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**COMMISSION;**

OR

**SOUTHERN BAPTIST**

**Missionary Magazine.**



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# THE COMMISSION.

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## Third Biennial Report.

### BIBLE BOARD.

In our report to this Convention, made two years ago, we suggested a plan for our future operations, contemplating the formation of Bible societies in every State, auxiliary to the Bible Board, with associational and other local societies auxiliary to them. This plan, which the Convention was pleased to adopt, and which it heartily recommended, we have seen no reason to change. But every day's experience has convinced us more and more of the importance of its general adoption.

The committee to whom these suggestions in our former report, were referred, recommend that "*a system of colportage which should embrace not only Bibles, but religious and denominational book distribution, be established by these associational societies.*" Upon the adoption of the report containing this recommendation, the Convention unanimously passed the following resolution:

"*Resolved, That the Bible Board be instructed in all future appointments of colporteurs, so far as practicable, to negotiate such an arrangement with our publication societies as will combine the dissemination of their publications with the Holy Scriptures.*"

These instructions it was our duty and our desire faithfully to observe.

But to bring about the change in the character and objects of our operations which it evidently contemplated, was of necessity the work of time.

Our plan of operations, while it did not preclude the Board from engaging and sending out colporteurs directly from itself, yet it did not contemplate such a course. We preferred to accomplish the work, so far as practicable, through the State societies, or other local Bible organizations. The funds collected within their limits we desired to place at their own disposal. We wished them to employ the colporteurs, purchase the Bibles, and themselves attend to their distribution, so far as they could be brought to do it effectively and promptly. Except in extraordinary cases, the Bible Board itself employs no colporteurs. We had therefore no other means of carrying into effect the spirit of the instructions given to us by the Convention at Montgomery, but to recommend to our auxiliary societies which were then in operation, that they should at once conform to the requirements of the Convention, and make the necessary arrangements, by negotiations with our publication interests, to supply every colporteur with a suitable stock of denominational and other religious books: and in the formation of new societies, to incorporate this object, wherever it was practicable and desirable, into their constitution.

THE ALABAMA BAPTIST BIBLE SOCIETY,  
Always one of our best auxiliaries, had

already raised a fund for the purchase of books. It established a depository, changed its name to correspond with the additional functions, to the "Alabama Baptist Bible and Colporteur Society," and has been ever since a model for all societies organized for similar purposes. The increase in its prosperity and usefulness, the firmer hold it has taken upon the hearts of the brethren, the new energy it has infused into the churches, the rapid increase of intelligence among them, and the unexampled spread of Baptist sentiments through the State, would sufficiently indicate the far-seeing and deep-seeing wisdom of the Convention in giving us these instructions, even without taking into consideration the reflex influence of their adoption upon the publication interests of the denomination.

This society reports to us as the aggregate of its two years operations, the sum of FIFTEEN THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AND SIX DOLLARS, which is much more than the whole amount reported by us in any two years of our previous existence, from all the Southern States combined; and though a considerable portion of this fund has been employed in the circulation of other religious books, yet we are assured that vastly more has been done in the distribution of Bibles than was done by the same society when it made Bible distribution its exclusive work. And though much the greater portion of it has been employed in the supply of their home destitution, they have sent much more in the last year than in any former year to us for the supply of the destitute in other fields.

They have sustained ten colporteurs, at an average expense of about three hundred dollars each; and so evident and so great has been the good accomplished, that they have determined to raise at least twenty thousand dollars more, as a permanent fund for the colportage work. Some six thousand of

this has already been pledged. The balance will probably be raised within the next two years.

We fear it will be several years before we can secure auxiliary societies equal or comparable to this in all the other States connected with the Convention. But to this object we propose steadily to direct our energies.

#### THE NORTH CAROLINA BAPTIST BIBLE AND PUBLICATION SOCIETY

Became auxiliary to the Bible Board of the Southern Baptist Convention by a resolution adopted at its meeting at Fayetteville in 1854. It has from its first organization, combined the distribution of Bibles with our denominational and other religious books, upon the plan recommended to the Bible Board by your resolution at Montgomery. So far as we can learn, it is a well managed and very efficient body; but it needs a larger capital to do thoroughly the great work of spreading the printed truth through so large and populous a State. We trust the brethren in North Carolina will see the necessity of giving it an endowment of at least ten thousand dollars, so that it may do promptly what it was designed, and what it is expected to accomplish. It reports about three thousand dollars as the aggregate of its two years' work.

#### THE VIRGINIA AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY,

One of our first and most reliable auxiliaries, has been disbanded, and its work turned over to the Bible Board of the Virginia Baptist General Association. We hope the change may ultimately prove to be for the advantage of the Bible cause. Both the society and the Board have, during the last two years, engaged, in connection with the Sunday School and Publication Society of Virginia, in the joint distribution of Bibles and other religious books. The society reports three thousand two hundred and twenty dollars as the amount

of its operations for one year, and the Board one thousand one hundred and fifty-four dollars for the other year, making an aggregate, with some other funds sent directly to our Board, of over four thousand five hundred dollars.

The report of the Virginia Bible Board, recently received by us, seems to express a feeling of discouragement, which is hardly justified by the facts. It was not to have been expected that the change in their organization could be effected without some temporary diminution of their income, and some temporary derangement of their work. When we consider this, and also that the Board was located at Norfolk and Portsmouth, whence it was scattered by the pestilence before it had ever entered upon its duties, we think they have no reason to complain of the past, and much ground to hope great things for the future. We trust and confidently expect to find Virginia standing, two years hence, where she has been accustomed to stand—in the first rank of the auxiliaries of your Bible Board.

#### THE BIBLE BOARD OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA BAPTIST CONVENTION

Has shown itself an important auxiliary, although it has not yet entered upon the joint work of Bible and book distribution, in accordance with your resolution of instructions to us. We trust it will be led to do so at the next meeting of that Convention next July. It is composed of some of the best and most zealous brethren of the State. Its President, Hon. J. B. O'Neal, has been a leading spirit in the Bible efforts of that State for many years. The location of the Southern Publication Society at Charleston, affords them great facilities, and offers strong inducements to the combination of the book with the Bible distribution. The union will give new energy and enlarged utility to both departments. We cannot forbear to express our anticipation that it

will be effected, and the work of the Board increased four fold. We have between thirteen and fourteen hundred dollars as the amount of their work reported to us for the last two years.

#### THE BIBLE COMMITTEE OF THE GEORGIA BAPTIST CONVENTION

Was, at its own request, released from further care of Bible matters more than a year ago, and the whole business entrusted to the control of your Bible Board at Nashville, with the understanding that we would take measures to secure the organization of a State society, in accordance with our general plan, at the meeting of the Georgia Convention, which has just passed at Augusta. That Committee had faithfully performed a large amount of unrequited labor, and had been the instrument of accomplishing much good.—We have now a State society, which goes into operation under most promising auspices, combining the book and Bible distribution, and which is likely, in the course of two or three years, to take rank with that of Alabama, and employ its fifteen or twenty thousand dollars yearly in the dissemination of the truth.

We have as the aggregate from Georgia for the last two years, including the work of the committee of the Georgia Convention, that of the newly formed Bible and colporteur society, and our own, about four thousand three hundred dollars.

#### THE BIBLE SOCIETY OF THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF TENNESSEE AND N. CAROLINA.

This society has not yet entered upon the work of Bible and book colportage. It has some superior advantages for the effective accomplishment of such a work, and will probably engage in it at an early day. It represents, however, only a small portion of the Bible interests of Tennessee. We do not see at present any prospect of thoroughly

combining all these interests, though it is an object which we do not think impracticable, and which we hope some day to accomplish.

The West Tennessee Bible Society regards itself as the auxiliary of the Bible Union, rather than of your Bible Board; but they have made us a handsome donation of Bibles and Testaments, which were valued by them at about five hundred dollars, and have in various ways expressed their interests in our work, and their desire for its success.

There is a wide field for our operations in East Tennessee. A very happy beginning has been made, and we expect shortly to have an efficient working organization in that portion of the State.

The aggregate of our work for Tennessee, including the above mentioned Bibles, is something less than two thousand dollars.

#### THE MARYLAND BAPTIST BIBLE SOCIETY,

One of our first auxiliaries, we regret to learn, has, if not disbanded, at least ceased to act efficiently in the work in which it was formerly engaged. We trust, however, that our brethren in that State have not lost their interest in the cause, and are confident that we shall be able, before another meeting of that body, to report that it has been revived, or another organization formed in its place.

#### THE BIBLE SOCIETY OF THE FLORIDA BAPTIST CONVENTION

Has but recently been organized! It is in a county where there is much destitution to be supplied, and is likely to become a very useful body in the distribution of books, if not in the collection of funds. It has not yet been enabled to enter upon the colportage work, though we understand that it designs to do so as soon as practicable.

#### LOCAL BIBLE SOCIETIES.

Besides these boards of State con-

ventions and general associations, and State Bible societies, we have many local societies directly auxiliary to us. Some like that of Hopkinsville, Ky., (which is represented in your body,) confined to a single church and congregation; others embracing an association, or a county or district. Some of these local societies are connected with our denominational schools: and we regard these with more interest than any others, on account of the reflex interest which they exert upon those who are to be the leading minds in the coming generation. Two of these societies have represented themselves in your body, viz: that of the Mary Sharp Female College at Winchester, Tenn., the first that was formed, and the worthy model for all similar institutions, and that of the Union University, at Murfreesboro, Tenn.

As yet, we have no State Society in Missouri, Kentucky, Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas or California; but so fully does our experience confirm the wisdom of this plan of operation, that we shall continue to labor in this direction until we have a State society, or its equivalent, in every State connected with the Convention. *We need them as much for the work of distribution as for that of collection.* They do us double service, first raising the funds, and then superintending the employment of them and other funds, if need be, in the supply of the destitution within their own bounds.

It is true we have received contributions from some States where there is neither a society, or a board auxiliary to us; but almost the whole of what we are enabled to report as the amount of our operations for the last two years, has been done by our permanent auxiliaries. And we think it is owing very much to the general adoption of this plan of operations suggested by us at your meeting at Montgomery, with the additional provision for the book colportage recommended by you, that we

are enabled to report more than three times as much as at any other meeting of the Convention—something more than thirty thousand dollars.

#### INSTRUCTIONS DESIRED.

A portion of these funds, it will be observed, was raised by our auxiliary and co-operative bodies, and by them employed in accordance with the resolution of instructions to us, passed at the last meeting of this Convention, as the *joint circulation of Bibles and other religious books*, under the direction and control of those who raised them. That portion, however, which was placed at the disposal of the Bible Board itself, was all employed in the exclusive circulation of the Scriptures, except so much as was required to meet the expenses of the Board.

We have purchased no books but Bibles and Testaments, and have made no arrangements for any colporteur acting under a commission directly from the Bible Board to distribute any other books. Some of the members of the Board thought that the instructions of the Convention to which we have referred neither required nor authorized it to do so. And there has also been some doubt in the minds of a part of the Board, whether it was the intention of the Convention that the funds contributed to our auxiliaries, and employed by them in the joint circulation of Bibles and books, should be reported to us, and thus become a *basis of representation in the Convention*, or only so much as could be ascertained to have been employed in the exclusive purchase and circulation of Bibles. We trust you will give us such instructions on these points as will obviate such doubts hereafter. But for their existence we should probably be able to accomplish somewhat more, especially in Kentucky and Tennessee.

#### PROSPECTS OF THE FUTURE.

Though we have not thus far done all that may have been desired, we have

endeavoured to do what we could; and we have done enough to satisfy ourselves, and we trust enough to satisfy the Convention, that the additional work committed to our care is entirely practicable, and will ultimately be accomplished. We can now confidently anticipate the day, and that no distant day, when we shall have at least one efficient auxiliary in every southern State actively engaged in the *joint distribution of the Word of God and our denominational and other religious books*. The Bible Board will thus become the centre of a vast scheme for the dissemination of the truth in the most enduring, and at this day the most effective form—that of the printed page. While those who go to foreign lands to tell in spoken words the glorious truths of our blessed gospel are sent out and sustained by the Board at Richmond, and those who preach the same truths to the destitute in our own land by the Board at Marion, the auxiliaries of the Board at Nashville, organized at its suggestion, encouraged and sustained by its councils, and finding in it the tie that binds them to the Southern Baptist Convention, will send out and sustain a little army of unpretending colporteurs, who will carry to every dwelling and leave them there to plead for Jesus, to explain and enforce the same truths, those silent teachers, Bibles and books, which often speak more eloquently and more effectively than the best of living orators.

It is probable that more men and more money will be employed in this work than in any other interest connected with this Convention, and that it will accomplish more for the diffusion of Baptist sentiments and the building up of the Baptist churches.

#### THE PAPER.

An interest so vast, so complicated, and spread over so wide a field, must have some ready means of intercommunication among those who are en-

gaged in its advancement. Much has indeed been done without this, and much can still be done; but we could do vastly more, and do it a great deal better, if we had some means of reaching directly the minds and the hearts of those engaged in the work. Two little columns of a little paper published only twelve times a year in a distant city, and these prepared a month or more before they can appear, so that the matters to which they refer have often been almost forgotten before attention can be called to them: two little columns prepared and published thus, do not and cannot afford any such facilities of intercommunication as such an interest as this demands.

Yet we do not desire, if it can be well avoided, to burden the denomination with another paper. We do not think it necessary that each Board should have a paper of its own, but we cannot see why the Bible Board should not have equal privileges with the other Boards of the Convention. And if the Commission is to be continued and devoted exclusively to the Board at Richmond, we are confident that it will be every way for the good of the denomination to transfer the Home and Foreign Journal to Nashville—not to become the exclusive organ of the Nashville Board, but to continue, as it has been, the organ of the three. This it could be in Nashville as well as at Richmond, and the interests of all three of the Boards be advanced by the change of location.

The advantages to be derived to the Bible Board are too self-evident to require mention. The Domestic Board would find Nashville quite as accessible by mail or travel as Richmond. It would take no longer for their articles to reach the compositor, no longer to set them up or send them out. And there would be this advantage—that Nashville is central to their field of operations. Their work is in the west; and the ever-flowing tide of emigration

is carrying it still further west. The appeals for aid come from the west, and much more of those contributions which are required to meet those appeals would come from the west, if the organ through which they are made had a larger western circulation. And it is on this ground that we base our opinion that it would even be for the advantage of the Foreign Board, especially since since they have the Commission for the East, to locate an organ here, to plead their cause in the West.

The brethren east of the mountains are already pretty well informed concerning our missionary operations, and somewhat trained to giving. They have taken the Journal from the first, and for the most part would continue to take it, though it should be removed; but comparatively few now receive it in the great valley of the Mississippi. The brethren here are uninformed; the churches here not yet trained to any systematic efforts. Yet here the *wealth* and the numerical force of the churches is rapidly gathering. They must be reached—they must be instructed. And it is self-evident that *we* have facilities for reaching them from their own midst which the Board at Richmond cannot have. The circulation of the paper would be vastly increased by the addition of these new subscribers in the West; and this increase of circulation would give both the Richmond and the Marion Boards access to men and means which they cannot reach from the seacoast. The new subscribers will be in a region where the light is most needed, where there is most prejudice to overcome, where society is still in the formative condition, where habits are not fixed as in the older communities, and where the population, wealth, and consequent permanent prosperity, is steadily and rapidly increasing. Now, if we can open the way for the Foreign Secretaries to reach these people, while they still retain their hold upon the East, we will surely thereby greatly ad-



vance the interests of the Foreign Mission Board.

Nor will they suffer, as we do now, by the retention of the matter of their publications for a few weeks after it is prepared. Their operations being in a far-off land, and unknown to the public until they make them known, will always have the freshness of novelty. Their communications, for the most part, are such as will not grow old and out of date by retention, while ours, having reference to things among ourselves, and published by the weekly papers, seem stale and out of time if not brought out at once. And besides this, they will still have the Commission, published as often as the Journal, in which they can bring out any thing that will not bear delay.

Another advantage to be gained by all the Boards, is in the saving of the cost. Our Corresponding Secretary is willing to take the labor and responsibility of the publication upon himself, and insure the Convention that it shall not be taxed a single dime for the payment of arrearages, as it has been every year since the Journal was established.

The facilities which Nashville now affords for the prompt and rapid printing and distribution of the paper are certainly not surpassed in any city. It will appear to any one who will examine the map, that Nashville is near the geographical centre of the States represented in this Convention; and our system of railroads, soon to be completed, will make it the point from which the mails will radiate to every portion of the Southern States in less time than from any other. This is a consideration of great importance in the location of a paper, and the circulation of which must extend over a territory so vast as that embraced by the Southern Baptist Convention.

In conclusion, upon this point, we only say that we do not wish to appropriate the Journal to ourselves. We only desire to share equally in its privi-

leges with the other Boards, and to relieve them and the Convention of all the trouble and cost of its publication.

#### NOTES CONCERNING CHINA.

SHANGHAI, CHINA, May 28th, '57.

*Dear Brother Taylor:*

In my last communication to Brother Poindexter, I gave him a brief outline of a trip I took into the interior of the country. I now send you a copy of some notes jotted at one of the Monasteries, on a mountain near Hu-chau,\* a town in Cheh-Kiang province, a little over one hundred miles west from Shanghai.

Fraternally Yours,

A. B. CABANISS.

#### DESCRIPTION OF A MONASTERY NEAR HU-CHAU IN CHEH-KIANG PROVINCE, CHINA.

April 15th, 1857.—Staid last night at the foot of the Pagoda Mountain near Hu-Chau. This morning, accompanied by one of my boatmen, I commenced the ascent, and, at the outset, found a resting house built over the road for the benefit of weary pilgrims who come here to worship. Here commences a well graded, paved road, with stone steps at every steep place. Ascending till we are tired, we come to another rest house over the road, with a large image in the centre. A little farther on, we pass through another building, with an image of laughing budha in the centre; and two large images on each side; while in his rear, stands another facing the back door. Ten or fifteen paces farther, by the side of the road, is another building with three images. Some thirty paces from this, we ascend a wide pair of steps to a large and handsome building, containing a large and splendid gilt image of the

GODDESS OF MERCY.

With numerous hands, she is sitting on the flower of the lotus, which

\* In the Shanghai dialect, this is called Oo-Treu, and some call it Hoo-Chau.

*springs out of a magnificently carved and gilded urn—gilded fillagree carving—spreads out on both sides and far above her head. Above this is painted in large letters, "Compassionate Saviour of the world." But how she is to save the world is not stated.*

#### MANY HANDED IDOL.

In the rear of this goddess, fronting the back door is a standing image, the number of whose hands I attempted to count; but gave up in despair. They are crowded upon each other like the the feathers on a bird's wings, and spread out on each side in the shape of a Chinese fan. Looking at it awhile, I determined to make another attempt, and finally counted seven hundred and thirty hands. These are intended to represent the manifold power of the idol.

Passing on, we cross an artificial lake, over a stone bridge. Ascending two flights of steps, we enter the main temple of the monastery.

#### RICH SCENERY IN A TEMPLE.

In the centre of this is a mammoth gilt budha sitting on the flower of the lotus like a tailor, as to his feet; but with hands folded, as if he had nothing to do. Three large images stand on each side of him, and a laughing budha sits at his feet. In the rear of these, and fronting the back door, is a rugged, precipitous mountain, reaching from the floor to the ceiling. This is wrought with much ingenuity, having grottoes and impending crags, on the brink of which stand birds, children, fairies and gods, leaning as it were on the air; while others are even sporting on the clouds which hang around these peaks. At the base stands the goddess of mercy on the head of a dragon which is peeping out of the sea, while children are joyfully playing on the rising waves. All around this building stand a multitude of full size images.

Passing into an open court, on each side of which are rooms for the priests,

we enter a two story building, where I am introduced to the Abbot, a jolly, fat bronze. I gave him a Testament and some tracts, and then distributed books among the rest of the priests, briefly explaining the contents.

#### EXCITEMENT PRODUCED BY A MICROSCOPE.

After conversing awhile with them, I pulled out my microscope, and asked if they could catch a fly for me. As they could not find one, I told them a certain parasite, (which, by the way, seems to be indigenous to Chinese bodies,) would answer just as well. The Abbot immediately commenced looking in his bosom; but another priest, with a better stock on hand, succeeded in capturing one before him, and, with a smile of satisfaction, laid a large specimen on the table. Placing the glass over it, I told the Abbot to look. As soon as he got a good view, the old gentleman's whole system seemed to be thrown into a laugh, and he shook from his head to his feet with ecstatic surprise and delight, as he exclaimed, "Look! look! did you ever see the like! wonderful! wonderful!" In a few moments the whole monastery was around—all anxious to look through the microscope. The Abbot first begged me to give it to him, but I told him it was the only one I had, and I wished to show it to other persons in my travels. He then urged me to sell it to him, and wished me to go up stairs and let him show me how many things he would give me for it. I had finally to tell him plainly, if I could spare it at all, I would give it to him; but I did not wish to be without it.

#### MONKISH AUSTERITEES.

He then desired me to go to a building to the left, and show it to some persons there. Imagine my surprise to find some priests immured in cells with the doors sealed, and only communicating with the outer world by a hole in the wall a foot square, through which their food is handed to them. They

were mostly old men. There was one youth some 20 or 25 years of age, with a pleasant countenance and long hair\* like a woman, with a metallic band on his head to keep it straight. When I asked them why they shut themselves up from the world thus, they replied "*Sieu Sung*"—to renovate or make ourselves better. I could but pity the deluded creatures, who imagine that by retiring from the world and doing penance, they can make themselves better. I took occasion to tell them God did not require such things, and all this kind of penance would do no good. I then pointed them to Christ, and told what he had done to atone for the sins of the world; but they gazed at me as if it was some strange thing which they could not comprehend. The young man told me he had taken a vow for three years, which would expire the seventh month of the present year, when he would come out. Though they have retired in order to be dead to the world, I noticed they manifested as much curiosity to look through the microscope as any of those outside—showing that their long efforts had not conquered their natures.

Leaving these anchorites I went up stairs, into a large room, where they have their daily worship. As some women had come in to burn incense, the priests went through their chanting genuflexions. When they had finished I told them we did not worship thus—and had no images for worship in our country. I then knelt down and offered an *extempore* prayer to the true God in order to let them see how we worshipped. After this I explained the plan of salvation, and told them God required the homage of the heart rather than outward forms and ceremonies.

Leaving the monastery, the ascent is steep and laborious. After awhile we

come to another rest station, over the road, on is which written, "Outer gate to heaven,"\*

Passing on we came to another station with an idol in it,—thence up a winding flight of steps to the top of the mountain, where stands a temple and pagoda. From this point I had a good view of the city below, and the Great Lake to the North, with its many islands. Numerous fish pools and canals intersected the rice fields and meadows in the plain—while South and West mountain peaks were everywhere visible.

#### A SICKENING SIGHT.

Coming down to the foot of the mountain, we met some boys gayly dressed, carrying miniature gods in their hands, and chanting as they walked. Behind them came a man nude to his waist, and surrounded with small sticks, the ends of which centered on his body, like the ribs of an inverted umbrella, he supplying the place of the staff. The other ends stood out all around him, and were supported by strings reaching to small hooks in his skin. One was hooked between his eyes—two on his breast—one on each shoulder, and two on his back. From the outer end of each stick, hung a string of paper cups, reaching nearly to the ground. With his disheveled hair, he presented a sickening sight to a Christian, though the poor Chinese seemed to think he was doing a meritorious act, in marching up the sacred mount in this manner. I have read of such things in Hindoostan; but never before witnessed such a sight in China. God grant that the day may soon come, when such superstitious admonitions may be banished from the earth.

The more I see of heathenism, the more and more do I rejoice that I had my birth in a Christian land. "Happy

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\* Also may be rendered "first gate to Heaven."

\* Priests usually shave their heads.

is that people, that is in such a case—yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord.”

### THE TROUBLESOME WATCH.

Five or six years ago Bro. Day, of Liberia, wrote an address to the colored Baptists of the South, giving them some information in regard to the barbarism of some of the idolatrous tribes on the coast, and urging them to contribute what they were able, to aid in giving the gospel, so as to save them from superstition and eternal ruin.

At a meeting of my colored congregation in S. W. Georgia, I received Bro. Day's address, and the brethren contributed very liberally, and so the subject passed out of my mind for several weeks. One Sabbath afternoon, when I had dismissed my congregation and left the house, Bro. Jim, the property of Hon. S. W., met me in the yard, and pulling from his pocket a large silver watch, said, "Brother —, ever since you received Bro. Day's letter to us, I have felt troubled about wearing this watch. I don't think it is right for me to be wearing it, for I can do without it, while they are going down to hell for want of the gospel—take it and sell it, and give the money to the missionaries."

I commended this Christian act, and gave the watch to Bro. Eli Ball.

How many articles have we about us that we could, and ought to do without, so as to enable us to send out more missionaries.

My brother, do you chew tobacco? Can you not give as much to save immortal souls, as to gratify your taste? How much money do you spend for things not absolutely necessary? Could you not make a little sacrifice, and put a little more in the "Savings Bank" of Benevolence?

Uncle Charles' wife, perhaps I ought to say, aunt Charles, told a merchant's clerk, a few days since, that she could

not spare the money to buy a fine collar he offered her, because *she had to aid Bro. Bowen in opening a road from Abeokuta to Ogbomishaw.*

I know a minister's wife who was in the habit of giving one dollar per month at the Female Concert meeting, and when it rained so that she failed to attend, she gave two dollars at the next meeting. She denies herself many little articles, in order to be able to give this sum. E. W. W.

### OBSTACLES TO THE INTRODUCTION OF THE GOSPEL IN CHINA.

#### I. ANCESTRAL WORSHIP.

The natural heart of man in every land, is alike opposed to God and to holiness. To this natural enmity must be added, in heathen lands, the force of time honored and cunningly devised systems of philosophy,—based on idolatrous worship;—systems that, while they allow the indulgence of many of the viler passions of the human heart, hold out to their devotees the hope of freedom from calamity. Of these systems there are three in China—Confucianism, Tauism and Boodism. (I propose, in time, to examine these systems for the benefit of all who may feel interested in the spiritual welfare of this great people.) To these the natural heart, under the influence of idolatrous systems, add the negative influence of a total absence of all knowledge of revelation, and of the existence of the one living and true God, and we have what is conceived, though very imperfectly by our best informed friends, to be the main difficulties to be contended with in attempting to introduce the gospel among the Chinese. They think of us only, or mainly, as contending with idolaters—men wholly given to trusting in idols, the work of men's hands, for salvation. Now, the *literati* of China, (who are Confucianists,) are, professedly, anti-idolaters; (though

many of them worship idols, and all of them are more or less under the influence of idolatry), and the great mass of the people who do worship idols, neither pray for, or expect of them, any other salvation than freedom from calamity in this life. The religions of the Chinese, being the work of man's device, promise no salvation in the Christian sense of that term. With the Chinese freedom from calamity, or worldly prosperity, is happiness. This happiness is the reward of merit, or personal virtue. And this merit, or personal virtue, consists in observing such rites, ceremonies and customs, as the system to which the individual may chance to belong has established. These rites, ceremonies and customs form the basis of a kind of public sentiment, the violation of which is sin, (in Chinese.) But while the religions of the Chinese promise their devotees no salvation, and no higher reward of personal merit than worldly prosperity, or the hope of being promoted in their next advent into the world of light, (according to their ideas of the transmigration of souls,) to a more honorable position in society; they provide both a place and agents, for inflicting punishment for a season upon all offenders whose merit does not exceed their demerit. The place is represented as a world, or place of darkness in the centre of the earth. The agents, or executioners, are the authorities of that world; and are represented as an exact counterpart of the authorities of this world of light, (China) from the Emperor down to the meanest lictor of a district magistrate. Even the practice, so common among the authorities of this world of light, of receiving bribes in judicial proceedings, to mitigate the punishment of a culprit, is predicated of the authorities of the world of darkness. But I will speak more particularly of these things, under that system, to which they more properly belong. Thus much seemed necessary to

illustrate some of the practices of ancestral worship; to which subject I would now invite attention.

Ancestral worship was known in China, according to the best chronology of the country, as early as three thousand and three hundred years ago. About the time of Moses. It consisted, originally, in honoring the deceased with affectionate remembrance. As early as the days of Confucius, (500 years before Christ,) this sacred custom had been corrupted by the introduction of certain idolatrous ceremonies. Thus it has continued through succeeding ages to degenerate till in 1857, we find it to be the most sacred form of idolatry known to the Chinese; and the only one in which all classes unite—(Confucianists, Tauist, and Boodists) from the Emperor on his throne, to the meanest peasant. The peculiar sacredness of this system arises from the fact, that the living are regarded as the guardians of their departed relatives; and the spirits of the departed are regarded and worshipped as the tutelary deities of the surviving relatives. In other words, the repose of a departed, as well as the worldly prosperity of the surviving relatives, are made to depend, in a great degree, upon fidelity to the dead;—in observing such ceremonies, and making such offerings, at such times and places, as custom has established to be necessary to comfort, appease, or propitiate the departed. This principle of reciprocal good, is the foundation of ancestral worship as practiced at this day, and forms the double bolt with which the gate of heaven is barred against the millions of this vast empire.

But, perhaps some one inquires, how do the living expect to benefit the dead? What do they do, &c.? Well, I will tell you, as I believe no one has ever yet told what ancestral worship is. The first thing done for the benefit of the dead, is to place a bowl of water at the outer door, immediately after the

soul leaves the body, in order that the *spirit may take the last drink of water*. As soon as possible they burn to ashes a suit of clothes for the use of the departed. As the spirit is invisible, so must the clothes, in order to be of service, be rendered invisible. The design of the clothing is, that the spirit may present a decent appearance when seized by the police officers of the world of darkness, which is supposed to take place soon after it leaves the body. This, too, is a counterpart of what is witnessed in this world of light. The police are much more lenient and respectful to a respectable looking prisoner than to one who is poorly attired. And if he be able to bribe him, by the way, they will make a much more favorable report of his case when they arrive at head-quarters. So, as soon as possible, after the clothes are burned, a large quantity of "ding" is consumed in order that the departed may have the benefit of this universal system of bribery. (Ding is common Chinese paper, covered with the thinnest possible coating of lead, and made into the form of ingots of silver, of which it is designed to be the counterpart. An ingot of silver is worth from 40 to 50 dollars. Two hundred of its counterpart, including the labor of making them, are worth only about two cents. A large proportion of the females of this part of China, find employment in the production of this "ding,"—the currency of the other world. It forms a part of almost every offering to the dead; and is supposed to be used by them in mitigating their sufferings, by bribing the executioner of justice, and in procuring other necessary comforts.) These preliminary steps having been taken, all the wearing apparel, bed, and bedding of the deceased, are burned for the use of the departed in the other world. Before the fire that consumes them, all the family, and such of the relatives as may be present, prostrate themselves.

The female part of the family, from the first indulge in very boisterous lamentation and bewailing. This, custom requires them to do, whether they feel like it or not, every night and morning for thirty-five days. As a man in prison, who is carefully looked after by his friends, is treated with more leniency than one who is destitute of friends to administer to his wants; so to bewail the departed, who, though they are in the world of darkness, can see the living in the world of light, is thought to have some influence in mitigating their sufferings. Indeed so much importance is attached to bewailing the dead that it is not uncommon for men of wealth to hire persons to blow the horn of mourning for many months after the death of a father or mother.

If the family can afford it, Taoist priests are always called in to superintend what may be regarded as the funeral rites of the dead. They engage in many unmeaning ceremonies; all designed to console the departed. By them the ancestral tablet is placed in its proper position. From this position it must not, for any consideration, be moved for many months. This ancestral tablet is nothing more than a piece of board, about three inches by twelve, placed in an upright position on a small block of wood, which serves as a base. On it is written the family name, given name, and the date of the birth and death of the departed. Now the Chinese believe that a man has three souls, and six ghosts, or spirits—(the six spirits are considered to be the grosser parts of the souls.) One of the souls, after death, remains with the body in the coffin; and takes its position on the ancestral tablet; and one goes into the world of darkness! The proper record having been made, and the tablet placed in position, the guardian, or master of ceremonies, in all the future worship of the departed is inaugurated. This master of ceremonies must be a male, and is, always

ex-officio, the oldest son in the family—(an infant is sometimes, by the aid of others, made to perform this duty. If, however, a family should be so unfortunate as to have no son, (than which a greater calamity cannot be conceived,) the nearest available male relative is inaugurated as such by proxy. No female, not even a daughter, can officiate in ancestral worship. Their part of the service consists in lamentations and bewailings.—they may, after the master of ceremonies has performed the rites of his office, join with the other members of the family in prostrations before the ancestral tablet. Hence the reason why the Chinese place a higher estimate upon their sons than upon their daughters. Hence too, two great social and material evils. 1st. Polygamy. If a man has no male issue by his first wife—if he be able, he will take the second, third, &c. 2d. The universal practice of betrothing children in marrying while they are yet children, and thus entailing misery for life upon thousands—yea, millions, of ill-matched persons.

The funeral ceremonies usually occupy from two to seven days; and are generally terminated with burning a straw-house, and paper samples of all the furniture of the departed. After this period, the family of the deceased, for some six or eight months, always, in preparing food for themselves, prepare enough for the absent one. This they place in order on a table before the ancestral tablet, as though a living person were to eat. The people vainly imagine that the absent one can partake of the *flavor* of these daily offerings. This practice of presenting food before the ancestral tablet is observed for many years on the anniversaries of the birth and death of the deceased. On these occasions, the departed are supposed to return home; and it is not uncommon for the wealthy to regale their long absent ones with music and great feasting. The usual seasons for wor-

shipping the dead, are, spring and autumn. At these seasons the grave-hills are repaired; and offerings of food, wine, “ding,” lighted candles, incense, paper sedans for the departed to ride in, and paper trunks for them to put their clothes in, are presented, and all, except the food, burned at the family graves; before which all the family, following the master of ceremonies, prostrate themselves in the attitude of worshippers. The same form of worship is observed before the ancestral tablets. These semi-annual offerings and ceremonies are maintained to the latest generation, by the oldest male in a direct line of descent. This is ancestral worship.

The character and magnitude of the obstacle presented by this system, to the introduction of the gospel into China will be more clearly perceived by briefly considering the motives that prompt to its observance. These are four. 1st. Filial affection or gratitude; 2nd. Fear; 3d. Self-love, or the hope of gain; 4th. The force of public sentiment.

1st. Filial Affection. The highest virtue known in the Chinese code of morals, is “show,” filial piety, respect and reverence for parents. This, the first passion known to the human breast, and common to all races, while the exciting cause is present, is, among the Chinese, made to run back after the objects of affection through many generations. They go upon the principle that a man never ceases to have a parent, either in “Yung,” or “Yang,” the world of darkness, or the world of light. And as a man never ceases to have a parent, therefore filial affection should never cease. According to the ritual, ancestral worship is the perpetuation of filial affection; but, as practiced by the masses for more than a thousand years, and almost universally at this day, it is filial affection in name only; while in reality, it is an intensified form of idolatry. This law of filial piety is most imperious in its demands. It re-

quires the living to be as assiduous in contributing to the wants of the dead as to those of the living. Hence, for an only son to abandon this form of idolatry and embrace christianity, would be to consign his father, mother and all his ancestors to a state of perpetual want and beggary. Consequently, when we called upon the people to abandon all for Christ, they say, "What, throw away my father and mother!" And yet, while filial affection is the standing argument for ancestral worship, it is perhaps, the least powerful of the four inciting motives that prompt to its observance.

## II. FEAR.

This is the strongest passion known to the heathen mind. Considered as a motive to action, it is strong indeed. The Chinese believe it is in the power of the spirits of the departed to affect the condition of the living, as well as to take riving for neglect, or for injuries received while living. Indeed they attribute many of their calamities, and certain diseases to the influence of some starving and discontented ghost. Hence, when any member of a family is taken sick, they always burn a quantity of "ding" in the street, before the front door, and make some offering before the ancestral tablet. The epidemic that raged in the city of Shanghai, soon after it fell into the hands of the Imperialists, was attributed to the starving and disaffected ghost of the thousands of poor wretches who died during the war, unlamented and unprovided for. The authorities and gentry of the city, filled with consternation, ordered "high mass" to be performed, and peace offerings to be made. This was done in grand style. Many millions of "ding," and thousands of paper garments, &c., were consumed for the benefit of the miserable dead. The three great annual festivals of the Chinese, in Spring, Summer, and Autumn, are designed to dispel evil influences, by such peace of-

ferings, &c., as are calculated to appease and propitiate the spirits of such persons as have died at sea, or otherwise away from home, where there friends could not procure their bodies. The spirits of such, having no abiding place, are supposed to wander about from place to place, afflicting the children of men with many grievous calamities. Indeed, the Chinese live in an *atmosphere of ghosts*—ever afraid of some invisible foe. Hence, for an only son to embrace Christianity, would not only be to consign his ancestors to a state of want and misery; but to bring down upon himself all the evils and calamities that it is in the power of the departed to inflict.

## III. SELF-LOVE AS HOPE OF GAIN.

The Chinese believe that it is in the power of the departed, not only to inflict injury, but to confer benefits. This hope of gain is a strong argument with the Chinese. They will worship anything that promises worldly prosperity. Many who have nothing to lose, seek to enter the Christian Church with no other motive in view than worldly prosperity—they hope to get a more lucrative employment than they can find among their own people. They worship idols from no other motive than to avert evil and to get gain.

The mass of the soldiers who fight the battles of the present war in China, are not influenced by the love of country, but by the hope of gain. Indeed, no scheme, enterprise, or religion, that does not promise worldly gain, has any attractions for the Chinese. They will do any thing for money. Some will even suffer decapitation for another, for a few hundred dollars to their family. The same principle influences them in their worship of the dead.

## IV. THE FORCE OF PUBLIC SENTIMENT.

If there be any public sentiment among the Chinese, it is on this subject.



Filial piety is a mark of respect in any class, while the want of it is sufficient to render an individual of any class execrable. No one would be persecuted for abandoning the idolatrous worship; but every one, (in the upper and middle classes, and, in many cases, in the lower class,) who abandon ancestral worship, is sure to bring down upon him fierce persecution. The young man "Poh," (the teacher of Mrs. Crawford's school, the only son of a man of the middle class,) who professed conversion a few months ago, has never joined the church, and probably never will, during the life-time of his parents. They vow, that if he does, they will commit suicide. Should they do this, the law of China would hold the son guilty of the murder of his parents. This practice of self-murder, to attain an end, or revenge an injury, is *the dernier resort* in China; and is by no means uncommon. Here the laws of the land come to the aid of the devil. Our teachers, who are generally well-informed men, tell us that it is nothing for a Chinaman to give up idols; but to abandon ancestral worship is what he dare not do. Even they, (our teachers,) would be compelled to observe its form, though they have no faith in its virtues.

Thus, you have an imperfect delineation of ancestral worship, and the motives that prompt to its observance. In it you will perceive *the* enemy with which we have to contend in China. Seizing, as it does, upon the most sacred and powerful passions of the human heart, it is *the great obstacle* to the introduction of the Gospel. In comparison with it, idolatry is *nothing*. Stripped of its connection with ancestral worship, idolatry could be easily disposed of; for it is comparatively an easy matter to convince as intelligent a people as the Chinese that an idol is nothing. But here we find the people bound to some form of idolatry by its connection with ancestral worship;—

indeed, the forms of idolatry are integral parts of that iniquitous system.

Brethren, study this subject. In it see the strength of your enemy in China. Think of us, then, *not* as contending *solely* with idolaters; but think of us as a small band of sappers and miners, with sword and shield, struggling at the base of a barrier of three thousand years standing, and formed of the united hearts of three hundred and sixty millions of souls—with the devil and his angels, under cover, to work the guns: And when you fully realize the nature of our struggle against such odds, the wonder will be, *not* that we have done so little, but rather, that so much has been accomplished.

M. T. YATES.

Shanghai, China,

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## Our Missions.

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### CANTON, CHINA.

Letter from Rev. R. H. Graves.

MACAO, June 3rd, 1857.

DEAR BROTHER POINDEXTER:

Yours of Feb. 26th came to hand by the bi-monthly mail. You say you have no doubt but that the disturbances in this land will be overruled for the furtherance of the Gospel. This is my hope and prayer. It is a cheering thought that there is One "who sitteth in the Heavens and ruleth,"—who sends war and distress on a people only because He sees them necessary to accomplish the object dearest to His heart—the submission of the world to the dominion of His Son.

I doubt not but what God is sending war, and anarchy, and famine upon this people as a punishment for their sins. The land was for years barred against the Gospel, but these bars were broken asunder, and an entrance effected. Still, though thousands heard and read the Truth, almost all, in the pride and obstinacy of their hearts, rejected it.

You will remember that about two years ago, 70,000 men were butchered in cold blood, for their alleged connection with the insurgents. Many of these the Chinese knew, and admit were innocent, and fell victims merely to official corruption and private revenge. Will not God visit for such crimes as these? Will he not sometimes show that there is a God that judgeth in the earth? When a nation opposes the Gospel, persecutes those who proclaim it, and delights in deeds of cruelty, may not God "break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel?" O, that these poor, perishing people would see the hand of God when His "judgments are abroad in the earth." O, brethren! pray that God may overrule the present distresses of this people for their eternal good. Pray that a wide door may be opened for the "glorious Gospel of the blessed Son of God."

Some parts of the province have been overrun by the Hakkas, a band of marauders, who seize all they can lay hold of, and murder without distinction of age or sex. They recently took Shuhing-fu, a town about 60 miles from Canton. Many were killed, and many of those who escaped are said to be dying from starvation at Canton. There has been much suffering in consequence of the dearth of rice. The government resorted to a temporary expedient to lower the price, but it is now rising again. Some of the gentry have spent large sums in buying rice for gratuitous distribution in the soup kitchens.

War, robbery and famine are filling the cup of distress to the brim.

Our missionary work here continues as usual. There is nothing of special interest. Our congregations vary in number, but are generally well-behaved. All accept tracts very willingly, and some seem quite anxious to obtain them.

How much faith we need to be earn-

est in our work, when we see no fruit of our labors. Perhaps God intends us to look less to our efforts and to place our whole trust in His promises. Still I cannot but hope and pray that our eyes may see many in this land turning to the Lord.

### SHANGHAI.

*Letter from Mrs. Yates.*

*Shanghai, May 56, 1857.*

REV. A. M. POINDEXTER,

*Dear Brother,*—Last week my husband set out on a little journey into the country. After visiting the native brother who lives at Loo-dzong-le, his intention was to spend a few days in rambling over the hills in that region; hoping, in that way, to recruit his health. More than a month ago, he was so prostrated by sickness, he has been unable to do anything since. Before leaving home, he charged me to answer your last, kind letter, in his stead. This gives me an opportunity of thanking you for the remembrance made of me in all your letters; and of assuring you that kind words are not wasted upon us. It gives us new life and new strength, to hope on and work on, when we see that you remember us prayerfully and affectionately; for our great discouragement is *not* that the heathen are "slow of heart to believe," but that Christians in America have become so disheartened in reference to the success of the gospel here. *Why* is it not enough that we are here, in exact accordance with the Saviour's last command? And *why* should they limit the fulfilment of His promise to five or ten years? *Why* can they not "wait on the Lord?" The Bible assures us, "the Lord is not slack concerning his promises." Surely it were better, both for missionaries and for Christians at home, to consider seriously, whether the delay is not occasioned by their individual want of believing prayer and diligent use of the talents

committed to them. In Matt. xiii., 58, it is said, "He did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief." I think I may venture to say *we* are not discouraged: and that, though to none would a great ingathering of souls be so sweet as to us, we are content to wait the Lord's time, our chief anxiety being to fulfil the measure of our duty.

Since the last regular mail, our church has received three male members. I am sure you will rejoice with us, over this indication of Divine favor; and could you have been present when the two native brethren told their experience to the church, you would have felt satisfied that they had "passed from death unto life." Poke-Seen-Sang said, "at first I gave no credit to the gospel—I disliked to hear it; but being employed in the school, I constantly heard Mr. Crawford preach, and after awhile was convinced that there is but one true God; but I did not believe what was said about Jesus—I did not want to hear of him—I loathed his name. Afterwards I was convinced the doctrine was *all* true, but I thought it would be time enough to repent by and by. Thus I went on till overtaken by severe illness. I saw how wrong it was to put off repentance; I thought it was too late for me to be saved, but hoped my father and mother might. After my recovery, I again heard preaching and read the Testament with an anxious, distressed heart. I saw clearly that a true believer in Jesus has great blessings, so clearly, that there seemed only a glass partition between them and my own heart, but I could not get hold of them. At last my mind was led to dwell upon what Jesus had done for sinners, and I found the joy and peace I so longed for, by believing that as he had *died* for me, he was certainly willing to save me." On being asked if he had continued in the same happy state ever since his conversion, he said, "there

was a time when I was very busy, looking after the building of a house, and neglected to read my Bible. I found my heart grow cold, and became alarmed, but, after all, I was like the seed that fell on stony ground. I turned again to the Holy Book; and from that time to this, have read it daily." In our schools and in public worship we use a little hymn-book written in the Shanghai dialect. Native scholars hold this style of writing in great contempt; and Poke confessed that he had felt so towards the hymns; but said, "I now find they express the very language of my heart."

A young man, named Lee, has applied for baptism. He appears to have experienced the new birth. The few who have joined us seem to run well. We find Chinese Christians more ready to exhort others and to pray in public than the majority of American Christians are. In this, I include both men and women; for in female prayer meetings I have never known a native sister "beg to be excused" when called upon to pray. Nor have I heard them talk of "doubts and fears" as is so common with some of us. Their faith seems as simple and trusting as a child's. Having chosen the Lord to be their God, there is no halting, half-hearted work with them. True, in *knowledge* they are children, but in *faith* I sometimes feel they are a pattern for their teachers. I am sure you will join earnestly in the wish that many more such may be added unto us.

28th. To-day I received a letter from Mr. Yates. He considers himself much better already, and intends to go considerably further, unless some unfavorable change occur. The company of four or five missionary friends beguiles the discomfort and monotony of boat-life. Mr. and Mrs. Crawford are of the number. The latter is very feeble. On this account she has given up her school for the summer. The rest of the mission are usually able to keep

busy. Something has been said about our going back home for a year or two, on account of Mr. Yate's health; but I hope it will not be necessary. Dr. Burton thinks he may get back his strength here by keeping out of his study and taking plenty of out-door exercise. We feel it would be sad indeed to leave China now, whilst there are so many who need to be taught and so few to teach. Please offer my very kind regards to brother Taylor. His letters have often brought us comfort and encouragement. I hope he is quite well by this time. I think you agents have harder times than missionaries; for you have the right to expect sympathy and help from christians, and must feel grieved when they are withheld; whereas we are prepared to battle with coldness and contempt.

*Letter from Rev. W. H. Clark.*

OGBOMISHAW—YORUBA.

The following, dated in March, gives us information of the safe arrival of brother and sister Trimble at Ogbomishaw, for which we are truly thankful.

DEAR BRO. TAYLOR:

Your valuable favor, under date Dec. 24th, has been received. It found me after a prolonged struggle against debility, consequent on care and anxiety, &c., improving in health and feeling. I evidently stepped beyond the mark. This experience, sad it is true, I intend using for the benefit of others, if they will exercise *common sense* to improve it. I don't believe the climate reduced me, and hope, therefore, I shall be able, as before, to prosecute my labors. It is my heart's desire to *live and do good* in this unhappy land. May the good Lord give me many years, under His *especial guidance*, to labor for poor Africa. I feel much the importance of that systematic labor, and watchful attention, so necessary to success in this unfavored clime; and wish others could appreciate, with experience dearly

bought, the importance of *vigilance*. If the Lord gives me *strength and grace*, I hope to accomplish a work in this land. But *remember my swift work* is over, and I shall try to make haste, *slowly*. *Impress this* on our brethren. In the outset we are all *like children*, and find it impossible to believe what others tell us, though it is beat from the track of their own experience. The danger with our brethren lies in the fact, they wish to accomplish too much in a given time. In this respect, allow me kindly to suggest, Bro. Bowen is, as for the last two years, far "overshooting" the mark. *He* will perceive this too late, in a failure to publish immediately his works.

I referred, in my last, to a few weeks recreation with the brethren in Ijaye. Since that time I have returned home and received into *my family* our good brother and sister Trimble—choice spirits. Send us more of the same kind, if you please. This division was necessary for several reasons. First, in our house we have room; besides, wherever a man *lives, there* he ought to *acclimate*. They are now enjoying fine health, and can *ride* and walk five or six miles an evening.

The advice, Bro. Taylor, in your last, is excellent. I agree with you in "*toto*," and, as far as *human nature* would allow, have acted it out in my own case, with not a little retrospective pleasure. When I came to Africa I settled that point, and not a few have been the times I have been called to exercise it—not that I attach blame to any one. No inexperienced man can well imagine the peculiar difficulties and trials of a missionary in a foreign land, in association with his brethren. If ever we need grace it is here, where, brought in immediate contact with each other, if there be faults we will most certainly perceive them. I had learned *this*, and am somewhat prepared to meet the imperfections of others. My motto is still to yield anything, everything, ex-

cept principle, rather than wound the feelings of my brethren. *This is our critical point*, and I do hope we may avoid the rock on which so many have split. With tears in my eyes I have asked forgiveness for that *supposed error*, of which I knew I was not guilty. I have borne and suffered—it is my motto still. May the Lord help me. You cannot write too freely and too often on such points, for we need daily to be watched. The only difference between us here and in America, is, we are *here*; ourselves fully developed. If we have any protuberances they are certain to be exhibited. Pray for us that we may be kept from the snares of the evil one, and not fall into his condemnation.

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*Letter from Rev. A. D. Phillips.*

IJAYE, March 12th, 1857.

Dear Bro. Taylor:

I have the cheering news that we are all well, and have generally been so since my last. As for myself, I remain in *excellent* health. I consider the affairs of the mission in a prosperous condition. We have plead with the people, and many of them give us many marks of affection.

The brethren here with me are now beginning to accompany me through town—preach in the market, &c., which seems to encourage the people to come. I believe we have gained ground here considerably for several months past. Our congregations on Sabbath are only tolerable, though out of the little number who do attend we have some interesting ones. Before I went to Abeokuta the last time, I endeavored to make an impression on the mind of one of our congregation, who has a plurality of wives. I have some reasons to believe my efforts were not in vain. He is a regular attendant at our meetings, and has an air of great seriousness. A few days since he came to the house, and I thought it a good oppor-

tunity to know what had been the working of his mind since my former private conversation. I was highly gratified to hear him talk more to my notion than ever before. He says he has about six wives, and it will be impossible in this country for him to put them all away at once, but he is doing it *pelle, pelle*, (gently, gently.) Says his people laugh at him, say the white man is not his friend, else he would give him something. When he was told how the gifts and riches of this world passed away, &c., &c., he rejoiced. As a general thing, I *never* give presents. All our members here, *especially* the two last, are doing well.

We are now preparing to start to Awyaw, with a view to get a locality for a mission station—expect to leave on the 16th inst.—hope to be gone only a few days. The brethren from Ogbomishaw are to meet us from Ijaye there. You are, perhaps, aware how Bro. C. was received there last Spring; but we have reasons to believe that we will meet with a better reception now. I accompanied brother and sister Trimble that far on their way to Ogbomishaw, and that night spoke to the chief man of the king about building there. He said but little to me then; but as my interpreter (who went on with brother T.) returned, Kuper, the chief man, said, to tell me we could get land if we wanted it. You already know the importance of that place. You also know the importance of our having a man at Abeokuta. It will, therefore, be needless for me to say more than has been said about letting us have appropriations for *both* these places.

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*Letter from S. Y. Trimble.*

OGBOMISHAW, AFRICA, }  
May, 13th 1857. }

Dear Brother Poindexter:

We received your kind favor of January the 7th inst., and were sorry to hear of Brother Taylor's afflictions. Your letter found us in our new house,

blessed with good health. I had the most stubborn attack of fever since my last communication I have ever had, but it lasted only four or five days. Our house is not done, but so soon as we get plank it will be finished in a short time, and the sawyers are sending in plank almost every day. We are having the yards dug up and planted. This is undoubtedly a beautiful location—the scenery—agreeable and enlivening. We have large congregations at this station now, and most of them seem very much interested in the story of the cross. At the old station our congregations are small, but some very hopeful cases. I believe that there are two or three with whose hearts the spirit of God is at work. They tell us they are trying to do as we tell them, and that they have repented, and believe that they are going to a better world than this when they die. Two of them are men of families. I told one of them that if he would follow Jesus, he must take up the cross and bear it daily, and he asked me what that cross was, and I told him that it was meeting with humble boldness and bearing, with much patience, all the persecutions and opposition he might meet; that he might expect persecutions, but that he must bear them all for Christ's sake. Yes, he said, my mother, wife and brother, have no objections to my coming to hear the word of God. All the rest of my friends laugh at me, but I am determined to press on. He says he keeps Sunday, and if he had not repented he would still go to work as he used to do.

Mrs. Trimble has two girls to teach, one from Abbeokuta, that can read and sew very well—was taught by the Church Missionaries. The other, a small girl, from an old neighbor, just before our door. We are sending her to school to Brother Bowen's teacher.

*Letter from Rev. J. H. Cason.*

Brother Cason, after referring to other matters, remarks:

If it is the Lord's will for me to labor in laying the foundation for others to build on, there shall never a murmur be heard, though I never see any of the fruits of my labor. Some person must do the first work. You may be displeased to see this kind of a letter, but if it is the truth, it should be known. As long as there is an exaggerated report about Africa, men who are unprepared for the fields are liable to come, and as a natural consequence, the climate, or something else will disagree with them, and they will return, having cost the Board two or three thousand dollars, and in addition to this, they will tell an unfavorable tale. Let the truth be known, and truly enterprising men will come out, and the work will go on. The Board cannot exercise too much caution in sending out men. They should be useful Christians, penitent and thoughtful men, and men who are not *afraid* under ordinary indications of danger. In a word, they should be MEN as well as Christians, &c.

You asked me to write a short article for the *Journal* every time. You know Brother Taylor, a new beginner cannot satisfy his mind without having a beginning, a middle, and an ending, and by the time our article has all these appendages, it is too long for the *Journal*. To tell you the truth, a young missionary should publish very few of his ideas to the world since they are obliged to change as he learns more of the people and country. It takes a deliberate mind to take a common-sense view of things on arriving first in a new world. If you wish to publish any thing from me, you must extract from my letters to you, &c. We have had the fever, and are all well, or nearly so. The fever is a powerful disease, and would soon be fatal, but it yields very readily to Quinine and prudence. My fever was high about ten hours, and it

prostrated me completely; but I would have been well in three days had not my fever returned from taking cold. My second paroxysm was worse than the first, and reduced me very fast. It all passed off in less than a week, and my health has been very good since. Brother Phillips is a great doctor on this fever. We all have had very light attacks from one or more of three reasons. We had been taking some Quinine since stopping at Lagos until a few days before the appearance of fever. The weather was favorable, or we had good treatment. There is no apparent cause for this country to be sickly. The climate, perhaps, weakens the system by the continued heat, making it necessary for a missionary to return or travel occasionally.

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*Letter from Rev. J. M. Harden.*

We can truly sympathize with our Dear Brother in his sore trial. May the Lord bless him.

Lagos, April 9th, 1857.

*Rev. J. B. Taylor:*

MY DEAR BROTHER:—I wrote you some time ago that I thought that afflictions still awaited me; my expectations have been realized. My wife is no more. She had been sick for about twelve months, and for the last seven days she ate nothing, and I don't think she spoke one dozen words during the seven days. It is now 2 o'clock in the morning. She died about two hours ago, and she had been a professor of religion a long time. I hope that she is with Christ, which is far better. All that I can say now is, my dear brother, pray for me.

In Christ,

J. M. HARDEN.

## The Commission.

RICHMOND, SEPTEMBER, 1857.

"BUY THE TRUTH, AND SELL IT NOT."

The following letter will explain itself. The readers of the Commission will recollect the articles signed A. B. C., in Nos. 4 and 5, of Vol. I. They were slightly altered from the Essay, "Modern and Apostolic Missions Identical in Character;" a copy of which was placed at the disposal of a committee of the Board, and to which brother Cabaniss refers as having been loaned to Mr. Roberts. We believe we neglected to do brother C. the justice of stating that the publication of I. J. R. was derived from this source, without credit, and we now give the facts of the case from his own pen. P.

Shanghai, May 11th, 1857.

REV. A. M. POINDEXTER, *Cor. Sec. F.*  
M. B. S. B. C.

Dear Bro.—Your welcome letter of January 26th, 1857, came to hand by last mail. After giving the news from our friends, you say, "I suppose brother Cabaniss has seen the articles in the Commission over A. B. C., and recognized them at once." You also added, 'I have had my attention called to the fact, that the greater part of them had appeared in the Oriental Advocate, the paper of I. J. Roberts, over his own signature. I shall state in the next No. of the Commission that the articles were written years since by A. B. C., &c.' I must here inform you, that only the first number of the Commission has ever come to Shanghai, and that by a sailing vessel from New York. I am, therefore, ignorant of what productions of mine, both you and I. J. Roberts, have been publishing. Though you are both publishing them without my knowledge, you are welcome to them, if they can further the

cause of Missions, for which object they were doubtless written. I think, however, it would have been more proper in Mr. Roberts to have given me credit for them as you did, instead of publishing them over his own signature. But he may have thought it was useless to make the distinction between "mine and thine," in such small matters.

I have been quite at a loss to conjecture what it was you have been publishing. But have finally concluded it must be something which I lent Mr. Roberts to read when he and his family were staying with us here at Shanghai. I recollect lending him the manuscripts of some missionary lectures which I delivered in the United States, and also an essay entitled, "Modern and Apostolic Missions Identical in Character," which I wrote six or seven years ago, and left a copy with some of the brethren in Richmond. Probably you and Mr. Roberts have cut up this essay and published it in different numbers. If so, I hope you and he both will acknowledge through your respective papers, that you did it on your own responsibility—and thus set me right before the public.

Truly yours in Christ,  
A. B. CABANISS.

### CHINA.

We publish in this number of the Commission several articles relating to China. That from the pen of A. B. Cabaniss relates some interesting facts noted in a tour into the interior. Brother Yates furnishes the most complete account of the origin and nature of Ancestral worship which we have seen. This absurd custom presents an obstacle to the progress of the gospel among the Chinese, far more formidable than we had supposed. Yet, in some instances, it has been, along with all other adverse powers, overcome by the grace of God and the power of truth. And the day

is coming when the whole people will be freed from its destructive influence. Let us labor on and pray in assured hope. China belongs to Christ. He will claim it for his own. Recent events, as recorded in the pages of the Journal and Commission, cheer us in our work. God is blessing the efforts of our brethren. We need more men for China. Who will go? We invite special attention to the article from T., in this number. Read it, young brethren; pray for divine direction, and then, if you feel in your hearts that China has a claim upon you, let us know.

P.

### THAT WATCH.

We hope our readers will ponder well the truth set forth in the little narrative of "The Troublesome Watch." O, if Christians were only as thoughtful and conscientious as they should be, how soon would many find themselves burdened with a troublesome watch, or unable to purchase a fine collar. Let us hear from you again, brother E. W. W., and often.

P.

### ASSOCIATIONAL RECORDS.

#### APOMATTOX ASSOCIATION,

Which assembled at Sandy River, M. H., Prince Edward Co., Tuesday, August 4th. Here our beloved brother, D. Witt, is pastor. After having been for several years laid aside from the pulpit by severe and protracted illness, he has, though still feeble, been permitted to resume his labors. "In this we do rejoice." The occasion brought to our minds recollections of a mingled nature. Just twenty years before, in 1837, we attended an association here. Where now are many of those with whom we then met? Where is Goodall? Where P. P. Smith, A. A. Davidson and others, with whom we then took sweet counsel and went to the House of God in company? And



where shall I, and others now here, be, when twenty more years shall have passed away? It was designed, in 1837, to protract the meeting, but so unpropitious were the indications, that the design was abandoned. Within about a month we were sent for to go and aid brother Witt in one of the most precious revivals in which we were ever engaged. It spread to surrounding churches. Many were added to the churches; some of whom have crossed Jordan's flood, others are still in this land of pilgrimage, pressing on towards Canaan. The revival seemed to grow out of the deep and agonizing prayers of the pastor, for himself and people—originating in the manifest indifference and worldliness seen during the Association. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity."

Here we had rain in abundance, but it did not so much interfere with the interest of the meeting as we feared it would.

Brethren Sumner, Pearey, Sands, and brother C. L. Cocke, President of the Hollin's Institute, with other visitors, were present at this meeting. The business of the session was transacted with spirit and harmony. A liberal collection was taken for State and Foreign Missions, and also for colportage. The aggregate was

Brethren Sumner and Cocke were heard with reference to the claims of Richmond Female, and Hollin's Institutes, and right worthily did they represent their respective schools; not as rivals, but as sisters co-operating lovingly, in labors for the good of the gentle sex, and of society. The Lord prosper and bless them both, and incline the hearts of his people to contribute the funds needed to their completion.

After a sojourn of a day or two in Richmond, I left, on my way to the

#### ALBEMARLE ASSOCIATION,

At Mt. Moriah, Amherst County. Passing on the cars to Lynchburg, I was

met by brother C. L. Cocke, who had kindly proffered me a seat in his buggy, from that place to the Association. We reached Mt. Moriah in good time, on Tuesday morning, the 11th of August—the first day of the meeting. As brethren arrived, we had the privilege of greeting many loved associates of former days, and of forming acquaintance with a number of other brethren. One of the most valuable, as it certainly is one of the most pleasant uses of these annual gatherings, is the opportunity they offered for the re-union of Christian friends and the extension of acquaintance among the brethren.

It was the intention of the Association, in accordance with a standing resolution, to devote the second day of the meeting exclusively to devotional exercises. But as brother Cocke was compelled to leave on the afternoon of that day, it was decided to give to him and to us, an opportunity to address the brethren on the morning of Wednesday. Accordingly, after a season of prayer and praise, we pleaded as well as we could with a voice almost inarticulate from hoarseness, the cause of the perishing heathen, and received in cash and pledges, over three hundred dollars for the Board. Brother Cocke then made an interesting address regarding Hollin's Institute. We then repaired to the stand, where, hoarse as we were, we were compelled, by the arrangement, to preach to the large assembly there convened. After the sermon, a liberal collection—the precise amount we cannot state—was taken for the State Mission Board.

Having partaken of refreshments, we accompanied our good brother Cocke on his way to the

#### VALLEY ASSOCIATION,

Which met this year on the 15th of August, at the Botetourt Springs, the seat of the

#### HOLLIN'S INSTITUTE.

The location of this Institute is in a

retired and beautiful valley, with charming mountain scenery all around. Here, too, is a Spring of White Sulphur water, valuable for its medicinal qualities. The school is easily accessible, being near a turnpike road, and within seven miles of the rail-road.

Notwithstanding the sickness which caused the dispersion of the scholars last session, we are fully convinced that Botetourt Springs is as healthy a location as can be found west of the Blue Ridge. If there are any local causes for disease we are unable to perceive them.

The Institute has two large buildings, capable of accommodating well, about one hundred boarders. Besides these, there are a number of Cottages, which, temporarily, may add room for some thirty to forty others. The latter it is designed to remove as soon as funds can be obtained to erect another building. This Institution was the pioneer of efforts among the Baptists of Virginia, for the elevation of female education. Brother Cocke, the President, deserves the gratitude of every friend of female education, for his patient, persevering, and, we may add, self-denying labors, for its establishment and success. It has been, and as soon as fully opened again, for students, will be, one of the most popular and successful schools among us.

The Trustees *now* owe about \$15,000 upon the property. They have received from the public only about \$5000, and from Mr. John Hollin's, of Lynchburg, whose name the Institute now bears, \$5000. The property is worth, for the purposes for which it is designed, more than \$25,000. Some estimate it at \$40,000. An effort is now being made to raise the sum of \$15,000, to liquidate the debts. We commend the object to the liberality of our brethren of Virginia.

The Valley Association convened on Friday, August. We did not attend on the first day. On Saturday we had the

privilege of aiding in raising a subscription of \$392, and some cents, for State Missions, which was increased by a collection on Lordsday, to over \$452, and of \$350 for Foreign Missions. On Monday, brother Sumner made an interesting address in behalf of Richmond Female Institute. He was followed by an address in favor of the Hollin's Institute, and a subscription for its benefit of \$3,350, which, with about \$2,000 previously subscribed, makes more than one third of the needed \$15,000.

We trust that this meeting will be the commencement of a new era among the Baptists of the West. Never, before, was such liberality displayed by them. Indeed, the subscriptions would be creditable to any of our Associations east of the mountains. The conviction was expressed by different brethren that the time had fully come when the West must exert itself to supply its own destitution, and build up its own educational Institutions. We trust this conviction will increase, and if it shall be followed by corresponding efforts, the day is not distant when the cause of truth will advance with greatly accelerated speed among these mountains and valleys. The brethren of the East will be more ready to extend such aid as may be required of them, when they see those of the West exhibiting a self-denying liberality to provide for their own wants. The session of the Association was every way pleasant and profitable. We do not know when we have attended such a meeting, in the influence of which, there was greater occasion to rejoice.

It should be stated that other subjects, as colportage, temperance, &c., claimed the attention of the body. But we cannot further extend this article by remarking upon its action. We wish that brethren of the East would more frequently attend the anniversaries in the West, and also that those of the West would increase their visits to

the East. The intercourse would be mutually beneficial. P.

#### POTOMAC ASSOCIATION.

This Association met in Fredericksburg, on Wednesday, the 12th ult. It was pleasant to see so many familiar faces, and to mingle in the deliberations tending to enlarge the boundaries of the Redeemer's Kingdom. For three days the brethren continued to contemplate its own destitution, and the means of supply, as well as all those interests connected with the State Mission, the Marion Board, and the Foreign field. It was our privilege to plead for China and Africa, and immediately after this appeal, it was agreed that the Association will, through the Foreign Mission Board, undertake to support one missionary in Central Africa; and the acting Board of the Association were instructed to look out for a suitable man to carry out the subject of the first resolution. It was understood that the sum of one thousand dollars would be needed for the entire expense of the outfit, and continued support of such a man; and the churches will proceed to arrange for securing the amount.

We are looking to the time when this will be one of our most efficient associational bodies. T.

#### ROANOKE ASSOCIATION.

This Association convened with the Church at Pleasant Grove, Campbell Co., Virginia, on Friday, the 21st of August. There was not a full delegation, owing to the remote location of the place of meeting; it being on the extreme limit of the district. We were pleased to meet with many of the most active and liberal brethren of the body, however. We were told that there had been quite an increase of funds for religious purposes, contributed during the year. State Missions, including collections at the Association, received between 3 and \$400; Foreign, about \$300; and a collection and subscrip-

tion for colportage, amounting to near \$300, were given to brother Dickinson on Friday. Bro. J. B. Wood represented the State Mission Board; Bro. Dickinson the Sunday School and Publication Board; Bro. Sumner, Richmond Female, and Bro. Cocke, Hollin's Institutes, and Bro. Pearcey and the writer, the For. Miss. Board, So. Bap. Con. Other brethren were present as correspondents. We had quite a pleasant and profitable meeting. P.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Will correspondents ever learn that we can do nothing with their letters unless we have the name of post office and State? Inattention to this is constantly causing us annoyance. Be a little more thoughtful.

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#### GEORGIA BAPTIST CONVENTION.

We have just received a copy of the Minutes of this body, which met in Augusta the first of May. It was a season of much interest. We much mistake if a new impulse has not been given to the various objects of a benevolent nature in that great and growing State. She will fulfil her part in those labors which relate to the spread of the gospel among the heathen. This, we doubt not. Several of her associations are taking action for the support, each, of one or more missionaries. We trust the number will be increased.

T.

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#### LOUISIANA BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION.

From the Minutes of Louisiana Convention, just come to hand, we learn that its annual meeting occurred on the 3d-6th of last July. We have reason to hope that the churches of this State will take a more decided position in sending the gospel to the heathen. From the report on Foreign Missions,

we extract the following seasonable remarks:  
T.

"God has seen fit to give us, by his providential dealing, other unmistakable intimations, that it is his will that we preach the gospel to the heathen. Not many years ago, when Judson went to Burmah, it was only by submitting to dire persecution that he could remain and tell the story of the Cross. Africa was little known and little cared for; China was closed against the missionaries of Christ. Well do we remember hearing brethren in the older States, pleading with God, to break down the barriers which forbade their sending the message of love to their perishing fellow-men. God has answered and is answering their prayers. To-day Burmah is open to the preaching of the Gospel, and multitudes, who, a few years ago, were worshipping gods of their own construction, are rejoicing in Christ as their Saviour. Bowen, Livingston and Clark, and others, have gone far into the interior of Africa, and find the people willing to hear of the Saviour of sinners. The Missionaries at Canton and Shanghai, write us that as far into the interior of China, as they have yet been able to penetrate, they find the people willing to have Christ preached. Even Japan, so long excluded from communication with the rest of the world, is now being opened. Thus the field is spread out wide before us, and God is saying as it were, "Go in and possess the land." The idea has gone out to some extent, that the efforts which have been made to Christianize Africa and China have proved failures. Not so. The expectation which some seem to have entertained, that so soon as the heathen should hear the Gospel, they would, (en-masse,) receive and be governed by it, is utterly unreasonable. In our own land, where people are taught from childhood to revere and honor God, how often does the minister of the Gospel have to repeat the message of salvation before men will receive it? Is it reasonable to expect that the heathen, whose prejudices from childhood have been in favor of idolatry, should be more ready to submit to Christ? No, among pagans, as well as in Christendom, the word must be spoken and reiterated until man can be persuaded to believe."

## ART THOU JESUS CHRIST'S MAN?

BY REV. J. D. KNOWLES.

The following stirring appeal on behalf of the mission cause, is founded upon the eager inquiry once made by a poor heathen to a distinguished missionary: "Art Thou Jesus Christ's Man?"

Art thou Jesus Christ's man?  
Redeemed by precious blood?  
Baptized into his death, and raised  
In emblem from the flood?  
Dost thou heed his last command—  
"Preach my word in every land?"

Art thou Jesus Christ's man:  
His image dost thou bear—  
His love for guilty man, his zeal,  
His self denial share?  
Canst thou see the heathen die,  
Hear unmoved his wailing cry?

Art thou Jesus Christ's man?  
Thyself hast freely given,  
To live for Him alone, till He  
Shall call the home to heaven.  
And wilt thou still refuse to go,  
To rescue men from endless woe?

Art thou Jesus Christ's man?  
And does he let thee live,  
Where freedom, peace and plenty  
reign?  
And dost thou grudge to give  
Thy gold, to speed the gospel flight,  
And fill the world with truth and light?

Art thou Jesus Christ's man?  
This question thou must meet,  
When thou with all mankind, shall  
stand  
Before His judgment seat.  
How then wilt thou endure His eye,  
And what! Oh! what, wilt thou reply?

## INDIVIDUAL DUTY.

"OCCUPY TILL I COME."

*By the Rev. James Smith, Cheltenham,  
England.*

The Lord gives talents to the whole of his servants. To some five, to some two, and to some one. Or he distri-

butes his money; each receives a pound, and each is expected to turn it to account. The talents are to be employed, in order to be improved and increased. He that hath, and employs his talent, improves it; and to him that hath employed and improved it, shall be given, and he shall have abundance. We may know what we have, but we do not know what it may become if diligently employed. The industrious tradesman may begin with a very small capital, but by "tact and push" he may become one of our merchant princes; born in a hired cottage, he may end his days in a mansion of his own; in youth obliged to borrow of others; in age able to lend to many. So it is in Christ's kingdom; we rise by degrees, and rise only by diligence, devotedness and zeal. Every servant has some *talent*; not one is left without; if he has not five pounds, he has at least one, and that one is to be employed.

Some have a talent to *teach* children to read, and to unfold to their minds the gospel of the blessed God. This is an important talent; not so splendid as some, but perhaps quite as useful. Its place is *not the napkin*, but the school room. It is to be feared, that while there are many of our schools languishing or kept small for want of teachers, there are many in our churches and congregations who have this talent, but consider themselves exempted from the command to use it. They are too "respectable," that is, they are too proud. They work too hard in the week; that is, they may spend all their energies in the world and for the flesh, and then be excused, because none are left to be employed for Jesus. They are—but time would fail to notice the innumerable excuses made for idleness, pride, selfishness, and carnality in its thousand forms. If you can teach, and do not, be sure, on good grounds, that your Lord does not want you, or expect you to teach. If you did teach, but have given it up, be sure that you have your

Lord's warrant, signed by his own hand, for quitting the field. Children are growing up in ignorance, young people are going to hell in droves, and you wrap your talent in a napkin, and spend your Lord's day in self-indulgence and criminal ease. This is not obeying the command, "*Occupy till I come.*"

Some have a talent for *preaching*, lay preaching, to congregations gathered in neglected and destitute neighborhoods, but not for the pastoral office, and they are required to preach; but because they have not a splendid gift, they settle down, and the poor may go to hell if every one acts as they do. We know how the flesh cries out, the distance is great, the weather may be bad, the cottage room is inconvenient, the congregation is small; or, I have tried, but seemed to have preached in vain. Look at Jesus himself, when he went through the towns and villages preaching. Did he flinch because of weather, distance, inconvenience, or even want of success? No, his Father's will was his rule; and to glorify his Father's name was his highest end. Look at the apostles, persecuted, defamed, made a spectacle and a gazing stock to angels and to men; did they throw up their commission, wrap up their talent in the napkin, and ingloriously quit the field? No, they all acted upon the principle which caused one to exclaim, in reference to bonds and imprisonment, "None of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry that I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Over kind wives, and over tender parents, by persuasions keep many at home for their own gratification, who ought to be employed in publishing the good news of a free salvation to poor ignorant sinners. The flesh, which ought to be crucified, is indulged; the devil, who ought to be resisted, is attended to; and

so the work of the Lord is neglected, and our villages and hamlets are left in darkness, ignorance and death. How many sit and hear sermons month after month, who ought to go out and preach them! If they can preach once a week, and there is any place needing the gospel at hand, they ought to preach it; and if they can only preach once a month they ought to do that. How different would be the state of the country if every Christian had laid out his talent instead of laying it up! Reader, could you speak of Jesus, in plain English, for twenty minutes, to a dozen or a score of poor neighbors? Is there any village, or suburb, or back street, or dark district in your town, where you may so speak? If so do you use your talent? If not, are you justified in burying your Lord's money in the earth? Are you attending to his command, "*Occupy till I come?*"

Some have a talent for *writing*, and they could write letters full of simple gospel, accompanied with pointed appeals, loving exhortations, and urgent entreaties. To such Jesus says, "*Occupy till I come!*" Some can engage in *vocal prayer*; this is talent, and should be employed. Nor should a nervous feeling, or fear of not shining before others, cause any one to wrap it in the napkin. Some have a talent for *singing*; God has given them a voice, an ear, and grace in the heart, and this talent should be used for God's glory. Some have a talent for *conversation*; they can interest and impress others when they talk with them; they should be careful to speak of Jesus, and try and win souls for him. Some could, by *visiting and persuasion*, induce persons to attend public worship who neglect it; and they should endeavor to crowd the house. Some have money, that is talent, and God requires that we use it for him. Reader, I know not what talent you have, but you have some. It may be only one, or it may be several. Are you using your talent

for Jesus? Are you filling a place in the field, performing a work in the world, or, in the words of the text, are you occupying until Jesus comes?

*Every talent brings with it responsibility.* It is given us for the good of others. We are bound to use it. We must give an account of what we have done with it. Every one of us is bound by the command of Jesus. He is our lawful King. We are his subjects, whom he has redeemed by his blood from a fearful doom, that we may do his will, glorify his name on earth, and then reign with him in heaven. We are bound to use our talents—the *whole* of them—and to use them industriously, hopefully, and because our Lord requires us to do so, and will soon come, demand an account, and reward every one of us according to his works. Authority—his authority—binds us, but gratitude should constrain us to do all we can for his glory and praise. Reader, what has Jesus done for thee? Dost thou know? What art thou doing for Jesus? Are you ashamed to say? What might you do? What has Jesus promised you? Can you guess? Nay, it is so great and glorious, that it has not entered into the heart of man to conceive. Can you expect so much from him, and yet manifest so little love, and be satisfied to do so little for him? Take down the napkin, unwrap the talent, put the money in the bank, and get the interest ready against the Master comes. Can you teach? Let the next Lord's day find you in the Sunday School. Can you preach? Look out for some neglected village, or blind lane or alley, and begin at once to

"Tell to sinners round  
What a dear Saviour you have found."

Can you write? Write at once to one or more with a view to save the soul. Can you pray vocally? Be sure and be regular at the prayer meeting. Can you sing? Let the church and congregation have the benefit of your voice.

Can you converse? Visit on purpose to speak of Jesus. Can you induce children to come to the Sunday School, or adults to come and hear the gospel? Try. Begin at once. Let no one near you have to say, "I was never asked to go to church. No one ever invited my children to go to school. No one ever spoke to me about my soul." Have you money? Give a fair proportion to God's cause, to carry on his glorious work in the world. This will be to carry out the Lord's command, "*Occupy till I come!*"

Let each one of us ask, "First, Do I know what talent I have? Have I examined? Did I ever try if I could teach, preach, pray, sing, write, converse, or induce persons to seek the salvation of their souls? Secondly, Do I realize my responsibility for the use of the talent or talents with which the Lord has entrusted me? Thirdly, Am I zealously employing my whole talent for the Lord? Fourthly, Am I expecting my Lord's return; and, therefore, endeavoring so to live, so to act, and so to work, as to be ready to meet him, and present my account to him? Fifthly, Is my talent, or any part of it, in the napkin? Methinks there were never so many napkins in use in the church of God as now. We have napkins of all sorts, and all sizes. They look so white, they are folded so tastefully, they are laid up so carefully, that few suspect what they are made of, what they contain, or that they will bring shame and confusion upon their owners at last. It is to these napkins that we must ascribe our want of lay preachers, Sunday School teachers, tract distributors, sick visitors, praying brethren, good singing, useful conversation, crowded chapels, and full exchequers. Whatever the Lord may find in my possession when he comes, may he never find a napkin; he left his own buried in his tomb, and what a mercy it would be if every one found in the church were buried there too!

## Other Missions.

### CHINA.

#### AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSIONARY UNION.

The Union have missions at Hong-kong and Ningpo. Rev. Mr. Knowlton, one of their missionaries says, concerning the first named station:

"You remark in your communication of Oct. 13th, that the brethren have inferred too much from an incidental allusion to the possibility of relinquishing the Hong-kong mission! I have not inferred any such suicidal and injurious work as that. I am heartily glad to learn that the Committee have taken no steps to that end. I earnestly hope they never will. Every port in China is a great centre, from which millions may be reached with the gospel. Hong-kong I regard as an important field. It extends its influence and has a footing beyond the island, upon the main land, and converts are multiplying among the villages. The church has about doubled the number of members that the Ningpo church has.

"The mission cause in China is destined to go forward and triumph, though it is in many respects the hardest field in the world, and though Baptists may be rejected of God as unworthy of a part in the glorious work. I cannot but hope that though the present prospects of the operations of the Union in China are so dark, the members of churches which claim to be so pure in their organization, and so "apostolic" in all their principles, will ere long become conscious of their ability and obligation to take a front rank among the hosts marshalling for the spiritual conquest of this vast empire."

Dr. Macgowan, of the same mission, thus refers to the insurgent party and its operations:

"The semi-religious insurrection has reached a crisis in its history. Intestine quarrels have resulted in the mas-

sacre of thousands of their bravest men, and in the execution of their ablest chiefs. It is supposed, as the chief authors of the blasphemy and imposture which have characterized the party are among the slain, and as the survivors are less dangerous men, that an improvement may be looked for. Time will disclose also whether the surviving chiefs possess the requisite military skill and administrative ability to continue the movement.—Many missionaries fear that, if successful in overturning the reigning dynasty, the party of Hung Siutsuen Taiping will be detrimental to the cause of truth. We are more hopeful. That chief, the originator of the party, still survives, and appears to have been the dupe of impostors. Certain it is, that it was during his absence that the Thistle Mount church became infected with heresy, and that he was controlled by the arch-blasphemer, who finally perished in grasping after the nominal sovereignty of the body, whose virtual chief he had long been. No Koran or book of Morman has been issued, nor have the Sacred Scriptures suffered mutilation at their hands. Accepting the Bible as a standard of appeal, the new government, if ever permanently established, can not fail, we should think, to exert an influence for good on the destinies of all Eastern Asia.”

#### GERMANY.

Mr. Lehmann, of the German mission, remarks:

“The Lord’s wonderful dealing is exhibited in East Prussia, where the germ, planted in humility and hope, has yielded glorious fruit. There is no field of labor where the truth, as it is in Jesus, has spread so widely and become rooted so deeply. In the neighborhood of Königsberg—embracing the churches of Memel, Rositten, Stolzenberg, Elbing and Goyden—are 101 preaching stations, and 1,141 church

members. These all strongly desire to have a centre in Königsberg, where at present only thirteen scattered members reside.

“Our churches in Prussia are twenty-two in number, out-stations 257, members 2,744; increase last year, 261.”

The same writer refers to an interesting baptismal scene:

“An early prayer-meeting was held at the chapel. At nine o’clock, I preached to a crowded congregation, from Acts 4; 8–14. Church meeting followed, when a considerable number were examined, and most of them received as candidates for baptism. In the afternoon I preached from John 20; 1,—Mary at the sepulchre. Again a rich blessing was enjoyed. At an adjourned church meeting, the examination of candidates was continued, and several more received. In the evening we proceeded for the administration of baptism, a long distance into the country, to the estate of one of our brethren, where, at my first visit, several years ago, I preached in a barn to the assembled throng. Near it was the baptistery, a pond through which a brook winds its way, surrounded by steep, green banks, bordered with hedges, and rising on every side like an amphitheatre. Hearing a noise, and seeing some persons behaving very rudely, we feared that a disturbance would be attempted. Br. Weist was requested by some to postpone the ordinance till early the next morning; but he was firm in his resolution. While he addressed the candidates in the house and made preparation, I arranged that our members, who were there in vast numbers, should mingle themselves generally among the people and separate them. Our fears all subsided when br. Weist, the pastor, appeared in his baptismal dress, leading one of the candidates in white, and followed by a long procession of the rest—all in white. The imposing scene evi-



dently impressed the spectators, and a great calm and the strictest attention prevailed. Mr. Weist, after a very clear and powerful address, proceeded into the water, baptizing successfully seventeen candidates, with due dignity. We thanked God fervently that he had overruled the scorn of our enemies, and granted us such tranquillity and peace. I afterwards addressed the baptized in the midst of a crowded assembly, in the house, and praying and laying on of hands, and a hymn closed the memorable scene and the memorable day. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul.'"

### BURMAH.

Referring to a quarterly meeting, Rev. Mr. Van Meter observes:

"There was a good attendance at the quarterly meeting, though not so large as on former occasions, when the place of meeting was more central. Several of the preachers were detained by sickness in their families, or by other urgent duties; but most of the absentees reported, by letter or otherwise, the reasons of their absence.

"There is nothing of special interest to be noted in the accounts from the churches; but neither is there any 'diminution of interest or effort' in the service and work of the Lord. Several report new worshippers and baptisms. The whole number of baptisms for the quarter is 120. Of this number, forty-seven are reported from two of the Pwo churches. Twenty of these I had the privilege of baptizing a few weeks since at Tee Hai, the new and growing church in Shwey Loung, the large Pwo district, lying about midway between Bassein and Rangoon.

"Forty were baptised at Po Dau during the meeting, not a few of whom are from Lay-Myet-Na, away in the extreme north of the Bassein district, and of whom mention was made in our last annual report. At that time a number had fully decided to become Christians;

the missionary has since continued to labor among them, and these are the first fruits."

### BOOK NOTICES.

Absence from the office prevented us from noticing, at the proper time, that excellent Quarterly, the *Christian Review*. We trust that all our readers who do not take the *Review* will mail three dollars, the subscription price, to the publishers, brethren Wilson & Taylor, of Baltimore, and secure a copy. They will be richly repaid by the perusal of the many valuable articles which it contains. The *Review* has lost nothing of its value by the late change of Editors and proprietors; and we trust will gain much in patronage at the South, without lessening its circulation North, by having taken up its abode in the monumental city.

The same cause, absence, must plead our excuse for the delay of other notices, which we now give.

*Lectures on Temperance.* By ELIPHALET NORT, D.D., LL.D., President of Union College. With an Introduction by TAYLER LEWIS, LL.D., Professor of Greek in Union College. Edited by AMASA MCCOY, late Editor of the *Prohibitionist*. New York: Sheldon, Blakeman & Co., &c.

It is seldom that a book comes before the public with three such names as those upon the title page of this volume. Dr. Nott has long since established his reputation as a scholar, a man of patient research, and a real philanthropist. His *Temperance Lectures* are a standard classic in the department of our literature. Without endorsing all his views, or concurring in some of his statements, we regard the work as invaluable, and almost indispensable to those who would understand the *Temperance Question* fully. The Introduction, by Professor Lewis, is a lucid and able *resumé* of the arguments presented in the lectures. The Appendix contains several valuable articles, especially the table of texts, in which wine is mentioned in the Old Testament. The book is in the usual attractive style of the publishers, Messrs. Sheldon, Blakeman & Co., to whom we tender our thanks for a copy.

To the same firm we are indebted for

Vols. II. and III. of OLSHAUSEN'S COMMENTARIES. Of the value of the work, and the attractive manner in which it is gotten up, we have already expressed our opinion. The more we examine it the more highly do we prize it. The third volume, (on the New Testament,) brings the Commentary down to the Romans vii. ch., 6 v. We advise all our brethren who can afford it, to purchase this book; and if there are ministers who cannot, we advise their brethren to procure it for them. It would form a valuable and acceptable present to any intelligent minister. P.

*Sketch of the Life and Ministry of Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.* From original documents, &c. New York: Sheldon, Blakeman & Co., &c.

We have read this book with interest as (though meager and unsatisfactory in its details,) the best, in fact the only reliable, account of Spurgeon which we have seen. The introductory chapter contains a narrative of the origin of the new Park street church. It is a descendant, in regular succession, from one of the oldest Baptist churches in London; and, in the line of its ancestry, enjoyed successively the ministry of Keach, Simpton, Gill, Rippon, and other "giants" of those days.

All who have read Spurgeons sermons, (and who that reads at all has not,) will wish to see this memoir of the man; and we are sure no one will regret purchasing it. We are indebted to the publishers for this volume also. These works, and other publications of the same firm, may be had of Wortham & Cottrell of this city. P.

*Idaline; or the Mission of a Short Life.*

By Mrs. C. W. DENISON, author of *Carrie Hamilton*, &c. American Baptist Publication Society, Philadelphia.

We have this work from the Society, through Messrs. Wortham & Cottrell, of whom it can be procured. We tender our thanks for it, though we could have wished that the first work sent us by them had been such as to meet our unqualified approbation. We had always rather praise than censure. The object of *Idaline* is valuable to illustrate the power of maternal influence, and of simple hearted, earnest piety. Of the former, the history of the "Widow Cornish" furnishes a most

terrible, and that of *Idaline's* mother, a most pleasing example; of the latter, *Idaline*, the heroine of the volume, (to write in fashionable phrase,) is a captivating and impressive impersonation. We have been interested, and we trust profited, by the book. The style is easy and flowing, but there is too much effort at *fine writing*, too great profusion of epithets, a want of just discrimination in the choice of words, and a want of naturalness in the grouping of incidents. But who would find fault with a gifted and earnest-hearted Christian lady in her efforts to benefit her generation and glorify her Lord. We commend the work to our readers. P.

*A Sermon Preached to the Students of the United Baptist Institute, at Taylorsville, N. C., June 4th, 1857.* By Rev. J. McDANIEL, at the request of the Ciccronean Society of the Institute. "Run speak to this young man," Zech. ii. ch., 4 v.

We have received of the author a copy of this sermon, for which we tender our thanks. The topics discussed are important, and urged with perspicuity and energy. We observe some inaccuracies in the selection of words, and too free a use of italics. To render these valuable for emphasis they must be sparingly introduced; and their frequent recurrence disfigures the typography. The sermon is a good one, well worth the perusal, not only of young men, but of all classes. P.

THE REVISED EDITION OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS; from the press of the American Bible Union, is a beautiful specimen of typography, and an invaluable aid to the understanding of this rich portion of the Word of God. In the volume before us, we have the Common and Revised versions, and the Greek text, in parallel columns; with copious critical notes at the foot of the page. We believe that the labors of the Union, with some abatement, have been productive of valuable results, and we think it is destined to do a work which will exert a powerful and salutary influence upon the interpretation of the Scriptures, even should its version never supersede that in common use. We thank the Secretary for this and other specimens, and would be glad to receive all their publications. P.

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