is quoted as having thus written: "I am preparing for a tour of one or two hundred miles in the interior, that I may see the extent and prospects of the great work you have to accomplish. The work I call *yours*, as I believe it will be the glory of the *South* to prove themselves the greatest benefactors of the negro race. It is a great work, and many discouragements may be expected, but for Jesus' sake, never abandon this field." Seven or eight had been added to the church. With reference to the tour above referred to, our missionary wrote, "I think a large extent of the Bassa country is ripe for the gospel. As far as I have been, which is about 75 miles in the interior and, say, 150 miles coastwise, I have found the preaching of the word acceptable. I have preached to 1000 persons 70 miles in the interior. * * * Not a whisper, not a stir until I had done, every ear attentive, every eye fixed. All around where I labor there is perfect order. They kneel solemnly before their Maker and seem to pray. * * * A stranger would sometimes think they are fit for the ordinance of the gospel." In the report of 1850, the Board say, "The church at Bexley has received an accession of seven by baptism, so far as can be ascertained since our last report. It is in a prosperous condition." Our missionary writes, "I am not discouraged, for I have never witnessed such bright prospects for the mission." While thus engaged with untiring energy in the labors of his mission, our brother was not unfrequently quite sick. In addition to this he was deprived by death of his wife and child. Under these afflictions he wrote, as quoted in the report of 1852, "I am better of pneumonia, of which I informed you, but am so exceedingly weak that I apprehend my end is near. That, however, does not disturb me. I would not give a straw to live. I have no selfish interests on earth. What, in the present state of my health, can I do for the heathen? Shall I weep for them? Yes, I can weep and pray for them. But I weep most of all that others do not weep. Who will care for the poor heathen? * * * To the utmost of my ability, I have taught their children, have preached to them, have pursued them with the word of God far and wide, into their villages in the interior. I have worn out myself, and can rest in peace." And again, "I am exceedingly afflicted in the loss of my wife and child, but I do not murmur. No, let God take my life, my all. I cannot murmur. God is too wise and good to do wrong. But O! that dart that pierced my heart, it would seem that the wound can never heal. My wife, in dying, embraced me in her arms, and death had done its work before the grasp was broken. That embrace, that look, haunt me like a ghost. Asleep, awake, I see her smile in death. But I murmur not."

In this report is noticed the death of a Bassa headman who had been converted and was baptized in 1846. "He was," writes brother Day, "remarkably fond of his Bible, and for several of his last years employed himself in reading, expounding, preaching and praying among his countrymen." Regarding the condition of the mission brother Day wrote, "We have many discouragements, but the few conversions and the improved condition of the Bassas around cause me to feel that all is not lost, to say the least. * * * 'I am going to heaven!' Hear you that language, and mark the source whence it comes! From a Bassa headman! * * * 'I am going to heaven!' rewards me for my toil, and pays a thousand-fold for all that on my station has ever been expended." The blessing of God continued with our brother. He was restored to his accustomed health, and borne through the deep waters that had gone over his soul. In one of his letters, noticed in the report of 1854, he says, "the natives are becoming more and more identified with us, more enlightened, see clearer that there is a God who controls the affairs of men, and are more conscious that they are accountable to him, and will appear before his righteous bar. In this report, reference is made to an interesting revival in his field. He thus notices a baptismal scene: "On Sunday morning, 26th June, (1833,) I preached. * * I first descanted briefly in positive institutions and God's abhorrence of disobedience to them, putting baptism among them. Invited attention to Scripture passages referring to baptism * * * immersion, the mode, and believers the only subjects: Sung to the waterside, the hymn, 'O! tell me no more,' &c. At a bend in the way, I looked back on a dense crowd, sixty or seventy yards long, just then ushering in from another way, multitudes of poor natives looking on with solemn awe. In the presence of that large concourse I baptized ten professing Christians, * * two of whom were native women who read the Bible. Every thing went off with such solemnity that a deep impression in favor of baptism ran through the congregation." In the report of 1855, it is stated that twenty-four had been baptized during the year. From this station a wide spread and most salutary influence has been exerted upon the Bassas; many of whom had been hopefully converted. The Bassas occupy the county for about 150 miles coastwise, and 75 miles in the interior; and are supposed to number about one hundred thousand. The following fact stated by brother Day, while he was stationed at Bexley, will illustrate the progress of christianity among this people, "On my own land is a christian village of say thirty inhabitants. They are a quiet set, who regularly attend divine worship morning and night. To see them in attendance you would suppose them christians. They solemnly attend the reading of the word, and kneel reverently in prayer!"

At an early period of his labors at Bexley, brother Day opened a school, chiefly for the education of native youth. This school has been prolific of good. Many young men, natives and colonists, have been educated in it. It was a "manual labor school." The pupils were not only trained in a knowledge of books, but to habits of systematic industry. Great attention has been paid to imparting religious instruction. This indeed, has throughout, been regarded as the main point. Did our limits permit it

would be interesting to trace, somewhat minutely, the progress of this school. We must, however, content ourselves with giving a few brief extracts from the reports of the Board. 1848—"Brother John Day is engaged at Bexley in superintending a school of native boys, which at first commenced with fifteen pupils; but at his earnest request the Board have authorized him to enlarge the number of pupils to fifty. Referring to this subject Mr. Day says: 'In view of the difficulty of procuring teachers for the interior, I have thought it best to take forty or fifty natives into my school.' * * Subsequently he writes: 'When I first addressed you, I was in a low state of health—did not expect to live but a short time—and on whatever objects I looked, everything so converged to a point, I could only see, could only anticipate small things. A school of fifteen native boys was all my vision could grasp. Now fifty is the smallest number that satisfies my desires.'"

1849.—"A school of about forty-five boys, * * most are natives." * * Referring to these youths our missionary says: 'The religious instruction they receive shows itself in their good behaviour. To see them bow their heads around the frugal meals while one of their number raises his voice in grateful thanks to their Maker for his bounty, and devoutly asks his blessings upon it, is enough to fill the heart of the spectator with joy. They quietly eat their poor meals, and cheerfully rise and engage in any work assigned them. * * * I do not like to say much about a school under my own direction, but I suppose there is not one of the kind more interesting in the whole country.'" 1850—"The school, containing thirty-eight native chil-

dren and twelve colonists, is reported to be in a flourishing condition. The Rev. Mr. Gurley, who visited Bexley as a secretary of the Colonization Society, states 'that this school presents scenes to awaken the gratitude and joy of every pious heart.' * * * 'I hope,' says the missionary, 'that most of my large boys are thinking of eternity.'" 1851—"The intelligent, easy demeanor of these [native pupils] youths," says our missionary, "would readily make them pass for colonists. I have three in advance of the rest. John Barco Day, the son of a great king among the Bassas, is rather an extraordinary boy of fourteen years of age. He is a studious, industrious and dignified youth. William Harris, the third of that class, is the son of a head man whom I baptized in the year 1846."

BASSA COVE.

In their third annual report, (1848,) the Board state, "At Bassa Cove is a flourishing school under the care of brother Elkins." Brother Day wrote, "This is a most interesting part of our mission. The re-captives and the natives are doing well, and are deriving great benefit from the school." Brother Davis was preaching at this place, Edina and adjacent native towns, with encouraging prospects of success. 1849—Brother A. P. Davis, missionary, besides attending to the church and supervising the school at Bassa Cove, he had made frequent excursions in reaching the gospel to the surrounding natives. On these journeys he had gone "as far as Cape Palmas, and above among the churches and stations on the St. Paul river." He writes, "I have endeavoured to perform all the duties required at home during the year, besides my labors and pastoral visits abroad. I have baptized seven, five,

at home, and two while traveling.— Among the last named is my interpreter. His name is John B. Davis. He has taken several tours among his brethren alone, since his union with the church; and I think, to very considerable advantage. Many admire his improvement, while on the other hand some are enraged. The change in his conduct, his refusing to partake of any of their habits, his distance from them in this respect is a powerful rebuke to them. They feel that there is a reality in the religion of Jesus to which they are strangers. I have had a number of applications by natives to be instructed as my interpreter has been. They beg that I would take them without pay. * * * Very high views of religion seem to be entertained by them."

For some years after this date there was no missionary at Bassa Cove.— The Board were solicitous to secure a suitable man for the field, but were unable. From the report of 1853 we extract the following statement: "At this place the Board have a school conducted by Charles Henry. The church has twenty three members: three have been recently baptized." The missionaries of other stations continued to afford such aid as their engagements would permit, and the church was prevented from extinction. Considerable influence was also exerted by the school. In the report of 1855 we find brother A. P. Davis again at this station. The report says: "The indications at this station during the last year are highly favorable. Says our missionary, 'The church under my care is increasing. Since I last wrote, I have baptized seven persons, and received several more for baptism. I can have as many in my school as I can give attention to.'"

BIBLE BOARD.

Our esteemed brother Dayton, Cor. Secretary of the Bible Board, seems to be cheered by the success of his efforts to enlist the churches in the Bible cause, especially in the home department. We trust that his most sanguine hopes may be realized. Soon, unless "the signs of the times" deceive us, we shall need greatly increased aid in the distribution of the Bible in Foreign lands. Meantime, what baptist can be willing that any of our own fellow-citizens shall be without the Word of God.

P.

THE ALABAMA BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION.

The Editor of the Southern Baptist who attended the late session of this body, represents it as having been a very interesting meeting. Our Alabama brethren have made quite a vigorous and successful effort, during the past year, for the cause of education in connection with Howard College. We intended to be at the Convention, but were prevented by sickness. Foreign Missions were not overlooked. But we cannot think that the amount (\$3,000) said to have been contributed in that State for the cause, is the fair quota of our Alabama brethren for the evangelization of China and Africa. But we live in hope of better days.

P.

OTHER MISSIONS.

We intend, in future numbers of the *Commission*, to furnish a general summary of the doings of other missionary bodies. Such a record would have been prepared for this number, had it not been probable that such an interval would occur before the issue of our 2nd Number, as to render it comparatively of little value.

P.

Our Magazine.

While we can point with satisfaction to the communications contained in this number, and would bespeak for them an attentive and prayerful perusal, we are not willing that it shall be regarded as showing *all* that the *Commission* is to be. We expect to give in our future issues, greater variety, and especially, *more Missionary news*. We hope to be so sustained by our brethren, that we shall be encouraged to every exertion to make the *Commission* every thing they will desire in such a publication. Under any circumstances *we shall do our best*.

P.