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The Commission.

Vol. I.

MARCH, 1857.

No. 9.

SERIOUSNESS AN ELEMENT OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

If there have been times, in the history of Christianity, when religion has been supposed to consist in austerity, and when the voluntary pietist believed that he was serving God, and promoting his own holiness, by wrapping himself in gloom, and sequestering himself from all the duties and charities of society, may it not be feared that the present is an age, when, according to the natural proneness of man to extremes, professors of religion are in danger of abandoning themselves to a spirit of levity, entirely inconsistent with Christian dignity, and with any high attainments in spirituality of character?

In whatever point of view we contemplate religion, it certainly seems calculated to impress upon the character a stamp of seriousness. Its tendency, as its design, is to purify our nature from the taint of vanity, to expel whatever is volatile, and to compress the character into a form of solid excellence. Religion truly is a source, a *real* source, and the *only* source of happiness. But it should not be misunderstood, or forgotten, that if it creates new sources of joy, it does also of affliction; that many of the trials of the Christian are peculiar and poignant; that in the present imperfect condition of humanity, even his joys are tinged with a mortal hue, and instead of creating an element of perfect

light, display themselves, rather, like the bow of promise, in the benignant beauty with which they are reflected from the cloud of sorrow. The Christian does, indeed, possess abundant and precious resources in his trials. But they are trials still. His afflictions work out for him a future and eternal glory. They are, nevertheless, afflictions. His sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed. They are, notwithstanding, sufferings; and though it is his great and peculiar privilege to be always rejoicing, still it is as one who is also sorrowing.

A reference to some of the principles of the Christian religion, in connection with the emotions they are naturally calculated to produce in the mind of the believer, will serve, I think, to impress the conviction, that seriousness is a natural and important element of Christian character.

How can the Christian think, without seriousness, of what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for his soul? What would he have been *now*, and *where* would he have been soon, if the Son of God, of his sovereign mercy, had not redeemed him from hell, by the price of his own blood? Can he think, without solemn emotions, of Bethlehem and Golgotha; of Pilate's hall and Calvary; of the patient, devoted and suffering life, and of the mortal agony of the Lord Jesus? and if he thinks of these tender and sacred scenes as he ought, will they not pervade his character with an

element of sobriety, and transfuse throughout it a spirit of seriousness? Will not such reflections rebuke the natural vanity of the heart, awe its frivolity into reverence, and command the truant affections into communion with God, and holy contemplation of the solemn realities of eternity?

What Christian who does not "groan, being burdened" with the depravity of his nature? Who, that is not deeply serious, can ever have sympathised with the Apostle, in his heart-felt exclamation, "O! wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" In the carnality of his affections, the impurity which mingles with his best motives and services, the unnatural insensibility of his heart to spiritual and eternal realities, and his unhappy distance from God, the Christian will surely find cause for deep and penitential seriousness; a seriousness only altered in its character by the merciful assurance of final victory, through the blood of the atonement.

How many reasons for anxiety, for prayer, for deep and serious emotion, press upon the Christian from around the domestic hearth? Here are those of whose existence he is the author; who have been introduced through his agency into a state of being from which they must pass to heaven, or to hell! Others, too, around him, are, under his influence, forming their character for eternity! O! if every breath were a sigh of supplication: every pulsation a throb of anxiety; every word the articulation of a soul quivering with emotion, could the intensity of our feelings be disproportioned to the awful magnitude and responsibility of the case?

Look, too, at the millions of our distracted country, living, in the midst of their unparalleled privileges, in atheistic ignorance, mad with a spirit of delusion, and pressing—as we have too much reason to fear—through a path of violence, outrage, and carnage, to eternal ruin! Lift your eyes upon a world

sinking to hell! Think of the darkness and degradation, the crime and misery prevailing in so large a portion of the earth! and without adverting to hearts lacerated by domestic affliction, to the tender ties ruptured by inexorable death, to the sickness of soul we feel in consigning those we love to the remorseless tomb, surely we shall see reason to believe that seriousness must be a predominant element in Christian character.

A serious work, too, the Christian has to do; and that both with respect to himself and others, a work which,

*"Might fill an angel's heart
And filled a Saviour's hands."*

A work, the magnitude of which pressed from the Apostle the exclamation, "who is sufficient for these things;" a work which cannot be done without prayer, without anxiety, without self-examination, without self-denial, without laborious and painful effort; and these cannot be exercised without seriousness. To pretend to such services in a spirit of levity, is not to perform, but to profane them.

With respect to others, the Christian is responsible, to the full extent of his ability, for the conversion of the perishing heathen to God. Millions upon millions, dying in their sins, are pleading with him, by their piteous condition, to come to their rescue. At such a spectacle, can he be otherwise than serious? As Christians, we are charged by the Lord Jesus with the duty of doing, each one, what we can to save from death the multitudes around us; our friends and neighbors; the congregation for which we labor, and the community in which we live. How solemn the enquiry, whether we shall, in the end, be found free from their blood, or whether, by our want of spirituality, we shall become stumbling-blocks over which they shall fall into ruin.

Serious employment, too, claims the

attention of the Christian, in the necessity resting upon him to secure the salvation of his own soul. How necessary that he should faithfully examine himself, knowing that whatever may be his profession, or his character among men, unless Jesus Christ be in him, he is a reprobate. With what solemnity must the declaration of the Apostle impress his mind, that after having preached the gospel to others, he may himself be a cast-away! How must his heart be appalled by those awful words of the Lord Jesus, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." In view of these solemn truths, if the Christian has reason for joy, there is reason, also, why he should rejoice with trembling. He must feel the necessity of falling penitently at the footstool of the Divine throne and crying, "Search me, O! God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Such a seriousness as that of which I speak, has ever been a conspicuous element in the character of those most distinguished for piety and usefulness. Jesus, our Lord, high and holy as was his communion with the eternal Father, and elevated was his joy, springing from this blessed source—was, nevertheless, "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;" and much of his sorrow, instead of being from causes peculiar to himself, proceeded from such as were common to him with all his members; while he was entirely exempt from others which press with peculiar poignancy upon the pardoned sinner. The Apostle who insists most upon spiritual joy, and was, in this respect, a happy example of his own doctrine, served the Lord "with all

humility of mind, and with many tears." Leighton and Newton, Edwards and Fuller, will not, I presume, be charged with fanaticism, or considered ascetics. But their character wears an aspect of deep seriousness. Of Leighton, Bishop Burnet has said, that, in the course of a long acquaintance, he never saw him in a mood in which he would not have been willing to die. These were men not of an *affected*, but a *real* singularity of character; a peculiarity declaring that they were not of earth, and stamping them with the seal of heaven. They were men whom we profess to admire, but whose character is as far removed from that of the easy, fashionable, laugh-loving Christian, of modern type, as of the obnoxious "long-chained puritan;" whose faults, I fear, we are much more ready to detect than we are to emulate his virtues. Whenever we shall reach the elevation, on which stood these holy men, it must be by a movement of *retrogression*, rather than of progress, from the point occupied by the present generation. With respect to the long chins, it should be remembered, that among them were found Baxter and Bunyan, Howe, Owen, and Bates, and many other such names of undying verdure. Alas! for the day when we shall cease to admire their character, to imbibe from their pages the spirit of piety; or kindle from their lamps the flame of our devotion. Indeed, the whole history of piety has been but a fulfilment of the promise, that "they who sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." We may, therefore, well believe that his joy will be small, and his sheaves few, who, though he may sow the "precious seed," fails to water them with tears. In proportion to the depth of our spiritual sorrow, will be the height of our spiritual joy.

Religious joy is, itself, a serious

thing. Far from being a mere flash of excitement, or an earth-born light, generated in the complacency of a soul which feels itself at ease, it is a flame of vestal purity, kindled by the Spirit of God, on the altar of a heart purified from sensuality, consecrated to the Lord, perfumed with a heavenly unction, and from which is continually ascending to God the incense of adoration. It is a sacred fire which will burn only in an atmosphere of holiness; such as that in which the God of love himself will dwell. It is a precious exotic, which will flourish in no soil not penetrated and broken by repentance, mellowed and fertilized by the rich grace of God, warmed by the beams of the sun of righteousness, and guarded against all noxious growth by a vigilant and faithful husbandry. It is the joy of a sinner redeemed from hell; who, as he looks down into the deep abyss from which he has been delivered, then lifts his eyes to the throne, on which he shall reign with Christ in his glory, "trembles as he sings the honors of his God." It is the joy of a soul affected and awed by the coming realities of eternity; the advent of Christ; the awaking shout; the general resurrection; the eternal judgment, and the life everlasting. It is the joy of a pardoned penitent mingling his notes of confession with the song of his praise, and tears of contrition with the incense of his adoration; and may we not believe, that even in heaven, when death shall be swallowed up in victory, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, the spirit of penitence, freed from the bitterness and dregs of mortality, will impart a sweetness to that eternal song, in which the redeemed shall sing, as they stand before the throne, "unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins, in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God, and his Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

W. H. J.

GOING TO HELL FOR A THIRIP

Some ten or twelve years ago, as I was passing down the principal street of one of our Southern cities, I met two negro men. They appeared to be discussing the character of one of their acquaintances. As they passed, I heard distinctly a single remark. Said one, "He will go to hell for a thrip."—"Thrip," gentle reader, is Georgia for six-and-a-quarter cents. Ah! thought I, he is taking a long journey, over a rough road, to an awful house of despair for so small wages.

Since that evening I have often thought of the remark, and had occasion, in some melancholy instances, to make application of it to some of my acquaintance also.

In less than six months I conversed with a young man in an enquiry meeting. He told me he could not consent to be a Christian, because, being a clerk in a dry-goods store, it was necessary for him sometimes to tell a lie, or lose a cent or two in the yard for his cloth, and he could not agree to give up his gain. "Ah! my young friend," said I, "Will you go to hell for a thrip?"

I have seen a man selling drams of ardent spirits to his fellow-men, ruining them in estate, body, mind and soul. And I could but reflect that deeply as he was injuring his neighbors and the community in which he lived, he was inflicting an equally fatal curse upon himself, for, thought I, "he is going to hell for a thrip."

I have seen church members flourishing in earthly substance; sometimes stinting themselves and their families to add to their store; sometimes gratifying every selfish desire; and yet, when a call was made for a contribution to support the gospel at home, or send it abroad to the heathen, they would close their steel-clasped purses and like Priest and Levite "pass by on the other side." And I have said to myself, "Take heed, my brother: men do sometimes go to hell for a thrip."

I have seen a young man of talent, professing to love the Lord Jesus, and to give himself up to his service, and presently that service called him to sacrifice, self-denial, and cross-bearing; it offered him poverty and toil now, but riches, glory, and immortality beyond the grave. I have seen him hesitate and halt, cast an eye to the brightness of the heavenly kingdom and the glory of the eternal crown, and then put forth his hand to grasp the good things of this life. And in sorrow of heart and anguish of spirit I have exclaimed—"Will he also go to hell for a thrip?"

I have seen one, in whom the love of Jesus burned with holy ardor, turning away from the temptations of the world, devoting his powers to the Redeemer's service, choosing poverty with Christ rather than riches without, giving up father, mother, brothers, sisters, houses, lands, money, honor, fame, ease—able to say with Peter, "Lord, I have left all and followed thee;" and I have rejoiced to see faith and love that no seduction of earth could allure from Heaven.

Reader! How is it with you? Where are you going? What are you going for? Are you in the broad road that leads to death? or in the narrow path that leads to life? Are you going with the many? or with the few? Is it the gold or silver of this world that stimulates you to action? or is it the "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away?" Are you hurrying down to a bed in hell? or striving upward to a mansion in the Father's house? Pause, think, reflect, be wise, determine, act—and give your heart to Jesus Christ.

N. M. C.

University of Miss. Jan., 27th, 1857.

ON GIVING.

Every contribution to religious objects ought to be a *gift*. True, it is our sacred duty to contribute: it is a debt we owe, as real, as binding, as any obligation under which we can possibly rest. But the debt ought to be discharged by a gift. If this be a paradox, yet is it a privilege. How pleasant that we can bring the offering of affection to the support of our Redeemer's cause. There is a feeling of relief and satisfaction in paying a debt; but what a thrill of delight is experienced when we can give a gift, an acceptable, pleasing gift, to one we love. Certainly nothing short of this will be satisfactory to our Divine Master. The ancient, oriental monarchs required that the most compulsory tribute brought them by subject nations should be under the fiction, at least, of a free will offering; they must "give gifts." Before the Monarch of the Universe, who sees the heart, the same thing must be done, and done in sincerity. We do not say that one is to give only when he feels spontaneously inclined to do so. To act upon that principle would very often restrain from prayer, and from reading the Bible. It is better to perform a duty reluctantly than not to perform it at all. Let a man give, therefore, because he ought to give, whatever effort it may require, but let him seek, at the same time, to give cheerfully, because he likes to give.

All Christians ought to give. There are persons who can speak very strongly of the duty of the Christian world, or of their own denomination, to contribute liberally to the spread of the Gospel at home and abroad; while they contrive, on the ground of some peculiarity in their condition, to excuse themselves from taking part. A notable instance of this is to be found in some ministers. "I give my labor to spread the gospel, and that is surely enough, without my giving money too."

Now this famous excuse was never

What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

substantial enough to be decent, except in the case of those who were utterly destitute of private means, devoting their entire time to the ministry, and receiving for their labors what would barely procure the absolute necessities of life; and even they would only be thereby justified in giving but little, not in giving nothing. How flimsy a mantle does it seem as worn by men, who, though perhaps poor and poorly paid, certainly have it in their power to retrench some expenditure, to make some sacrifice; or by men, who give a large portion of their time to school, or farm, or merchandise, and thus are about as thriving as their neighbors, and often comparatively rich. We have heard of a wealthy and honored minister—and we believe him to be a sincere Christian, though lamentably penurious in matters of religion, that on one occasion he preached upon covetousness, denouncing it with all that majestic eloquence for which he is remarkable, and as the people went away more than one man said to his neighbor, “Didn’t you feel, as you listened to Mr. ——— to day, like telling him what Nathan said to David?” It is painful to think of the disastrous effect produced, not only upon the influence of that sermon, but of his preaching in general. On the other hand, when the preacher himself gives liberally, it is one proof of his being in earnest, and it will powerfully stimulate others to a like liberality. The people do notice this matter, though, out of respect for the sacred calling, or a sort of dissatisfied acquiescence in the old excuse, they may rarely complain; and there is nothing that can give such added cogency to a pastor’s argument and appeal in the cause of benevolence, as when they see that “to his power, yea, beyond his power, he is willing of himself.” Besides, one must give, or his own piety will suffer. The more fervently he urges a duty upon others, the greater the injury of neglecting it

himself. It is true that some persons may complain of the preacher’s giving so largely, “what, after all, comes out of the people,” (when he has no means of support besides his salary,) but these are only the unreasonable, who must be disregarded, or the unreflecting, who will soon think better of it. We maintain that to give, and to give liberally, is the privilege and the duty of every Christian man, and a church is just as much bound to enable the pastor to do this, as to furnish him the means for purchasing books, or educating his children. If they would be ashamed of their pastor’s having to live in a very small house, they ought to be equally ashamed of his having to make a very small contribution.

The poor ought to give as well as the rich. Shall we speak of the widow’s two mites, which together made less than half a cent? If one really gives as much as he is able, and thus Jesus smiles, what matters it whether the world applaud or not? Often Jesus does smile now, even as the under shepherd looks with joy, upon the humble contribution, hardy earned and freely given, of pious poverty. Let no one then be ashamed to give, because he can afford but little. And let no one forget that giving is not so much among the mere luxuries, as the necessities of life, which ought to be enjoyed, though it be in a more frugal way, by the poor as well as the rich. If the great number of persons in our churches who are comparatively poor, would all contribute something, according to their ability, what vast sums would be poured into the treasury of the Lord. Or let us reverse the statement and say, the rich ought to give as well as the poor. Few wealthy men contribute in any thing like so large a proportion to their means, as those in moderate circumstances. They have not commonly just around many examples of persons equally rich to stimulate them, and they are slow to observe that a subscrip-

tion which is absolutely great, may be relatively very small.

We ought to give *to various objects*. The one grand work of Christian benevolence has come to be distributed, whether fortunately or unfortunately, into quite a number of distinct departments of effort, and these make their separate calls for support. Of course it cannot be the duty of every Christian to contribute regularly to every known enterprise, for they are counted, great and small, by scores, and this were to dissipate one's attention so as to diminish the benefit received by himself. But is there not an equal personal injury when interest and attention are confined to one or two philanthropic undertakings? Besides purely local efforts, in which a limited number of persons are alone concerned, there are certain general objects, which appear to have claims upon all alike. The present necessities, and relative importance of each, a man must ascertain and decide for himself, and graduate his several contributions accordingly. But something he ought to give to every one. It may possibly be true, that if some should contribute exclusively to one object, and others to another they would all be duly sustained. But even then, the giver himself would suffer. These enterprises being in a measure distinct, each makes its appeal to certain special convictions and sentiments, and utterly to neglect any is to fail somewhat of that moral culture which benevolence secures, to substitute a practical one-sidedness for completeness of Christian development. And it ought constantly to be remembered that an important result of all right-minded and well-directed liberality is lost, in all cases where the giver himself is not made a better Christian.

We ought to give *with system*. Probably all well-informed persons recognize the propriety, indeed the necessity, (if much is to be accomplished,) of "systematic beneficence." But what

system each one shall adopt, is the question. Now we would not, if we had the power, regulate the matter by any general law. A man has no right to shun the responsibility, and ought not to lose the benefit of deciding for himself. It would be difficult to find a better discipline, than in the anxious and prayerful effort of a conscientious man to decide how much he ought, for a given space of time, to contribute to the cause of his Redeemer. But there is room for suggestions, suited to the various callings and circumstances of men, which this or that Christian may be induced to adopt. Where one lives exclusively upon salary or fees, as laboring men, clerks, teachers, ministers, physicians, lawyers, &c., it is comparatively easy. Many such persons give one-tenth of their receipts, and have only to distribute properly among various objects. Some ought to give a larger, and perhaps others a smaller proportion. Those who live upon the income from property have a more difficult problem. One thing seems plain, that they ought to give a larger fraction of their income than the former class, since the principal, from which their receipts are derived, is a permanent possession. But for men engaged in business, particularly for farmers, the question becomes much more complicated still. To give a fixed proportion of one's gross receipts, would in some cases answer well, but in others it would be liable to serious objections. To give according to the net profits of business, is a very questionable plan, for then the more expensively and even extravagantly one lives, the less he must contribute. With farmers, the custom of setting apart the produce of a certain piece of ground, or a certain fractional part of particular crops, often works well. It appears to us that intelligent practical men, occupied as merchants, mechanics, manufacturers, or agriculturists, might render a most important service to the cause of benevolence, by devising each

a scheme for systematic giving, trying it himself, and communicating it in a paragraph through the religious journals. Meantime, we urge upon every reader at least to establish some system for his own direction. Let him thoughtfully and prayerfully determine on what principle to regulate the amount of his stated contributions. Experience, and conference with others, may suggest modifications of his plan, and thus may be attained the most useful results.

At the same time, one ought occasionally to give from *impulse*. We know that in the matter of private devotion, a man must have stated seasons, which no degree of temporary disinclination shall induce him to neglect; but at whatever hour of the day besides he feels any special devotional impulse, he ought to yield to it, and however occupied, to lift at least for a moment his heart in prayer. There is here an analogy, as there ought always to be an intimate connection, between praying and giving. Let the Christian establish his system, and never come short of it; but when some fact brought to his knowledge, some appeal of another, or reflection of his own, produces a special impulse to give, let him not repress the generous feeling, but give at once, though it be but little. Thus shall his own heart be kept in a healthier frame, while the cause shall gain some additional aid.

Alas! for the Christian man who does not love to give. J. A. B.

PROBLEM OF EVIL.

No finite intellect, may be able to solve it, unfold the Philosophy of its origin, harmonize its existence with the wisdom, goodness, and power of God, and show how "all partial evil works out a universal good."

But the problem may be relieved of many of its difficulties, to reflecting and ingenuous minds.

The varied forms and established order of evil, constitute the appointed

school of virtue. What discipline of virtue could proceed, if deplored evils were withdrawn. Patience is cultivated amid provocations and trials of temper. Benevolence is called into exercise by poverty, want, and wretchedness. Honesty is proved and confirmed amid temptations to peculation and fraud.—Industry is stimulated by apprehended want. Inquiry and study are awakened by consciousness of deplored ignorance.

The exercises of the camp are not more necessary to the accomplishments of military skill and discipline than the existing order of trials, arising from ignorance, want and woe, to the culture and perfection of human virtue.

The existing order of evils, is not only a school for the cultivation of virtue but also a back ground for setting off and displaying its picturesque beauty. As every painting requires its back ground, to define more clearly its outline, and figures, and give, more brilliant and stronger expression to its coloring; so isolated, or associated virtues, are best set off in their beauty, brilliance, and order, by the prevalence and contrast of evils. Ideas of color, and magnitude, arise from relation and comparison. So truth, justice, benevolence, and piety are illustrated, and commended to heightened admiration by the contrasted deformity of error, oppression, selfishness, and irreligion. Surely God brings good out of evil, makes the evil passions, and ways of men praise him, and illustrates the excellence of his law and the glory of his character.

W. W. E.

Through the gloom of the night
 The bright star beameth;
 O'er the dark frowning cloud
 The rainbow gleameth.
 'Midst the sorrows of earth
 Hope smiles the sweeter,
 To think of the joys that
 In heaven await her.

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH.

There was once a great and good monarch, who reigned, with undisputed sway, over a vast domain. Many distant provinces were in willing subjection to this excellent prince, who governed them with unfailing wisdom and discretion, and the highest happiness of his subjects was ever best secured by unwavering obedience to his just regulations. In all times of unusual scarcity, trial, or danger, their applications for aid met with a cordial response from their sympathising sovereign, who either sent them immediate relief, or in some other way, which his superior wisdom saw better suited to their general necessities, provided for the existing emergency. And though he had often thus aided them, yet they were still invited to come *freely*, whenever their need pressed them, and assured that as a loving father's towards his children, so the heart of their kind sovereign yearned towards them, and delighted in bestowing whatever could add to their real enjoyment.

But though this excellent king was thus the friend and benefactor of his subjects, still some of them were dissatisfied, and the inhabitants of one petty province actually took up arms against him. When the tidings of this foolish and wicked rebellion reached the capital, the whole court was indignant at the base ingratitude of these rebels, as well as astonished at their stupid arrogance, in supposing that their puny strength could maintain a controversy with the countless legions under the control of their sovereign. Many were eager to avenge the insult offered to their honored king, and longed for the word to be spoken which should authorize them to crush the rebels who had thus forgotten alike their position and their obligations. But the good king gave forth no such exterminating mandate; his heart still yearned toward his rebellious subjects; and he longed to have them return to

their allegiance, only that he might pardon the insult, and again shower down favors upon them.

So he despatched ambassadors to their far off home to invite them to lay down their arms, and receive his pardon. But the rebels so hated their excellent king, that they were enraged at the very sight of his messengers, and without even waiting to hear their errand, or permitting them so much as to enter their city, they rushed forth upon them and stoned them without the walls. Many similar attempts were made by the good king to subdue their animosity, but all proved equally futile. At last the heir to the throne, a noble and excellent young prince, the pride of the kingdom, and the joy of his royal sire, offered to go and see whether he could not bring them to terms. His father told him that the way was long and difficult, that the journey would occupy many months, during which time he would not only be deprived of all the comforts of his regal home, and be cut off from the society of his honored father and of all congenial associates, but he would, after his arrival in that distant province, have to hold intercourse with the utterly vile and depraved, and who, after all, would perhaps only treat his offers of reconciliation as they had done those of his predecessors. But the noble young prince still expressed his willingness to make the attempt, and the good king so pitied his misguided subjects that he willingly assented to the petition of the prince; and after all the preliminaries had been satisfactorily arranged between the father and son, the latter set out upon his difficult and dangerous embassy.

He was gone for many long years, during which he took up his abode in the revolted province, dwelt among the degraded inhabitants, mingled, year after year, freely in their society, that he might learn to understand their characters, and their ground of com-

plaint against his father's government, and that he might seek to remove their prejudices, correct their faults, and gradually, by the power of his own pure and lovely example, elevate the tone of public sentiment, and ultimately bring about complete reformation. In order to accomplish this, it was necessary that he should lay aside the insignia of his rank, disguise himself as a poor man, and submit to all the inconveniences of poverty and neglect. He even became a servant to some of those whose welfare he sought, and he shrank from no privation or suffering that could, in any degree, tend to the accomplishment of his purpose.

Upwards of thirty years thus passed, during which he not only cheerfully submitted to privation and hardship, and labored unceasingly to reform the wretched and guilty rebels, but he actually bore in his own person the punishment due to *their* crimes, and became their surety at his father's court; so that whenever they should present themselves before the throne, not only would their former offences be no more remembered against them, but they would be received and treated as *friends* whom the king himself delighted to honor. After all this had been accomplished, the prince returned once more to his father's court, bringing the joyful tidings that his errand had proved successful; some of the leaders of the conspirators had laid down their arms, submitted to the offered terms of peace, received full and free pardon, and had pledged themselves henceforth to go throughout the length and breadth of the land, inviting all their countrymen to be reconciled to their lawful sovereign, and to enlist themselves under his banner.

Then did the father and son rejoice together over the complete success of the scheme they had devised; and all the court shouted for joy at the safe return of their beloved prince from his long and dreary exile, and at the rich

fruits of his many years of toil and suffering. All were convinced, too, of the wisdom of the plan adopted by the son, of leaving those who had formerly been rebels, as ambassadors to effect the reconciliation of their countrymen. None could so well know the strong points of the conspirators, or the obstacles which prevented their submission, as those who had recently occupied the same position—none could have motives so high and holy to move them to exertion, as those who had just received pardon for their own offences; and, therefore, none doubted that with zeal and fidelity, they would fulfil the sacred duty assigned them.

But, alas! for the frailty of poor erring humanity, no sooner had their benefactor taken his departure, than they began to fold their arms and comfort themselves in talking over their own improved condition and prospects, and to regret that he to whom they owed *all*, should have assigned them so very troublesome an errand. One said, "The rebels are so scattered, and most of them are a long way off, it will be a toilsome journey to get to them." Did he forget *how much further his prince had come to save him?*

Another said, "The job is expensive. it will take so much of my fortune that I shall have but little left to enjoy when I return." And what had it cost the heir of the crown to come to *his* rescue? How much enjoyment had he sacrificed for thirty long years of exile from his father's house, poor, despised, destitute, forsaken? Had he been deterred by the *cost*, from his noble purpose?

A third excused himself on the ground that he had enough to do at home, without setting forth to serve others; his business required his attention; it was quite impossible for him to leave home. And had the king's son nothing to occupy him at home? Was it a mere pastime that had kept him

for more than thirty years an alien from his father's house?

But a fourth said, "These rebels are all *strangers* to me. I don't know anything about them; and why should I take all this trouble? If they were my *friends* I might do it, but I can't make this sacrifice for those I have never seen." Was he a friend of the benefactor who had travelled so far to save him? Was he not an *enemy* as well as a stranger? Yet that tender heart had groaned for him, and toiled and suffered for his relief.

Another said, "From what I have heard of these rebels, I know them to be utterly vile and debased. How can I give up the society of the refined and excellent, to mingle with those so far my inferiors, and to whom I feel such repugnance?" Ah! how far greater was the difference between him and the noble prince who had rescued him from his former debasement, than between his present condition and those he thus despised! Had the pure and spotless young prince shrunk from contact with pollution, where would he now have been?

The sixth pleaded, "Let them lay down the arms of their rebellion as I have done. They know already that they are doing wrong, and incurring not only guilt, but danger by their present course. Let them repent and return to their duty, without waiting to be urged to do so. It is more their concern than mine; let every one attend to his own business."

Unfaithful servant! Had thy Lord left thee to thyself, wouldst thou not long since have been reaping the bitter reward of thy folly? What hast thou, that thou hast not received? And had he not come to woo and win thee to obedience, wouldst thou not still have been waging warfare against thy rightful sovereign, or hopelessly consigned to endless perdition?

"Well," said the next, "I would go if I was *sure* that I could accomplish

anything; but, after all, I don't know that they would even listen to my message; and perhaps my life might be sacrificed, and no good achieved at last."

Is this the cold, calculating indifference—are these the doubting words of one whose life has been justly forfeited for his own rebellion, and who had been rescued by the free, unmerited compassion of the prince, whose last, solemn command, whose standing commission he now so carelessly neglects? Alas! alas! is this the gratitude, are these the kind returns, a saved rebel owes to the loving friend who rescued him from the punishment his crimes had so justly merited?

What shall the prince say to these unfaithful servants, who so slightly treat his last command, so utterly set aside his authority, and neglect the solemn duty assigned them by their lord? If those rebels perish in their crimes, unwarned, and ignorant of the way opened for their pardon and restoration to the favor of their sovereign, whose will be the guilt, and at whose hands will the avenger of blood look for restitution?

Christian of this nineteenth century! *A thousand millions of immortal beings are hastening to eternity*—SEVEN HUNDRED MILLIONS of them are ignorant of their danger, and never heard the joyful tidings of salvation. Your Prince, the Captain of your salvation, who left the bright courts of heaven to proclaim pardon to *you*, has been saying for more than eighteen hundred years, "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Will you hesitate longer? Will you still dream over the desolations of sin? Will you fold your arms in luxurious idleness, and hug your gold to your bosoms, while souls—immortal souls—the purchased possession of his toils and groans and blood, are going down to endless death? Will you, whom he has redeemed by the sacrifice of himself, make vain excuses, and talk of the few paltry sacrifices

you make for the conversion of a ruined word? And what are these *sacrifices*? You dwell in ceiled houses, are clothed in fine raiment, and fare sumptuously every day; while *Jesus* had not where to lay his head, and for the simple garments and plain food which nature demanded for the supply of her most pressing necessities, he was dependant, often, upon the charities of the poor, whose dwellings he entered but to bless. You provide for all your own wants, real and imaginary; build fine houses, pamper every fleshly appetite of yourselves and your children, lay by a certain portion of your income for future contingencies—and then, if you bestow a *small portion of the remainder*, for which you have no particular use, you talk of *sacrifices*, of *donations* to the cause of Christ. The very term is a solecism. Can that be a sacrifice which costs you nothing? Is that a *gift from you*, which being *loaned* to you for a specific purpose, is, in part, applied to the very use for which it was designed? Alas! alas! that poor frail humanity should thus deceive itself. That those who have written “Holiness to the Lord” on themselves and all they possess, should thus prostitute time, talents, influence, life itself, with all its noblest powers and capabilities for usefulness, in grovelling devotion to the god of this world, and in abetting the arch fiend himself in his purposes of universal destruction! That when aims so high, and motives so holy, are held out to the child of God, he should still grovel in pursuit of baubles that must perish with the using—that when permitted to engage in rescuing souls, priceless souls, from eternal death, he should waste his few passing hours in heaping up straws—and that when he might be gathering gems to deck the crown of his Redeemer forever, he will prefer rather to lay up the paltry treasures of earth, which, in a few short hours, may take to themselves wings and flee away, or which at best, he

must leave when the day of his own death shall arrive.

Fellow Christian! in view of that solemn hour when earth and earthly joys shall be passing from your grasp—of that awful day when you and those *you might have saved* from endless perdition, shall meet at the judgment-seat of Christ—when the Saviour, whose last command you have trifled with, whose solemn commission, signed and sealed with his own precious blood, you have left unfulfilled—when He shall charge you with your guilt—say, what wilt thou answer? When He shall make inquisition for blood, ah! whither wilt thou hide thee from the avenger? In view of these solemn realities, as you would be free from the blood of souls; as you would welcome to the joys on high those whom your efforts have saved from hell and elevated to heaven, as you would meet the approving smile of him who died for you, I pray you be faithful to your trust. See to it, that time, talents, influence, be wholly consecrated to the Master's cause and that *as far as in you lies, the gospel shall be preached to all the earth*; and the lowest and most degraded of earth's teeming millions, whom you may reach by prayer, or effort, or sympathy, by toil, or sacrifice, or self-denial, by life or death, by going yourself or sending and sustaining others, by *any* means that you can use, that *every one* of these shall hear of Jesus, and learn the glad tidings of salvation through his blood.

When Christians shall thus live, and labor, and pray; when the church shall wake from her long sleep, and clothed in her beautiful garments, shall go forth in the strength of her God, conquering and to conquer—then, and not till then, shall the millenium appear; the heathen, now so mad on their idols, shall worship and serve only the living and true God; and the seventh angel shall issue forth his joyous proclamation, echoed by the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of earth, “The king-

doms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever."

Who of us, my fellow-Christians, shall have part in the rejoicings of that great and glorious day? Not he who shuns the toil and sacrifice needed to usher it in—not he who would shrink in the day of battle, and fear to risk anything in so glorious a cause. But he who bears patiently the cross now, shall wear the crown hereafter; he who lays down all for Christ in the day of his humiliation, not counting even his life dear unto him, so that he may win souls to his honored Lord, *he* shall have part in the glorious rewards of that day when Jesus shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied; when, in all this sin-ruined earth, there shall be no more curse; but the tabernacle of God shall be with men.

F. G. R. D.

Charlottesville, Oct. 30th, 1855.



From the Southern Baptist.

CENTRAL AFRICA.

The work on Central Africa, by Rev. T. J. Bowen, just issued by the Southern Baptist Publication Society, strikes our country at the right time, as to the great question of opening commerce with the interior of that continent.—England and France are already ahead of us; and they will probably share the larger portion of the profits of the great trade which must soon come out of that country. We learn from reliable sources that some of our leading Southern members of Congress hope to introduce a bill even in the present session, for an appropriation for navigating the Niger. But the views of Mr. Bowen, in this book will doubtless help the measure, sooner or later. We cannot do our readers a better service than by thus offering them the large and comprehensive views of a Christian missionary, on material civilization, and the consistency of those views with the motives of

the herald of the gospel. We select an extract from chapter 26th, on the "Means of Regenerating Africa."

"The missionary work, and the only duty of missionaries, as such, is the preaching of the gospel, and the planting and training of churches. The duties of this single calling are sufficient to fill the hands of any laborer. After all, the missionary is a man, no less than a minister; and, as a man, he cannot avoid feeling an interest in every thing pertaining to the physical, mental or moral improvement of mankind. He must not be a school master for the heathen, but if he is wise, he will do all that he consistently can for the promotion of such schools as are adapted to the condition and wants of the people. He cannot instruct them in the arts of the blacksmith, the carpenter, the mason, &c., but he will desire them to have that degree of instruction in every art which is necessary to their present improvement. He may not turn merchant among them, but he will rejoice at the extension of commerce, as one of the great means of civilization. In like manner, missionary societies cannot become the patrons and supporters of any thing which is not directly a part of the missionaries' work; but, if need be, they may render any kind of assistance to school teachers, merchants and traders, which may be consistent with the design for which missionary societies were created.

No one denies that schools and the industrial arts would be useful to Africa, and helpful to the extension of the gospel. But the greatest of all these secondary means for the extension of the gospel, is commerce with Christian countries. Of course, I make no allusion to the slave trade, which is supported by the most demoralizing species of war, and causes the death of two or three persons, on an average, for every slave that is brought to the market.—Like many other things in human history, the slave trade was a mixture of

good and evil; but the great cycle of human events has passed it by, never to return. Already "lawful commerce," as it is usually and significantly called, has taken fast hold on most of the old stations of the slave trade, as at the mouth of the Gambia, and Sierra Leone, in Liberia, on the Gold Coast, and lastly, at Lagos. This is the traffic which we regard as a powerful auxiliary of the gospel, and upon the steady advances of which, we look as an evidence that our missionary labors shall not cease till Africa has been added to the civilized world. That the men who are engaged in this work, feel intense interest in the progress of present events, is not to be wondered at, when we consider that as preachers, school teachers, mechanics and traders, they are creating nations, and founding empires.—Never before, have the benevolence, the wisdom, the wealth, and the might of men been devoted and pledged to such a work as this, of which Africa is now the object. However much it may be delayed, the ultimate success of the undertaking is no less certain, than the principles of nature upon which it is founded.

While we remember that African commerce is yet feeble, we are not discouraged in our hopes that it is destined to become a powerful instrumentality in the civilization and conversion of the continent. The commercial importance of the country is beginning to be recognized. The scores of French and English vessels constantly engaged in navigating the Senegal and Gambia rivers, and the rapidly increasing trade of several nations with the Western Coast generally, are proof of this. But the present trade is probably not a tithe of what it might be, even with the present population. The single article of palm oil—to say nothing of all sorts of tropical productions—has no assignable limit, as regards either the production or the consumption. The little palm-nut is the greatest enemy that has ever

reared its head against the slave trade: for civilized nations will soon find negroes too valuable in Africa to suffer their exportation to other countries.—Hereafter every war in Western Africa will be an injury to Europe and America, and we rejoice to see so strong an advocate of peace arising to power and immortality on the shores of that hitherto wretched country. We thank God for that emblem of peace, the palm tree.

But the internal wealth of all countries, and especially of so broad and rich a continent as Africa, must always be vastly superior to that of the coast. In every thing except rice and palm oil, Sudan has the advantage of Guinea.—The air is more salubrious; at present, the people are more civilized, and are superior as to race; and the soil and climate are better adapted to most of the tropical productions which are accounted so valuable to other hot countries. Here, at the present moment, are millions of people, every one of whom may have something to sell, and desires something to buy. The caravan trade across a thousand miles of desert, is computed at several millions of pounds sterling, even now, although it is expensive and unnatural, owing to the character and length of the road. The negro caravans of the interior which travel from one market to another, often consist of hundreds, and sometimes of two or three thousand people, laden with home productions, with salt and carbonate of soda from the desert, and with numerous articles from civilized countries, which by some long and expensive route have reached the heart of the continent. From what I saw and learned at Ilorin, I suppose the weekly arrival of such traders at that town cannot be much, if any less than ten thousand, and the same is going on in every part of the country. There is not a town without its market, and not a market without some European goods, and a desire for more; and yet all this vast, populous and productive region, is

cut off from all direct and convenient intercourse with the civilized world.—How much and how many valuable commodities are there wasted annually for want of a market, or else not produced, or but little produced, we are not able to say. The present trade of the country is of course almost nothing to what it might be.

So far as the productions of Central Africa depend on the willingness of the people to labor, there is no doubt as to their abundance. The industry of these people is one of the most remarkable and unexpected facts which have been brought to light by our acquaintance with the country. It is a land without vagrants. The blacksmith, the weaver, the farmer, in short every body, male and female, has something to do, and their markets are always abundantly supplied with every home production to show how probable it is that such a people would labor still more, if stimulated by the demand of a good foreign market.

For what now, does the majestic Niger, the Mississippi of Africa, flow through the heart of Sudan, except to form a great highway for a great traffic with foreign countries? But the civilized world is still unacquainted with the Niger. Strange indeed, that the great and enterprising commercial nations of world, should not know whether the Niger is or is not navigable for steamers. But the fact has arisen partly from our mistakes in regard to the character of the country and people, and partly from some mistakes which have been made in attempts to explore the stream. The manner in which several travellers have pushed through the country, as if travelling against time and reason, has brought more reproach on the climate of Africa, than it ever deserved. Travellers would be likely to lose their lives in any country if they should hasten on, as did Park, without shoes, or as the younger Park, with no clothing but a calico wrapper, or as Clapperton and

others, exposed to sun and rain, wading streams, lying on the wet ground, and too often endeavoring to counteract these imprudences by an imprudent use of brandy.

Mungo Park lost his life by the mistake of firing on the kind hearted people of Busa, who meant him no harm, and thus throwing them into the mistake that his canoe was the advance of the Fellatah army. Lander floated down the river from Yauri to the sea, but forgot to observe whether there was any real impediment to navigation by steamers.

Laird and Oldfield, who reached Raba, were not provided with boats of sufficient power and lightness for the service.

They lost many men, partly from imprudent exposure, partly from the constant use of rum, and partly by purging, bleeding and blistering the heads of men whose cases required an opposite treatment. In the lower part of the river, they were troubled with sand bars, because they were not acquainted with the rules by which the eye may determine the course of the channel. Finally, they made no money. This expedition discouraged the English for several years, during which time Capt. Beecroft, late Consul at Fernando Po, ascended the river on his own account to a point some distance above Raba.

The recent expedition, (in 1854) ascended the Benue to 11° east longitude, and returned at the end of six weeks without the loss of a single man. This result had been predicted by Mr. Hutchinson, (see his journal) provided the men would live prudently and make free use of quinine. The boat returned professedly for want of wood, but really, some were dissatisfied, and unfortunately among the several personages on board, there was no one invested with authority to control the movements of the expedition. It still remains for England, or some other power to make a well-ordered, persevering effort to ex-

plore the Niger and its tributaries. The matter would be very easy to our own government.

Our present knowledge of the Niger is rather extensive than definite. The Delta is sickly, but may be passed in a short time by a good steamer, after which, the climate is probably as good as in tropical rivers. The sand bars would give little trouble to an experienced river pilot. There are rapids at Busa, but the river is several hundred yards wide, and canoes are paddled up and down it daily. The broad river above Busa, is full of shoals and islands, but is navigable for canoes, and we can scarcely doubt that some of the wide channels are sufficiently deep for steamers. The proper season to enter the river would be about the end of April, so as to allow ample time for interviews with chiefs, and to reach Busa in June. One error of the English explorers has been too much haste to return, and another, too much desire to traffic. According to Caille, who descended in a canoe, the river above Timbuctoo is broad and deep, and it probably retains this character for several hundred miles. Below Yauri there is no danger to be apprehended from the natives. The Moors about Timbuctoo, might or might not be hostile, but it is most probable that they would receive the explorers with friendship. Prudence would suggest that the steamer or steamers should be adequately provided with means of defence.

One serious mistake has been committed by commercial adventurers on the Niger. They have expected, very wrongly, that if the country were rich, they should find abundance of valuable commodities, ready to be purchased, and brought aboard the steamers. Because they have not found this, they have been discouraged. Even McGregor Laird, so lately as last year, complains that the expedition up the Benue was not remunerative. How could he expect that any first or second expe-

dition of this kind could be very profitable? I presume he did not expect it; but his remark was made to induce the British government to relieve him of the expense of another expedition: whereas they ought to have taken the affair into their own hands at first, and have put the expedition in the command of some man who would have finished the work.

The navigation of the Niger is not a lottery, in which men may draw a fortune, but a matter-of-fact work, in which they may earn it. If trading houses were established at suitable points on the river, the people would soon come to buy and sell, first by hundreds, and then by thousands, and the productions of the country could be laid up ready for the steamers. Before many years, the centres of trade would remove from their present locations to the banks of the river, the caravan trade across the desert and to the distant coast of Guinea would be broken up; wagon roads would be opened; new articles of export would come into notice, and the production of old ones would be increased; and, at last, the traffic which would not pay the expenses of the first expedition, would be an object of importance to the civilized world.

Possibly this commerce might need some protection, either by forts, with a few civilized negro soldiers, or by armed steamers, which is the method adopted by the French on the Senegal. We, who have lived for several years in the country, however, can scarcely believe that any protection would be needed, except good behaviour. All our supplies and cowries, to the amount of several tons, have been brought into the interior to us by native carriers. We have lived in unlocked houses, and have travelled far and near through the country, and have ever felt as secure in our persons and property as if in America. For my own part, if I were a trader on the Niger, I should have no fears of the people."

Our Missions.

CANTON—CHINA.

Letter from Sister Gaillard.

MAÇAO, Nov. 11th, 1856.

My Dear Brother Taylor:

Strange are the paths of the future, and in wisdom hidden from our view. Three weeks ago, to-day, I little imagined I should be where I am now, in Macao, and our dear home in Canton deserted by me. Not a whisper came to intimate the present state of affairs. Yet in two days after that I was on my way here, and now, with the exception of Mr. Gaillard, its former residents have all left it. Truly God's ways are dark and enveloped in mystery to our finite comprehension; and we are taught our own worthlessness when God bids us stand by and see His salvation. It is a blessed thing to know, as we certainly may know, that he is a jealous God, and will not allow His glorious name to be used lightly. Many are the prayers of His people here, that He would bring good out of evil, "exalt His name among the heathen," and open this vast Empire to the glorious Gospel of His Son Jesus Christ.

Although we look upon the war, and all war, as evil, and contrary to the Gospel; still though sad at heart at the view of suffering, falling heaviest upon the innocent—yea, not even sparing His own little ones, the "Children of the Kingdom,"—yet we may rejoice, and I trust do rejoice, that we have the promise that "all things work together for good to those who love God," to His church, and for the advancement of His holy reign in the hearts of all men.

What a fountain of fulness is there in God through Christ!

Oh, if these poor Chinese only had this mighty God, even Jehovah, to flee to in this time of commotion, famine

and destruction! Had they faith in Him, how different their state! But alas! will not the hearts of God's children be affected at the thought of their misery, as thousands go into an unprepared-for Eternity? May the tale of these woes lead many to resolve to buckle on their armor and "come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty." I know we have the prayers of Christians always, but may this war give to those prayers a new fervency and devotion of spirit. May the church feel that her part is to *pray*. God has for the present, seemingly, taken the mission work in Canton from our hands. Let us pray that He may manifest His glorious majesty and power; bringing the greatest amount of good out of the least possible evil. Mr. Gaillard will probably remain in Canton until some decisive measures are taken; I suppose Brother Graves has told you all the news, so I will not repeat.

Yours in the bonds of Christ,

EVA M. GAILLARD.

YORUBA—AFRICA.

Letter from Rev. W. H. Clarke.

Yoruba, in its moral aspect, presents a field truly interesting, not on account of the advanced state of the people in divine knowledge, but as enlivening as with the hope, from their peculiar condition, that under the blessing of God, ere many years shall have rolled away, they will be, to a considerable extent, partakers of the divine faith. That we have heathenism here in many forms, is most true, but it seems to be a peculiar heathenism. Idols, sacrifices and charms, are the consoling hope and support of every class. While, however, they worship wood and stone, they do not rely upon any inherent virtue possessed by these dumb idols, as able to save, aside from that mystic intercourse and communion, they are supposed to have with the Divine Being.

The peculiarity of their heathenism is, that it places every idol in an entirely subordinate position to the Deity, who uses them as mediators, to reconcile a sin-avenging God. The account given by them of their idols is, that God made them in the beginning, with their mediatorial position, as being suitable to the black man, while another dispensation has been conferred on the white man. In their confessions, whatever may be their practice, they acknowledge the impotency of their false deities, that they have no saving power, and ascribe to God the creation of all things, and all perfection. Numerous are the idols worshipped. Orisha seems to be both a general and specific name for idol, so that nearly all their worship may be denominated Orisha worship.

It is stated by some, that in the morning they pray to God. Their prayer is offered up at an early hour. This worship then, if we take their confessions into consideration, does not seem to be a blind devotion to idolatry. The Supreme Being occupies an important position in their religious creed. Well would it be, did they act in accordance with their knowledge of his character, and confessions of his greatness. It is astonishing to hear some of their remarks while speaking on this subject. Their own language would stamp them as peculiar heathen.

Their deities are the mediums through which they offer up their sacrifices, and their priests, the *officials*, who at times, though not universally, perform this ceremony. Altars of stone are to be seen in places where parts of sacrifices are deposited. They seem to think these sacrifices, accepted of God through their mediatorial deities, have an atoning merit. Hence it will be perceived how similar their creed to the Jewish ceremonial. An acknowledgment of sin is common. And there is no scripture that so vividly describes their character, as that in which James says, "If any man be a hearer of the word and

not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was." The light of tradition seems yet to tinge the dark clouds of superstition and idolatry that envelope them. Their knowledge of divine things is remarkable, and their confession of the truth preached, *with the want of personal application*, are clearly indicative of the Phariseism of the human race. They will admit all you say, and then tell you *they* serve God. But if pressed too hard, they fall back on the very common and very natural objection, that they received their Orishas from their fathers, and cannot yet give them up. Many will go on to add, the time will come, when little by little, they will forsake them.

Their knowledge of God may be inferred from the terms by which he is known, viz.: God, Lord, Almighty. He is viewed as the Creator and Supreme Ruler of all things, and as a Spirit, invisible. The terms Saviour, Mediator, Priest, faith, repentance and such like; and their knowledge of eternity, the soul, heaven, hell, and angels, mark them as a people in advance of the generality of heathen, though their condemnation may be so much the greater. As regards eternity, there is a certain vagueness, an indescribable conception, that scarcely can be called a defined idea. In fact, there is something about it, even among the enlightened, that baffles the widest and deepest range of the intellect. My soul shrinks back at the grandeur of the thought ETERNITY!

It might here be very appropriately asked, what is the effect of such a religion on the life and character of the people? To which it may be replied, a variety of causes tends to produce a kind of heterogeneous effect—an image, part of clay, iron and gold. So with this people. They are as an image of compound mixture, at one time presenting to view something that is beautiful

and attractive, then again that which is deformed and corrupt. Here are idolatry, and the corrupted truths of a genuine religion, both operating on the same minds. No wonder then that from one stand-point, we feel cheered and elated, while we see the emission of some true light, like fire struck from the flinty rock, while at another view, the soul sinks as it beholds the corruption of depraved nature; a dark mass of earth from which glimmers no light to cheer the pilgrim in his nightly walk. Such commingled results may be seen in social, domestic and civil life. If there is not enough of divine truth to quicken and save, it exerts a salutary influence in restraining evil doers, and becoming a kind of palladium for the safety of human rights, and the benefit of general society. While under this protection, an incitement is given to the generosity and good feeling of human nature, that ends in a very considerable amelioration of depraved hearts. Hence true virtue is rewarded as well as vice, and law is no mean restraint to evil-doers.

MONROVIA.

Letter from Rev. John Day.

Who can read the following letter without a swelling heart? What earnest devotion to the work in which he is engaged! And this is not a mere passing emotion. Thus has our brother been pleading for years for the benighted millions of Africa. Sometimes exultant with hopes, sometimes oppressed by fears, as the dense clouds gathered into Egyptian darkness, then again with tears of gratitude and strains of thanksgiving and praise, but ever to us here, and we doubt not to Him who heareth prayer—"O, remember and help these poor, ignorant, degraded Africans!" Will not God hear? Yea, has he not heard? And will any *Christian* be deaf to the entreaty? P.

DAY'S HOPE, MONROVIA, Dec. 6, '56
Rev. Jas. B. Taylor:

VERY DEAR SIR.—There is no use in disguising my wish and intention as

far as I can be permitted to carry them out. I can not feel as I wish, unless I have the poor natives around me. I have the land, I am building houses, and want to take 15 or 20 native boys. I am having land cleared off, and in the course of next year shall be ready to take them in. We have expended much, and have seen but little good resulting. That is, we have witnessed but few conversions. Hundreds have been taught to read the word of God. They have returned to the region of darkness, it is true; but do they carry no light? They carry with them the Bible. Is it powerless? Have I not seen men come, and sit with others and read as well, and perhaps, better, than when they left? Who learned you to read? You, sir. Will not that Bible proclaim there is a God, a Heaven, a hell? May not the work which we have done tell in years to come? My brethren here are whispering round, "Day is getting up a separate interest; Day is about to establish another church." No, Day is a servant of the most high God, and wishes to show to poor heathen the way of salvation. And I thank the Board for what they have done. But I shall not cease to cry until this is a complete missionary establishment; with its native department, its common, classical, and theological school departments. I have a personal private interest in it. How? *My soul is in it.* My peace of mind, outweighing gold, is in it. Do stir up the people and let us have an institution of which others will take the model. An institution both creditable and vastly beneficial.

GREENVILLE.

Report of Rev. R. E. Murray.

This is the last report of the excellent Murray, an account of whose death has been published in the Journal.

Greenville, Aug., 26, 1856.

DEAR BROTHER,

In complying with your request, I

think it best to give a short history of the origin of the Baptist Church in this country.

On my arrival in Liberia, Sept. 4th 1843, I found Brother Hilary Teage, pastor of the Providence Baptist Church, Monrovia. On the 5th instant, my letter, in which my wife was included, was handed to the pastor, and, a few days after, we were received into the communion of the church.

In May, 1844, I received, through the kindness of some dear friends, to whom I will ever feel grateful, the office of Superintendant of Emigrants, for Sinoe, which was then attached to Grand Bassa County.

On the arrival of the brig "Lime Rock," with emigrants for Sinoe, I commenced preparations to embark on board with my family. There being a few Baptists at that place, the brethren at Monrovia gave me a letter of recommendation to them, with authority to use my talents, (if any,) to the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom. I rejoiced at the confidence reposed in me by the brethren, but trembled at the idea of the responsible duties imposed on me. I felt sensible of my inefficiency, but asking counsel of God, I took courage, and resolved by His help to do my duty. We sailed from Monrovia on the 10th May, 1844, and arrived at Sinoe, on the 16th instant.

After a little inquiry, I discovered but two Baptists in the place. Brother Samuel Delaney, and sister Maria Peel—the latter from Charleston and an old acquaintance of mine. Brother Delaney was overjoyed to learn that there was a prospect of communion with his own people, for though he worshipped with the Methodist brethren, yet he could not be induced to unite with them.

BUILDING A MEETING HOUSE.

It was not long after I arrived at this place, and made known my design of striving to get up a meeting house, that I observed certain unmistakable signs

of opposition from a christian brother, who first began by throwing out baits in a sly way. He observed at one time, "You have talents, and I would advise you to see where you can be most useful;" but finding the bait did not take, he became quite plain, and observed, that the Baptist denomination would never obtain a footing in this country, that it had begun to decline in Messuradacounty, and would not gain strength in this. I replied, that I had no fear of the result of a faithful discharge of duty, that it was the work of God, and he would give success to it. In this I have not been disappointed.

After a residence of two months in Sinoe, Brother Delaney and myself concluded to erect a little thatch meeting house. Several of the citizens generously aided us by small contributions, the house was completed in a short time; and on the Lord's day, 22nd August, 1844, it was opened for public worship. It was a day long to be remembered. The attendance was good. There were but three Baptists present, for Sister Peel did not unite with us until 1847.

OPPOSITION.

Many trials awaited us. We were evil spoken of, ridiculed, and people were taught, by an apostate Baptist, that we were a dangerous set, that any who followed us would go to hell, as we placed our hope of salvation entirely in water baptism, and other arguments equally destitute of truth and good sense, were put forth with the same unchristian object in view. But is it not strange that such false statements are put forth respecting us, as, that we believe that water will regenerate the soul? This is directly opposed to our precepts and practice; and this charge recoils with a crushing force on the heads of those who make it. I have often wondered why our accusers are in such haste, if their infants are sick, to have them christened? But let

them try to disguise the true state of their feelings, by the most specious arguments, they cannot deceive me. I was reared altogether by pedo-baptists, was christened in due form by a Methodist preacher, and was taught, that by that solemn mockery, my salvation was secured. This impression was so strong on my mind, through all the days of childhood, youth, and early manhood, and was productive of such a degree of self-righteousness, that the most heart searching discourses seldom affected me, and when they did pierce my coat of mail, the effect were so transient, so evanescent, that my old opiate would soon soothe, and lull me into my former state of indifference. When it pleased my heavenly father to convince me of my sins, and the awful danger to which my sins had made me obnoxious, my old opiate soon lost its virtue, and I felt then, and will ever continue to feel, that my being christened, and taught to believe it a saving act, did more to jeopardize my soul, and expose me to ruin, than any thing I can conceive of. It blinded me so completely, that I could not see my need of a Saviour; and I am fearful the same effect, where the practice of christening infants prevails, will be sure to follow.

Having commenced my labors, though I saw little to encourage me, the Methodist interest being so strong, yet I hoped that God would, in his own time, give success to my weak endeavors to be useful in the spread of Gospel truth. As often as my heart would rejoice in hope of seeing a poor penitent enquiring the way to Zion, so often was I doomed to be disappointed. A meeting would be called, by the Methodists, and in the midst of excitement almost beyond description, I would hear of the conversion of the person, or persons I had fondly hoped, would unite with us. Many such disappointments I had to endure. But this was not all, the smallness of our number made us a

constant laughing stock in the community.

BAPTISMS AND CHURCH CONSTITUTED.

Every thing for nearly two years wore a most unpromising appearance, when it pleased God to add two to our number. On the first Sabbath in June, 1846, they were baptized by Brother Jones of Cape Palmas, and on the same day the church was organized of five persons. It was a delightful day to us, when, for the first time in our county, baptism was administered Scripturally, that is, to believers by immersion.— Brother Jones was very clear in his remarks on the subject of baptism; and such was the feeling manifested by two of the leading men in the Methodist communion, that one would not stay to witness the administration of the ordinance, while another observed, "If that is the only way to heaven, I wont get there;" while a female present, with more judgment, replied, "I wont say so; I would rather submit to it than loose heaven." From this time, there was no increase, till sister Peel joined us in 1847. In May, 1848, another was added to us, and was baptised by Brother A. P. Davis on the 10th of June, 1848. This young woman had not been three months in the country, at the time of her baptism, and many of the "knowing ones," prophesied her death, and endeavored to work on her fears; but, sustained by Him in whom she trusted, and in whose cause she was about to engage, she went forward, leaning on the arm of her beloved Lord, and is now a consistent member of the Church, while some of the prophets have passed from time to eternity.

A GREAT INCREASE.

But now a season of great rejoicing was approaching. I had, for more than a year, felt that God would send us help from abroad, and give strength to that branch of His Church in which I had been laboring for nearly four years

with very little success, but with a feeling sense of the great honor I enjoyed in laboring for the promotion of the cause of Christ. On the 12th of July, 1848, the "Col. Howard," arrived, bringing us a fine company of emigrants, and adding fourteen members. This was life from the dead. From that time till 1853, the increase of the Church has been rapid, both by letters and baptism.

PRESENT CONDITION.

Our denomination has now two independent churches, one in Greenville, and one in Farmersville, under the pastoral charge of Rev. J. Roberts—besides a number of brethren in various parts of the country. Within the last year death has summoned many beloved brethren from this vale of tears, to meet their Saviour and Mediator. We lament their loss, but acquiesce in the will of Him who doeth all things in righteousness and perfect wisdom. We have every reason to give thanks to God for the success of our cause in this place. Many things occur to try us to the quick, but God will overrule all things for good.

LABOURS AMONG THE HEATHEN.

In relation to the missionary enterprise, I cannot say that much has been accomplished in turning the heathen from their vile and abominable customs and habits, but that the gospel has been preached to them, in a way to extend far back in the interior, is a matter of rejoicing to us. "Joe Weah," living about 40 miles in the interior, is now calling for a preacher and teacher, which call should be speedily responded to. It would be an excellent station. The gospel has been made known to the inhabitants of Blue Barne, Sinoe, and the Butaws. At the last named place, a young man, who has just returned informed me, that he spent a Sabbath and was requested to "talk God palaver" for them. They told him that brother Nyle invariably performed di-

vine service on the Sabbath. This young man not being a professor could not discharge the duty required, however, he taught the younger ones the alphabet and the Lord's prayer. He felt mortified at the language of rebuke addressed to him by the natives, for their opinion is, that every man living where the means of grace are enjoyed is a "God man." From the number of natives, of different tribes, frequently at Krootown, I can confidently say, there is not a tribe within a circuit of 70 miles, some portion of which have not heard the gospel. Since the declaration of peace, the natives of Sinoe and Butaw have requested that teachers, and preachers be sent them.

There is at Little Butaw a young native named "Tom Butaw," quite desirous of placing himself under a schoolmaster, that he may improve himself for the benefit of the rising generation. He stayed at Kroo with Messrs. Canfield and Sawyer, and is quite intelligent. He declares himself tired of the customs of his country; and is fearful that very little can be done to reclaim the old people; but is full of hope for the children. He has a taste for drawing, and will soon furnish me specimens of his skill. I wrote his name, which he copied admirably.

Since the revival of 1850 in this place, there have been ten natives baptized.—3 had lived in the United States; 2 natives of Sierra Leone; 3 Cangoes: 1 native of Trade Town, and 1 native of Zeemboo.

EDINA.

Letter from Rev. Isaac Roberts.

EDINA, Dec. 26th, 1856.

REV. J. B. TAYLOR.

Dear Sir,—I send you a brief report of my labours during the last quarter. You may discover from the above that I am from home. I visited Edina last month to meet the association; and I rejoice that my life has been spared to,

meet the brethren, my fellow labourers, again face to face: for since our last meeting wars have almost threatened our destruction, while at the same time, starvation stared us in the face. But a kind and heavenly parent has yet prolonged my days to stand up as a mouth for him. The church over which I have the care, seems to be in a prospering state. God has been pleased to visit her with the influence of his spirit. * * * On the 2nd of November, preached at Farmersville, baptized 4 persons, and administered the Lords supper. * * * On the 14th preached the funeral of Bro. R. E. Murray. * * * The school connected with my church is in a healthy state, but needs spelling books, paper, &c. At Farmersville the Chapel is in bad order, and the members, in consequence of the war, are unable to repair. For any aid from the Board they would be truly thankful. The tracts that you sent me I have distributed. You will favour me by sending me a few more.

CAPE PALMAS.

Letter from Rev. B. J. Drayton.

Brother Drayton has been elected Governor of the Colony of Maryland, but it will be seen that he still continues the supervision of Cape Palmas Mission.

HARPER, MARYLAND, in LIBERIA.

Rev. Jas. B. Taylor:

DEAR BRO.—I have the satisfaction to acknowledge the receipt of your favor, of May 23rd, which afforded me no small amount of pleasure. I regret that you have not received letters from me as often as you have reason to expect them, for I am sure the Board have the first place among my correspondents; and if you have not received letters, it is not because I have not written.

I feel truly grateful for your kind expressions respecting my prosperity and usefulness. These repeated manifestations of the favor of Almighty

God, in singling me out as an instrument in His hands to assist in the establishment and spread of His lovely Gospel in this dark and benighted country, have a strong tendency to humble me in the dust before His Omnipotence.

The Church, as you are aware, must evidently go forward in this, as well as in other lands, with triumphant glory and success; and to secure this happy and desirable result, the Head of the Church has various means and ways. Through a prudent, pious, and wise Government, many of the angry feuds arising among the natives may be arrested—highways thrown up—paths thrown wide open, through which the Gospel may pass and reach the countless numbers who must perish, if they are deprived of its blessedness.

You alluded to my "elevation in official influence." It is as you have learned. The government came into my hands in December last, as Lieut. Governor, to serve out the unexpired term of the former Executive, which expired the first of June last; and at the regular election, which occurred in the same month, I was elected, almost unanimously, for two years from August last. It appeared to me, after due consultation and prayer, that I would be pursuing the path of duty, under existing circumstances of the State, to accept the office; and I feel that an All-Wise Creator intends me for special reasons, and for the accomplishment of certain ends, to move for a season in a two fold relation among my heathen brethren. The will of the people also, and my best friends, would not take any denial; hence I submitted with a sense of my weakness and inability, and place myself under the care of the Lord. I admit that I have yet much to learn to enable me to discharge the duties of the past as it should be; but my country, my degraded and less favoured brethren, have compelled the measure.

"We shall be sorry," you say, "to

lose your influence and labors on our behalf." I could not feel justifiable, under existing circumstances, to withdraw myself from your service at this point; and nothing that I know of could induce me to suffer such a check to our interest here, as I am aware any kind of withdrawal of mine would occasion; yet I believe the work can go on without me, and as it was not me in the past, neither will it be me in future; but the grace of God, working a will in his people to accomplish his incomprehensible designs. I have in weakness prayed, and wept, and labored by the grace of Heaven for the establishment of this interest, and for the present commanding position and influence it sustains: and I cannot materially relax my efforts on your behalf; not since my induction into office, have I ceased to defend the cross, and neither do I intend to let the work suffer at any time or place for the want of my humble labors and influence.

With a heart actuated with the warmest emotions for the prosperity of your interest, I consider it to be my duty to sustain the same unbroken relation to you, and to employ my leisure moments and best endeavors for the maintenance and furtherance of your interest, and the Redeemer's Kingdom. Such things as I may not be able to do, I am of the opinion that the service of an assistant preacher will accomplish.

The Commission.

RICHMOND, MARCH, 1857.

Our subscription list has increased faster than we anticipated. We have on hand only a *very few* back numbers, (except of No. 1,) and all those brethren who desire *full* sets of Vol. 1, had better order at once. "First come, first served," will be the motto, until the small supply on hand is disposed of.

We trust *all our patrons* will exert

themselves to send in subscriptions, in anticipation, for Vol. 2. Send on the names and the money, that we may know more of what can be depended on than we did at the beginning. P.



"BETTER LATE THAN NEVER."

At least so our feelings prompted us to exclaim upon reading the following in the Tennessee Baptist; a paper, by the way, which is *leading* all our Southern journals in the number of its subscribers. Brother Graves serves up a savory dish; albeit, it may be too strongly spiced for some palates, yet it is a favourite with the multitude. But to the extract.

"THE COMMISSION; OR SOUTHERN BAPTIST MISSIONARY MAGAZINE.—We have not been as enthusiastic in commendation of this publication, by the Foreign Board, as we should have been, had its publication been recommended as necessary and expedient by the late Southern Convention. It has been undertaken purely upon the responsibility of the Foreign Mission Board, neither the leave nor consent of the Convention asked. Still, if it meets its own expenses, *including that portion of the time of the Secretaries devoted to it*, it will deserve to live and enjoy the patronage of the denomination. The last number pleases us much. It is filled with valuable missionary articles, that to all our ministers and members who wish thoroughly to understand our Foreign fields, their position, geography, climate, character of population, and relative importance, the obstacles to, and success of our missionary labor, and in the end a perfect history of our missions, are actually indispensable. Price only \$1 00. Address A. M. Poin-dexter, Richmond, Va."

Regarding the origin of the Commission, it is from the same source which has brought into being each of the periodicals which has appeared under the patronage of the Boards of the Convention. This will be seen by reference to an article in the January number, for 1857, of the Home and Foreign Journal. As to paying expenses, Bro. Graves, and our other editorial brethren,

can do much to secure this result. A plenty of subscribers, who send us the "little yellow boys," or an equivalent, would make the Commission a source of revenue to the Board. Bro. Graves knows all about this. He has experience of the difference between a small and a large list of patrons; and he can do much in helping out a brother at a dead lift. Come brother Graves, and brethren all, aid us at this point and we promise you we will endeavour to make the magazine such that you will not regret it. P.

CENTRAL AFRICA.

In another part of this number will be found an extract from the work of Bro. Bowen, on Central Africa, taken from the Southern Baptist. We have, since making the extract, seen a copy of the book, (sent to Home and Foreign Journal. Our brother Tusten seems not to know that there is also a "Commission" published in Richmond,) and have read the greater part of it *with intense interest*. We have no doubt that the first edition will soon be sold; and another, and another, called for. By the way, the work is disfigured by *typographical errors*, that should not be permitted to go into a second edition. It needs a careful revision.

We had intended to prepare a more extended notice of the work for this number, but have not been able, as yet, to finish even the reading of the book. It will furnish us, in future, many a valuable extract. It is written in that lucid, easily-gliding, and graphic style which marks all the writings of the author. The energy of a deep, quiet, but powerful enthusiasm, nerves the whole volume. Without any parade of learning, the author displays a large acquaintance with languages and philology, familiarity with the leading authorities regarding Africa, and large powers of comprehension and analysis. *There is hope for Africa*, is the

undebating conviction with which we follow the missionary through this detail of his travels and labors—*she has a future, the radiance of which shall constitute a bright halo around the diadem of Jesus!*

P.

WORTH READING.

So we think of the communication of W. H. J., which forms the first article of the present number. It is well calculated to impress the mind with an awakening view of the great issues and struggles of life, and to awaken in the heart earnest longings for that intimate communion with God which shall clothe the joys of life with the radiance of heaven, and sooth its sorrows with the blessed hope of immortality. Yes, seriousness is an element of Christian character, most important in its influence, and salutary in its results. Life is serious—death is serious—Eternity, O with what solemnity it presses upon the heart!

We hope that J. A. B. will very frequently practice the principles he inculcates—and which we have reason to know he practices in reference to money—respecting his contributions to the Commission; and in this hope we know that all our readers will concur. We trust that the inculcations of the article will make a deep and lasting impression upon the mind of every reader; and that each one will call the attention of others to it.

"Going to hell for a thrip!" Alas! how many are doing it daily. We humbly and earnestly pray that the warning of brother N. M. C. may arrest the course of some poor wanderers before the fearful journey is closed. Send us more, many more, of these spicy, pungent plants from your Southern garden brother C.

"The Mission of the Church," is from the pen of a gifted lady, who has shown herself willing to give more than

the labors of her pen in carrying out the command of Christ to preach the gospel in all the world. We think we may, without fear, commend the articles of this number to the attentive perusal of our patrons.

P.

THE LIBERALITY OF OUR CHURCHES.

Christianity is essentially benevolent. In its practical effect it must exert a liberalizing influence upon all who feel its power. It quickens all the generous emotions, represses selfishness, awakens in the heart an earnest sympathy with the miseries of others, especially such as relate to their spiritual condition, and, at the same time, by exalting the great realities of eternity, lessens the hold which merely transitory, temporal interests exert. Whatever form of benevolent effort may appeal to the Christian, we expect him, as a matter of course, to take a deeper interest in its success, and other things being equal, to lend to it a more efficient support than the man who is not a Christian. The Christian too is supposed to cherish such an irrepressible desire to glorify his Lord, that, whatever tends to advance the cause of Christ will find in him an ardent friend, and devoted co-operator. We instinctively feel that there is an entire and most criminal contrast between the character of the Christian, and that of the professor of religion who has no tear to shed over human misery, no hand to alleviate the sorrows of suffering humanity, no heart to sympathise with the progress of the cause of Christ, no liberality to aid the efforts of those who are laboring for its extension. We may endeavor to think well of such a man, but we cannot. We may endeavor to encourage the hope that he is a child of God, but clouds, dark and portentous, rise up before our vision, thwart which no bow of promise spans its mild beauty,

As of the individual, so of the com-

munity. A church which manifests no concern for the well-being of mankind, may be orthodox in creed, decorous in worship, undisturbed by dissensions, and correct in morals, but every one feels that there the Spirit of Christ is not. The master spirit of the Son of Man, if we may use the expression, was love to man. Divine philanthropy warmed and swelled his heart with an unquenchable devotion. Persecution could not irritate, suffering could not appal, blood itself, his own heart's blood, could not quench the earnest benevolence of his soul. O what agonies he endured *for* man, and *from* man,—yet his love failed not. The Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier, imparts to those who are Christ's a likeness, however faint, to their Redeemer. And where a body of professed Christians evince no oneness with Christ in this respect, we fear, in spite of all efforts to the contrary, that they have a name that they live, and are dead.

Consonant to this is the conviction, that the liberality of a church is a pretty fair indication of the strength of their piety. We speak not now of modes of manifestation. These may differ, while yet the manifestation may be unmistakable, and convincing. There might be found, for example, communities of Christians, illy instructed, who feel little sympathy with the measures now in progress for the conversion of the heathen, who, nevertheless, are earnestly laboring for the relief of the misery, and the conversion of those around them. In these they find objects which appeal to Christian benevolence, and the appeal meets a hearty response in their hearts. We may lament that ignorance, or prejudice, superadded to ignorance, prevents them from appreciating the scope and breadth of our Saviour's last command, but we cannot question the reality of their piety, or the sincerity of their devotion. Very different is the case, however, when, as sometimes happens, the *home*

plea is urged against effort abroad, *while home itself is neglected*. Here there is nothing to mitigate the painfulness of our apprehensions, or to avert a feeling of contempt. Hypocrisy, everywhere, is contemptible. In religion supremely so. To plead the obligations of one duty in bar of those of another, and then to neglect the duty thus prominently urged, is hypocrisy. They hope to deceive others. But they do not. No man is deceived by such unrighteous and palpable fraud. The character of such persons, or communities, is understood, not only by the great Searcher of Hearts, but by men. "Verily they have their reward," the frown of heaven, the pity of the good, the contempt of all.

Now, in the living exhibition of Christianity, as seen in our churches, there is the struggling of the antagonistic powers of selfishness and benevolence. Perhaps, not a church can be found where somewhat of the benevolence of Christ is not exhibited. Would that we could add, that no individual member of our churches, but exhibits somewhat of this spirit. But alas! alas!—We remember to have met a man in the State of —, who was passing down the declivity of life. He was a man of wealth, had no child, or other near relation depending upon him for support. Himself and wife had both been members of the church from an early period in life. We were soliciting funds for an object which he acknowledged to be important to the cause of Christ. But he *was unable to contribute; he was in debt*. We noticed, that this excuse gained no credence with those who knew him. This led to some inquiries. "He owns a large estate.—True he is a little in debt; but it is for a recent purchase of land. And before that is paid for, he will probably purchase another. It is always so: and his invariable excuse for not giving is, 'I am in debt.' "Well, I am sorry for him. But I hope he does better at

home. He spoke in high terms of his pastor, and of the necessity of giving him a larger salary. What does he give to his pastor?" "Five or six dollars, if it is urged upon him, otherwise nothing, and always with the excuse, 'I'm in debt!'" Of how many is this, substantially, a picture! "I am in debt." "There is so much to be done at home." "There are so many calls." "I must provide for my family." The heart sickens and turns away in disgust from the contemplation of such characters.

Then there are those in whom the influence of religious principle, and the power of conscience, struggling hard against selfishness and covetousness, obtain a partial ascendancy. They give—something. It is distressing, though sometimes amusing, to witness the contortions of their moral nature when appealed to for aid. We deeply sympathise with one under the hands of the dentist for the extraction of a tooth; but some times we can but feel amused at his ridiculous contortions. To obtain the benefactions of some Christians is like drawing teeth. They give, but it is because they are forced to give. And though when they have made a donation conscience feels some relief, yet there is left much soreness.

But then again, and thank God the number is increasing, there are Christians who love to give. To take away from them the opportunity, would be to deprive them of one of their chief enjoyments. Whether poor, or rich, their ability is the limit of their benefactions. "Yea, beyond their ability, they are willing of themselves." Such persons shine as lights in the world. A church of such would be a "Drumond light," in the community to which it was attached.

Between these extremes are to be found all shades of character; and from the blended light and darkness of each is made up the complexion of our churches. What is it? The pure Ebon of the

Guinea man? The fair tint of the European? Or the nondescript of the mulatto? That the spirit of liberality is sufficiently prevalent no one believes. The neglect of the wants of the poor, and of the young, the meager and hard wrung support of the larger number of pastors, the straitened treasuries of all our general evangelization societies—all these things unite to declare that we have not, in this respect the spirit of Christ as we should possess it. What then? To know a fault, should be to seek its correction. To see a deficiency should lead to reformation. We close this article then, by calling upon every reader, to aim at an increase of the liberality of our churches. 1st. By yielding himself more fully to the spirit of the gospel. 2nd. By endeavoring to bring others under its influence.

P.

CHINA.

From some cause we have no recent intelligence from our Shanghai Mission. From Canton, also, we are without communications of a later date than the letter of sister Gaillard. The difficulties with the English were unsettled at the last advices. What is to be their termination we pretend not to conjecture. Of one thing, however, we feel certain. This, and all the other commotions of that troubled land, will, either directly or indirectly, open the way for the spread of the gospel in China. It is the purpose of God, made known to us in His Word, that all nations shall bow to the scepter of His Son. This consummation is hastening with every revolving year. The processes by which it shall be achieved, are, in part, under the controul of Providence in such a way as to call for nothing more, on our part, than earnest prayer and hopeful trust. "The Lord reigneth." But while we are not required to concern ourselves with the arrangements of Divine Providence, we

are required to watch the indications which they shadow forth, and to be ready to co-operate, in the performance of the duties assigned to us, in securing the ultimate result.

China is to be converted. Unless God shall carry on the process of her conversion in a way entirely different from what has been the course of things in all the past, this event must be brought about by those who have the gospel. We must carry the gospel to China. We, who have received salvation, must obey the injunction of our Lord, "Go ye, teach all nations." Do we realize the obligation thus imposed upon us? We have done something for this end. But could it be said, of a truth, that we have entered, with any heartiness, into the work? that we have put forth any efforts at all corresponding to the magnitude of the work, and the difficulties to be overcome? How few missionaries we have there! And where are those who are willing to go forth to increase the number? Shall it be, that when, in the providence of God, "a wide door" is opened into interior China, we are to have no men in the field prepared to enter?

It is known that several years are necessary, in China, to fit the missionary for effective service. Shall we so neglect the present period of preparation, that when the time for action comes we shall have no laborers to work?

Young men of God listen to the call of those millions crowding the road to death. It is as the loud wail of the tempest—the awful voice of the thunder. But your ears are closed. O God of China, as of America, do thou open the ears of the deaf, and unseal the eyes of the blind!

P.

THE NAVIGATION OF THE NIGER.

We learn that the Committee on Commerce, in the United States Senate, reported a bill, some two weeks ago, in favor of an appropriation of 25,000

dollars, and the appointment of some competent officer of our navy, for the exploration of the Niger—the Mississippi of Africa. Hon. R. Toombs, of Georgia, moved for the reference of the bill, and at our last advices we learned that it was likely to pass. We sympathize with the sentiment which has been expressed privately to us, from high sources in Washington, that Mr. Bowen should accompany the expedition, as the master spirit, and be appointed a commissioner to negotiate treaties with the chiefs and nations of Central Africa, and make full reports on their resources, and the measures proper to be adopted for their benefit, as well as for our own.

We take this statement from the Southern Baptist. Our government has too long been inattentive to the growing importance of African Commerce, and the necessity of vigorous efforts to prevent its benefits from inuring almost exclusively to England. It is to be hoped that the measure thus auspiciously introduced, will be followed up with prompt action. The United States must colonize, and Christianize Africa, and United States commerce ought to be a most effective means to these ends. P.

OUR THANKS

Are due, and are hereby gratefully tendered to the brethren who have enriched the columns of the Commission with their contributions. It can but be a source of satisfaction to them, as it has been to us, that their offerings have gained so large a share of commendation. Nearly all of our Southern Weeklies have now given their opinions of the Commission; and with one voice they unite in testifying to the high character of the original articles of the Magazine. Thus encouraged, we feel assured that those whose pens have illuminated our past, will be willing to shed additional light upon our future progress. And we have no doubt that we shall be able to secure other, equal-

ly valuable assistants. Several of the original articles are contributions from persons whose names do not appear in the list of "Contributors." That list was published not as exclusive, but simply to give assurance beforehand of what would be "the taste and quality" of the Commission. Not only from brethren have we received aid—our sisters too are helping us to plead the cause of Christ and Souls. We hope to have continued co-operation from them. And now, we venture to make an appeal

TO THE SISTERS,

On behalf of our paper. It is well known, dear sisters, that you seldom fail in any good enterprise to which you earnestly devote yourselves. Will you not help the Commission? How many subscribers can you send us before we commence volume Two? P.

THE CHRISTIAN REVIEW.

It is rather out of time to notice the January No. of this valuable periodical, but we did not receive it before our last issue was in press. The Review is said to be *the only Baptist Quarterly*. This, of itself, would entitle it to the patronage of our reading brethren. But it may rest its claims upon its own merits.

The number before us is the first published by the present editors and proprietors, Rev. Franklin Wilson and Rev. J. B. Taylor, of Baltimore. If we are to judge of the future character of the Review by that of this number, it will be well worth the price paid for it and the time devoted to reading it. Without attempting a discriminating notice of any of the articles, we mention as having particularly interested us, "THE FUTURE STATE," by Rev. J. M. C. Breaker. "The Future State of the Heathen," by Professor Enoch Pond; and "ALISON'S HISTORY OF EUROPE," by Rev. J. R. Kendrick. We give the table of contents. Article I. The Future State, &c., by Rev. J. M. C. Breaker.

II. The Future State of the Heathen, by Professor Enoch Pond. III. The Providence of God in Books, by Joseph Belcher, D. D. IV. Cockburn's Memorials of his Time, by Thomas Duffee, Esqr. V. Notices of Scripture Translation in the Chinese Language, by Rev. E. C. Lord, China. VI. Alison's History of Europe, (second series,) by Rev. J. R. Kendrick. VII. Notices of New Publications. VIII. Literary and Theological Intelligence. Ecclesiastical Record.

Price \$3 per annum, in advance. Address "Christian Review," Baltimore, Md. P.

Other Missions.

MADURA MISSION—INDIA.

STATION REPORT.

A letter from Mr. Rendall, dated October 14, 1856, is in the form of a semi-annual report of the Madura station. He first speaks of the girls' boarding school, which he says "has now forty-one scholars in attendance, and all the stations in the mission are here represented. The progress of the girls, in the course of study, during the past term, has been very gratifying. Mrs. Rendall has been able to devote to them a greater portion of her time than usual, and the girls have been greatly benefited by it. Quite a number are seriously disposed, and come to me frequently to converse respecting the salvation of their souls. I have hope of a few, who are now candidates for church membership."

Mr. Rendall adds the following more pleasant intelligence: "Mr. Winfred has written me that he received into the church at Mallankinaru, on the 22th of September, three men and four women."

This is the second time that our native pastor has been permitted to receive additions to his church this year. I am also informed that Mr. Webb re-

ceived four persons to the church on a late tour to Pulney."

CEYLON.

Mr. Spaulding reports from Oodcove, October 1, that within the previous six months, four persons had been admitted to the church by profession, and one by letter.

"The state of the church," at Baghejuk, writes Mr. Parsons, "is delightful; there is not a ripple upon the sea of their peace and brotherly love. And such is their love for souls, it is a wonder to me that anything can withstand them. But the hardness of the human heart is amazing.

TUSCARORAS.—*Religious Interest.* Mr. Rockwood, in a letter dated January 26, gives the following cheering intelligence.

We are in the midst of a most precious revival of religion, scarcely less interesting and powerful than that of 1852. In some of its features, it is a more solemn and impressive work.—There is more pungent conviction of sin, and consequent sense of the need of an all-sufficient Saviour. Twenty-two have already presented themselves for admission to the church. Others are indulging hope of pardon, or are inquiring the way of life.

HENTHADA—SIAM—ASSAM.

Henthada.—Mr. Crawley writes under date of Oct. 27, 1856,—communicating the intelligence that a female had been baptized on the preceding Sabbath, who for several months had given satisfactory evidence of conversion, but who had lacked courage to meet the reproach that would follow such a confession of Christ before men.

"Throughout the whole city, the assistants report, a spirit of inquiry prevails. One assistant tells me that wherever he goes, he hears the people con-

versing about the 'white books.' Of course we are not so deceived as to suppose that this is an earnest spirit of inquiry. Still it is pleasing to know that the people are thinking at all of tracts, and care to read them.

Siam.—At the last communication three additional converts were received to the church. One of them was quite an aged man, who received his first knowledge of the way of life from the venerable deacon Pe Hwa, now deceased. The other two are young men, over whom the brethren rejoice with trembling. They will be exposed to many temptations, but the Master whom they serve is able to keep them.

Mr. Smith writes that the operations of the mission are continued as aforesaid. The second king manifests a favorable disposition towards the brethren, and recently sent Mrs. Smith one hundred ticals (\$56.81) to aid in sustaining the expenses of her school.

Assam.—Mr. Ronson writes, Nov. 3, "It is my privilege to tell you that some for whom we have felt much solicitude, lest they should 'despise, and wonder, and perish,' have been hopefully converted to God."

Yesterday, Lord's day evening, we assembled to commemorate our Saviour's dying love; twenty-four communicants were present. It was pleasant to welcome these six persons by the hand of fellowship. The four baptized seemed very happy in the privilege of following the Saviour into Jordan.

DEATH OF A DISTINGUISHED MISSIONARY.

Our exchanges chronicle the death of Rev. Eli Smith, D. D., missionary of the American Board at Syria. He died January 11th, aged 56.

The *Recorder* says of Dr. Smith:—"He was born at Northford, Ct., (at that time a parish of Wallingford,) September 12, 1801. He graduated at Yale College in 1821, and at Andover in 1826. In May, of that year, just before the end of his seminary course, he em-

barked on his Mission to the East; where, after thirty years of indefatigable, wisely directed and faithful labors, he has finished his course with joy."

Dr. Smith has not only done valuable service as a missionary, but "one of much importance to the learned world, was performed in connection with Dr. Robinson, which that eminent man has handsomely acknowledged in his *Biblical Researches in Palestine*. His labors," says the *Congregationalist*, "as a translator of the Scriptures into the Arabic language, date from 1846. For these labors he had been long preparing, and was, perhaps, better fitted than any other man on the earth. They were congenial labors, and he gave to them his whole soul. To translate God's holy word into a language spoken by sixty millions of people, and into such a language, fitted beyond most others adequately to express the meaning of the inspired originals, filled him with enthusiastic delight. It is believed that the New Testament, the Pentateuch, the minor Prophets, from Hosea to Nahum, and the greater part of Isaiah, have been completed; and we hope more than this. Among the most desirable things of this age, to human view, was Dr. Smith's living to complete this magnificent work. But infinite wisdom does not err, and his removal from earth, just at this stage of the enterprise, was by a divine hand. Dr. Smith was among the most intelligent, laborious and consistent of missionaries, and he was one of the most thorough scholars of our times. His mind was pre-eminently practical. His views on missionary policy were sound and comprehensive, giving the proper place to every species of labor. An intelligent biographer would find ample materials for an instructive volume of his Life and Remains, and the Christian public would welcome such a tribute to his memory."

BOOK NOTICES.

THE BAPTIST DENOMINATION: Its history, doctrines, and ordinances; its polity, persecutions, and martyrs; facts and statistics of its missionary institutions, schools of learning, &c. The indebtedness of the world to the Baptists, and their duty to the world. By D. C. HAYNES. *With an Introduction by JOHN DOWLING, D. D.* New York: Sheldon, Blakeman & Co.

The title of this work renders a further description unnecessary. It is designed as a popular manual upon the history, faith and polity of the Baptists; and embodies a large amount of valuable information.

WISDOM, WIT AND WHIMS of distinguished ancient philosophers. By JOSEPH BANVARD, A. M., Author of "Plymouth and the Pilgrims," "Novelties of the New World," "Romance of American History," &c., &c. New York, Sheldon, Lamport and Blake-man.

A collection of incidents and anecdotes relating to near a hundred of the distinguished ancient philosophers.—Much amusement and instruction may be derived from the volume.

ANECDOTES, RELIGIOUS, MORAL, AND ENTERTAINING. Alphabetically arranged, and interspersed with a variety of useful observations. Selected by REV. CHARLES BECK. From the ninth London Edition. New York, Sheldon, Blakeman & Co.

This is a valuable work, affording practical lessons of great value, inculcated in a pleasant and impressive manner, and an attractive style. Its value is attested by the number of editions through which it has passed.

For the above works we are indebted to the enterprising publishers, Sheldon, Blakeman & Co., who are doing so much to furnish the community with valuable books. The style in which their books are gotten up is worthy of all praise. These books may be had of Messrs. Wortham & Cotterell of this city. P.

JOAN OF ARC. THE MAID OF ORLEANS: *A Poem.* Delivered at Wake Forest College, North Carolina, June 12, 1856. By L. H. S. A member of the graduating class. Richmond, Va. J. W. Randolph.

We have received from the author, Mr. J. L. Shuck, a copy of this work, for which we tender him our thanks. There are few passages of history of more romantic and thrilling interest than the heroic daring and melancholy death of Joan of Arc. Mr. Shuck has grouped the principle incidents of her career, in an attractive form, in this effort of his youthful muse. As connected with the occasion of its production, the poem is creditable to the author. P.

MISCELLANY.

AT JESUS' FEET.—The Rev. W. Jay attended the dying bed of a young female, who thus addressed him: "I have little," said she, "to relate as to my experience. I have been much tried and tempted, but this is my sheet-anchor. He has said, 'He that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out!' I know I come to Him, and I expect that He will be as good as His word. Poor and unworthy as I am, He will not trifle with me; it would be beneath his greatness; I am at his feet. As you have often said—

'Tis joy enough my all in all
At thy dear feet to lie:
Thou wilt not let me lower fall
And none can higher fly.'"

RELIGION A NECESSITY.—As the lungs demand air, the eye light, the ear sound, the palate food, the intellect truth, so the religious faculty—the noblest instinct of man, the highest intuition of reason—craves an object of worship.

Under its influence man everywhere seeks a rest for his faith; an altar for his sacrifice, an object for his supreme adoration.

"House of God," Everts.

They say and do not.—Every wicked man lays down rules for others, which applied to himself would prove him vile, ungrateful, and worthy of death. "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant."