

THE INDIAN ADVOCATE.

"AND THE DEEPEST SHALL REJOICE AND BLOSSOM AS THE ROSE."

BY THE BOARD OF INDIAN MISSIONS.]

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THE INDIAN ADVOCATE

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From the Macedonians.
Short Sermon, No. 10.

"Now, therefore, perform the doing of it; that, as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have."—2 Cor. 8:11

The missionary enterprise has, in all ages, been beset with essentially the same difficulties. Men are constantly liable to forget their obligations to God, and yield to the seductions of selfish worldliness. Hence the necessity for incessant effort, in order to arouse them to the remembrance and practice of their duty.

Even the Apostle Paul was not exempt from the very trials which encompass the friend of Christian benevolence, at the present day. He very soon had occasion to know that there was a great difference between passing resolutions and acting in conformity to them; between willing and doing. Among the Corinthians there was sufficient readiness to will, but by no means a corresponding readiness to perform. He found it necessary, therefore, to address to them the motives of the gospel, at precisely this juncture. How cogent are the reasons which he offers, and what faultless model do they present for our imitation, when placed in similar circumstances.

1. He presents to them the example of the Macedonian churches, who, under great trial of affliction, and in deep poverty, had even beyond their power, contributed to the cause of Christ. They had not waited to be urged to their duty, but had collected a contribution themselves, and had pressed it upon the acceptance of the Apostle. What a blessed sight was this. How truly were these churches cities set upon an hill! How must the wretched, selfish idolaters among them, have confessed that here were principles in exercise such as they had never seen before! "Hervin is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit."

2. He informs them that he offers no commendation on this subject. He merely gives his advice. But he lets them know that the case does not rest here. Benevolence to the saints was a duty which they owed not to him, but to Christ. Jesus had given them the example. "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor; that ye, through his poverty, might be rich." If we love Christ, we shall love to do as Christ did; say, to do it, not as a matter of duty merely, but of gratitude and affection. Let a man think of this. If he can remember the love of Christ, and then turn away and refuse to cherish compassion to perishing souls, he is no disciple of Christ. "If a man see his brother in need, and have no compassion, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

3. And yet, while the Apostle urges this motive, he is far from manifesting any inconsiderateness. He only asks them to perform according to that which every man hath. He does not desire them to go beyond their means. All that he asks, is, that every one should act conscientiously according as God hath prospered him. He will know, that if the disciples would all act on this principle, there would be no want

of means for all the purposes of Christian benevolence.

4. The Apostle was considerate in another respect. He singles justice with his motives to charity. He does not believe in having all the charity of Christians done by a few, while the rest stand by, all the day long, and it may be finding fault with those who are spending their own money, while the fault-finders had never contributed a single shilling. He declares it as his notion, that where men are united in a common cause, every one of them is bound in duty to aid in it. It is meant to shroud from bearing our part of a common burden, which we profess to have assumed just as much as our brethren. I mean not, say he, that when men be eased and ye burdened, but that there be an equality. This is surely just and merciful. This is the Apostle's views of Christian benevolence.

Christian brethren, is there anything in this that has an application to our own case?

1. There has been among the Baptists in the United States, a very prompt readiness to will. We have passed resolutions in the most liberal manner. We have promised to give to any amount that the cause of Christ demanded. We have urged our Committee to go forward. At our meetings of the former Convention, and of the present Union, we have prayed, and wept, and promised. It would seem as though the whole riches of the denomination were to be poured into the treasury of the Lord. Not a State Convention is held, at which these promises are not renewed. This is all right. The cause of Christ demands this, and we feel it to be so. But the cause of Christ is just as precious when we return home, as it was when we spoke at these meetings. Pastors pledged themselves to labor for missions among their people. They declared that they would neglect the monthly concert no longer. They resolved that they would circulate the Missionary Magazine and the Macedonian, and other vehicles of religious information, among the people. These were good resolutions. They were solemnly made. They were publicly made. "Now, therefore, brethren, perform the doing of them." As there was a readiness to will, let there be a performance out of that which ye have.

2. Consider the liberality of others. Our brethren in England, for example, comparatively poor, pressed down with the support of an established church, in addition to their own, very far exceed us in liberality. The Moravians, very few, and by no means wealthy, exceed in missionary liberality and zeal, every other church in Christendom. But let us come nearer home. The very converts whom we have been the means of reclaiming from paganism, together with our brethren who are laboring among them, set us an example which should put us to shame. There is not a Baptist church, so far as I know, in the world, which has, in proportion to its means, contributed so liberally as the church at Maulmain and those in the Karen jungles. In a great trial of affliction, their deep poverty has abounded unto the riches of their liberality. Brethren, can we see this, and not stir up ourselves to follow their example?

3. But we would not urge you from this motive alone. Consider the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. From what motives you may act, if this be wanting, your charity is not an offering

to God. It may be kind and benevolent, but it is not pious. Do you give, my brethren, from this motive? When you add to your wealth, do you ask, "In what manner can I best dispose of this in order to please Christ? When you receive your wages for labor, do you remember the trials and labors of the Son of God for you? When an opportunity presents itself to aid the cause of Christ, do you go and ask Christ to teach you what you shall do, and do you obey his intimation? This is to obey Christ. Do you never try to escape from giving to Christ at all, and feel as though you had done a very shrewd thing, if you could find an excuse from being present at a meeting for contribution, or if you can keep out of a collector's way? And if you are obliged to give something, do you not first estimate every other expense, and then calculate upon the very least mite, that you can give to Christ? Do you go to bed, reader? Are you Christ's servant, or the servant of mammon? You may doubt; but can any one else?

4. In this matter there should be an equality. We all profess to be engaged in the work, we ought to all act with Christian honor. It is a shame for our great denomination to throw this whole labor upon the missionaries abroad, and a comparatively few churches at home. Yet such, to a considerable degree, has been the case among us. Brethren, who feel for the cause of Christ among the heathen, have been obliged to give to it, not only beyond their proportion, but to such an extent as to deprive themselves of the power of giving to many other causes, which they are bound to cherish. Let all this, then, be done away. Let there be an equality. Let us with one heart and soul give ourselves first to the Lord, and then to our brethren, by the will of God. Brethren, suffer the word of exhortation. Let us meditate on these things, and I am sure that we shall think and act in union.

REVIVALS AMONG THE CHEROKEES.

Brother Evan Jones, in a letter dated Cherokee, Aug. 3, 1847, gives the following most encouraging intelligence:

"Our native brethren have been greatly blessed in their labors during the past four months. Many of their meetings have been favored with the presence of God. From April 11 to August 1, sixty-three Cherokees, twenty-one males, and forty-two females, have been added to the professed disciples of the Saviour on profession of their faith in him.

The church at Delaware Town had a meeting, which commenced on Saturday, July 17, and continued till nearly noon on Monday the 19th. It was a reviving season. The members of the church appeared to be refreshed in the presence of the Lord. Our native brethren spoke of the love of Jesus, and urged sinners to flee to him, with an earnestness and anunction that produced deep feeling in the assembly.

"On Monday morning, after prayers, we spent two or three hours in free conversation on various passages, in the Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians, Titus and Philemon, and the Epistle of Jude, lately published, in tract form, in Cherokee. The questions of many of the brethren furnished evidence that they read with attention, and bestowed serious thoughts on the truths presented to them. The tracts were received with avidity. I hope that, as the field of their spiritual war becomes enlarged, their faith, their

hope, their joys, and their deportments, will be elevated and invigorated.

Brother Downing's account of the meeting of the Union at Cincinnati, was exceedingly gratifying and encouraging to our native brethren and sisters. After he had concluded, it was determined, unanimously, to do all that can be done to excite and cherish the missionary spirit.

"In a conference of the leading brethren, it was determined that the duty of churches to support regular pastors, so far as they are able, ought to be carefully taught, and distinctly, and earnestly pressed on the attention of the members of our churches.

"Several of the brethren went to Verdigris, to attend a meeting of three days in that western settlement of the nation, commencing on Friday, July 23d. By a note from brother Ozanaya, I learn that their meeting was very interesting. The preachers spoke with liberality and earnestness, and the people gave anxious attention.

"Our brethren, Lewis Downing and Tanenole, give quite an encouraging account of a tour of twelve days to the south. At several places they found large congregations, and serious attention. Many appear to be under deep concern. At Lee's Creek, in particular, there seems to be a peculiar awakening in many families. There are some other places at which a lively interest in spiritual things is manifested.

Magazine.

NEED OF PRAYER.

We cannot succeed without God's help, which we obtain by prayer. Now, brethren in the ministry, and brethren out of the ministry, let us, this year, take up a determination, that henceforward these shall be more earnest and united prayer. Let us hear the voices that come to us from every quarter. "Brethren pray for us!" The Directors, amidst their arduous labors, pressing difficulties, and sore trials, say, "Brethren pray for us!" The Secretaries, under deep perplexity, with solemn responsibility, say, "Brethren pray for us!" The missionaries, amidst insalubrious climates, with careworn constitutions and great discouragements, say, "Brethren pray for us!" The missionary churches, amidst idolatry perpetually tempting them to relax and to apostatize, say, "Brethren pray for us!" The whole world, groaning and travailing together until now, if not by the voice of entreaty, yet by the extremity of their misery, say, "Brethren pray for us!" Whatever storms roll over us,—and we may expect them,—yet in the progress of our history, prayer is the conductor that extracts the soul from the cloud, and guides it innocently to its grave in the earth. Whatever difficulties we may yet have before us, they must be overcome. I see the cloud of commercial embarrasment, darker every hour, rising upon the horizon of our country, in the shadow of which all our institutions must, more or less, be involved. The spirit of fidelity and false philosophy are working their way throughout the world. Worldly-mindedness, luxury, soft effeminacy are encroaching the church of Christ.—Tahiti is gone from us; Madagascar is closed; the stations in South Africa are partly disabled from their usual work. But let me see the church of God rising in the power of faith and prayer, and I cast my fears to the wind. I am full of hope for the cause, assured as I am, that the impotent, lame, combined intercessions of a praying church will soon be swallowed up in the halliuhaha of a redeemed world.—Rev. J. A. Jones.

