

N. D. Free

THE INDIAN ADVOCATE.

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

By the Board of Indian Missions.

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THE INDIAN ADVOCATE

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The Religion and Superstition of the North American Indians.

It is interesting as well as painful to contemplate the religious notions and superstitions of the North American Indians. Like most barbarous and rude nations, who have not had the light of Christianity spread before them, they have a belief in superior beings or spirits who exercise a controlling influence over them; and, like the ancient Athenians whom Paul addressed, they in some mode or other erect their altars "to the unknown God." And though their ideas with regard to the immortality of the soul are vague and undefined, they all have the basis of such a doctrine, and all believe that the spirit within them will exist in some condition or other after the death of the body. Having none to declare unto them the true character of God "when they ignorantly worship," they bow down to "things seen and temporal," as the nearest approach they know how to make to those which are "invisible and eternal." Hence their altars are paid to the sun, or moon, or the ocean, or a high mountain, or a vast lake, or a great river, or a roaring cataract, or the dawning day, or the mighty wind, or the earthquake beneath their feet, the thunder-torrent over their heads, or any thing that wears the impress of vastness, mystery, or power.

Still more crude, among some nations and tribes, are their ideas of material creation, and of the origin of man and nations. The Iroquois, for example, have a tradition that they originated as follows:

"In ancient times they had a large fish, which having turned down, a great geyser and blowing were heard among the waters. They looked, and beheld a man stand up from the water! Hence the name *Pigeon*—a man coming out of the water, or made of water."

A tribe west of the Rocky Mountains, called "Carries," have this tradition respecting the formation of the earth and the origin of the human race:

"A star at first overpowered the face of the world, which was a plain surface. At the top of the water a mountain was arising about in different directions. At length he concluded to dive to the bottom, to see what he could find, on which to subsist; but he found nothing but mud, a little of which he brought in his mouth, and placed it on the surface of the water, where it remained. He then went for more mud, and placed it with that already brought up; and he continued his operations until he had formed a considerable hill. This land increased by degrees, until it occupied a large portion of the world, which assumed at length its present form. The earth in process of time became peopled in every part, and remained in this condition for many years. Afterwards a fire ran over it all, and destroyed every human being, except one man and one woman. They moved themselves by going into a deep cave in a large mountain, where they remained for several days, until the fire was extinguished. They then came forth from their hiding-place; and from these two persons the whole earth has been peopled."

Among some of the tribes, however, their traditions and customs afford strong arguments in favor of the opinion now held by every one, that the North American Indians are descendants of the earliest tribes of Israel. For instance, what a striking resemblance is there between the following, and the account given by Moses of the creation of man: "Then, one of the chiefs of the Sun, or Shash, stated to Major Hutton, that his people 'believed that the Great Spirit, in the first place, quailed from the dirt of the earth two men; but finding these alone would not answer his purpose, he took from each man a rib, and made two women.' From these three sprung all red men. That the place where they were created our Missionaries visited. That they were all one nation until they be-

lieved so badly that the Great Spirit came among them and talked different languages to them, which caused them to separate into four different nations."

The points of coincidence here are so numerous and so direct, that it seems impossible to resist the conclusion that the traditions of these people must have been handed down from those who had received the Mosaic account. First, that the man was created from the dirt of the earth. Second, that the man was created before the woman. Third, that the woman was made from a portion of the man. Fourth, that the particular portion of the man used for that purpose was the rib. Fifth, that they were one nation till they "behave badly." Sixth, that they were separated by the Great Spirit into different nations. And seventh, that the means used both causes for their separation and dispensing was the confusion of their languages.

The Indians make great use of tobacco in their religious as well as social ceremonies. They not only smoke the "calumet of peace" with their friends, but they on all occasions offer tobacco as an incense to their gods, and think it the most acceptable sacrifice both to the Good Spirit and the Evil Spirit. In passing on their canoes the sublime ceremony of the "Pictured Rock," on the shore of Lake Superior, they paddle in breathless silence, and cast tobacco into the lake to keep the spirit of the waters quiet till they are past the scene of danger. They throw tobacco into the air to still the tempest and the winds and into the rivers, the lakes, and the ocean to quiet the raging waves. And even when they smoke for personal or social enjoyment as a general custom, "the first puff is offered, intended for the Great Spirit, as an act of homage to him; the next is to their mother earth, whence they derive their food and other sustenance; the third is bestowed on the spirits of their dead, with the intention of their good will to their living friends."

They are generally earnest and devoted to their deities, and some of their ideas are highly refined and poetical. It is said of the Shawanese: "They fancy that the Divine Being, or the Great Spirit, comes and sings in their religious meetings, and if they do not hear his still, small voice, they conclude their sacrifices are not accepted."

Their reverence for the Great Spirit is of the highest character. It is said of the Cherokees: "They never profane the name of God in their own language; and that they have no words in their language to express such profanity."

A person who visited a tribe of the Ojegas speaks of twenty years ago, as an agent for the government, gives an interesting incident of their worship. He says "their village was built so compactly as Boston, and the centre of a vast prairie. All the warriors, chiefs, and young men met so two miles from the town, surrounded on good horses, and as fine as they had feathers or anything else to make them. The Ojegas town consisted of one hundred and fifty dwellings, with from ten to fifteen in each house. Very few white people had ever been among them. They are entirely in a state of nature. They know nothing of the use of money; nor do they use any sacred spirits. I picked my tent about half a mile from the town, and remained five days. They made dances and plays every night to amuse themselves. These Indians have a native religion of their own. At day-break, every morning, I could hear them at prayer, for an hour. They appeared to be so devout in their way as any class of people."

But even among different tribes of the same nation, their habits, religious notions, and moral character, are very various. Mr. Paine, in 1822, speaks of another tribe of the Ojegas, with whom he spent some time, as follows: "The moral darkness, in which this people are involved, is greater than has been communicated to the Christian world. It has been consistently reported, that they worship God, and acknowledge him as the great first cause of all things. This, however, will, I believe, be found to be a misapprehension. From the best information I can obtain, it appears that they are an idolatrous race, and that they worship the sun, the earth, the moon, the thunder, and the stars. They worship these creatures of God, as deities. If asked who made the sun, moon, earth, &c., they cannot tell."

It is evident that they have no knowledge of Him who made the heavens, and the earth, and all things that are therein." The same writer represents this tribe as being "so badly fixed in their habits and degraded in their minds."

It cannot close this brief article more appropriately than by quoting the following passage from a sermon delivered by a clergyman of Massachusetts, a species of a sermon, "I hear the voice of the savage, crying from the bosom of the wilderness. And there is in that cry a wild, native eloquence; it says, 'you have stripped us of our hunting ground, all in life that we hold dear; you have corrupted our morals; our talents, already lamely diminished, have nothing left us but the dreary ledges of being swallowed up, unless it be the most fearful apprehension of perishing for ever in our sin. Once we were the heirs of your fall; we now only ask to die the heirs of that salvation which is revealed to you in your Bibles.'"

We are God's Stewards.

From "Dabbie's Thoughts on Missions," we extract a paragraph, to which the attention of all our readers is earnestly invited. It contains a sentiment of unsustained importance, and yet it is one, concerning which, thought is seldom exercised. Many do not recognize the Divine Being as the Proprietor of all they possess, and of those who professedly admit the doctrine, how few act as if they believed it! Let all ponder well the following thought:—*Editor Commission.*

Suppose a steward, agent or clerk, in the management of your money, your estate or your goods, devotes only a part to your benefit, and uses the rest for himself, how long would you retain him in your employment? Let us suppose, then, that we are not God's agents, but that he has bestowed on us, as God has an indisputable right to every thing in our possession; to all our strength, all our influence, every moment of our time, and demands that every thing be held loosely by us, in perfect obedience to him.

No less exigent certainly can be required of God's stewards, than worldly men exhibit in the pursuit of wealth and honor. Let us, then, look at their conduct and learn a lesson. They are intent upon their object. They rise early and sit up late. Constant toil and vigorous exertion fill up the day, and on their beds at night they meditate plans for the morrow. Their hearts are set on their object, and entirely engrossed in it. They show a determination to attain it, if it be within the compass of human means. Enter a Merchant's Exchange, and see with what fixed application they study the best plans of conducting their business. They keep their eyes and ears open, and their thoughts active. Such, too, must be the watchfulness of an agent, or they will not employ him. Notice also the physician who strives to eminence. He tries the utmost of his skill. Look in, too, upon the ambitious attorney. He applies his mind steadily to his case that he may manage it in the best possible way.

Now, ask, shall not the same intense and active state of mind be required of us, as God's agents or stewards? Can we be faithful stewards, and not strive, study, and deliberate the best ways of using the talents that God has bestowed on us, so that they turn to the greatest account in his service? Is not the glory of God and the eternal salvation of our ruined men, an object worthy of as much regard, as such engagement of soul and determination of purpose, as a little property which men use as a mercenary instrument for the fleeting breath of empty fame? Be assured, we cannot satisfy our Maker by offering a sluggish service, or by putting forth little effort, and pretending that it is the utmost of our ability. We have shown what we are capable of doing, by our regard to our earthly wealth and honor. God has seen, and we ourselves know, that our ability is not small, when brought fully into exercise. It is now too late to indulge the thought of deriving either our Maker or our fellow-men on this point. We are by claim to the character of faithful stewards, only as we employ all our power in serving God, as worldly men do in seeking riches, or a name.

Then, too, to be faithful, we must be as enterprising in the work that God has given us to do, as worldly men are in their affairs. By enterprising, I mean, bold, adventurous, resolute to undertake. Worldly men exhibit enterprise in their readiness to engage in large projects—in digging canals, in laying rail-roads, and in sending their ships all over the globe. No part seems too distant, no difficulty too deep, no business too high, no difficulty too great, and no obstacle too formidable. They scarcely shrink from any business on account of its magnitude, its audaciousness, or its hazard. A man is no longer famous for circumnavigating the globe. To sail round the world is a common trading voyage, and ships now visit almost every part of the globe. A business is no longer called a whale, where merely thousands of dollars are accumulated; but in great undertakings, millions are counted by millions. Such is the spirit of enterprise in worldly matters.

Now, I ask, are we not capable of as much enterprise in using the means ordained by Christ for rescuing souls from eternal burnings, and raising them to seat at his right hand? Had the same enterprise been required of men in some former century, they might have plead incapacity. But it is too late now to plead incapacity. Unless we choose to keep back from God a very important talent, we must put forth this enterprise to its full extent in the great work of the world's conversion.

A Noble Example.

Not long since, a letter was received at the Missionary House, from an esteemed pastor in the State of Massachusetts, of which the following is an extract:

"Day before yesterday, a plain farmer and his wife called on me, and stated that they wanted to get me to transmit some money to the Board. The woman modestly hinted that it cost many a hard earning and hard day's work to raise the money—but if it might be the means of saving one poor heathen, she should be satisfied."

The man said, with tears in his eyes, that when he thought of the multitudes of the heathen who were perishing without the gospel, he wanted to do something. They handed me a roll of Five Hundred Dollars, which I inclose. This is the second donation of the same amount which they have made in four or five years.

There cannot be a doubt that this favored couple thus gave from time to time to Christ, will afford them more real happiness in life, in death, and in the world to come, than any other property which they may possess. This is the way to lay up treasure in heaven. Our thought on receiving this letter was, thanks be to God, the cause of missions has some sincere, hard working, but friends among the hills of New England. Who will sustain this noble example?"—*Journal of Missions.*

Missions.—Little did Mills and his associates, when they kneeled in the retired grove, at the confluence of the mountain streams in a valley of Berkshire, anticipate the results that were to follow their prayers and efforts. Many souls have already gone home to glory from health ground, and many more are on their way. And yet, most of what has been done is only preparatory work. Our missionaries have been preparing the way of the Lord. We have seen great things, we are authorized to expect still greater things. Let us have faith in God, and beseech him to hasten his work.

What has been done has cost but little additional on the part of Christians, that is, of Christians at home. Who has suffered personal privation in consequence of this? None. He has given to the treasury of God! Had the well-to-do man been deterred by all who bear the name of Christ, the results over which we rejoice, would have been increased on a hundred fold. More missionaries would have been sent, more heathen children would have been brought under Christian instruction, more leaves of the tree of life would have been scattered abroad for the healing of the nations.

Do we lose the cause of missions? Let us do that the Father may say of us, as he did to the women of old, who had done what they could. They shall be rewarded as a dying host, and receive a welcome to the realm of glory.

THE INDIAN ADVOCATE.

Edited by the Corresponding Secretary.

LOUISVILLE, MARCH, 1850

The Rooms of the American Indian Mission Association, are on the corner of Third and Jefferson Streets, opposite the Post Office.

SPECIAL NOTICE:

Letters on business connected with the Indian Mission Association, should be addressed to Rev. SIDNEY DYER, Corresponding Secretary, LOUISVILLE, KY.

Those containing remittances, to U. VAN BUREN, Esq. Treasurer, LOUISVILLE, KY.

It is also particularly requested of all persons coming to the city, having in charge money for the Association, that they call at the Treasurer's Office, 511 Main Street, and pay it there.

Agents of the Board.

- Rev. V. R. Thornton, Gen. Agent for Georgia. Rev. A. T. N. Vandiver, for Georgia. Rev. G. B. Davis, for Alabama and Tennessee. Rev. Andrew Moffat, for Mississippi. Rev. R. L. Thurman, for Kentucky.

Rapidity of Indian Progress.

We are confident that, although the rapid extinction or removal of the Indians has become a fact of universal observation and remains, very few are fully aware of the speed with which this remarkable event has been going on, for a hundred years, we greatly fear, a consummation of the worst dire character. We think of the settlement of New England, or of Jamestown, more than two centuries ago, when the whole Atlantic slope was thickly populated with aborigines, and wonder at the fact, that, in so short a time as two hundred years, nearly the whole of this vast region has been depopulated of its race. This is, indeed, under all circumstances, a most remarkable mortality; but what is this, compared with events of a like character, which have transpired in our day, and under our own eyes.

Admitted, this is an age of wonders, so much so, indeed, that men seem almost to have lost the faculty of being excited to the manifestation of astonishment. But we have beheld developments in the history of the Indians, which we feel assured we should consider Utopian, if they had not transpired under our own observation. We are just now in the prime of life, and yet, since we attained to our present stature, we saw the site where the city of Chicago now stands, with its twenty five thousand inhabitants, covered with the wigwams of an Indian encampment, and heard the wail which overhangs its busy streets, echoing the wail of thousands of young Indian men and maidens, as, with light and merry hearts, they mingled in their native ball play. Where are these young hearts now? If you seek for them, ever so diligently, they will not be found. They have all passed away, mysteriously, suddenly; and the place that knew them once, will know them no more forever! They have left but their name, and the bones of their fathers to tell of their dwelling there.

In the same year, 1832, we helped mow the tall grass; for the purpose of making an encampment, on the spot which the city of Des Moines, Iowa, now occupies. We there met, and held a treaty with the Indians for the purchase of the territory now known as the State of Iowa. It was then a wilderness, excepted only by the Indian; but, in the short period intervening from that to the present time, the Indians have passed away, and now the wilderness has become a State, with its Senators and its Representatives in Congress. We might multiply the number of these startling changes, but these are enough; others are taking place, and we are beholding their progress. It cannot be otherwise than that both receive an essentially affected, for good or evil, by these revolutions. We rejoice that the result on our side is most beneficial and happy. It is true, liberation, as regards the Indians; they are gone, but how few of those who are now receiving the benefits of this removal, ever ask, Where are they gone? and, What is their condition? Have they also been improved by

the change? It cannot be doubted for a moment, that we are the direct cause of the removal of the Indians from their paternal homes; nor should it be forgotten, that our direct relation to this event involves many and very weighty responsibilities. Would that we possessed the power to come these responsibilities to be felt and duly discharged, we should then have bright hopes for the future prosperity of the Indians; but who can fall to see, that, if the same causes are kept in operation, tending to their expatriation and extinction, and the same agency is maintained in regard to their condition and wants, that the ultimate sale of the whole race must ensue. We know many, many of whom are extensively conversant with the history of the Indian, amidst this idea. But if the history of the race teaches any truth with absolute certainty, it is that the tendencies are all rapidly converging to this dreadful consummation. They may, they can be averted, if the Christian world will but awake and put forth the proper effort; and we would once more urge its feeble warning against a longer delay in this matter. Now is the accepted time; now is the day for their salvation. Delay will but lessen the prospects of success, and increase the measure of our guilt. A channel for all benefactions, seeking an outlet in their direction, is fully open in the organization and operations of the Board of the American Indian Mission Association. We have begun the good work, and have already been highly blessed in our labors, thus receiving the seal of the Almighty's approbation. We now stand in need of the co-operation of all, and we affectionately urge upon our brethren the duty of rendering this aid speedily and with a liberal hand.

Encouraging.

It will be seen, by a reference to our table of receipts, that the amount is gratifyingly large, compared with previous months. Had it not been that, our operations would have been seriously embarrassed; and were with this increase of aid, we are under the painful necessity of withholding the salaries of our missionaries for the last quarter of this year, because our treasury is empty. We are, however, confident, that our brethren will continue, for a few months, to give us their prompt and liberal support, so that we shall be enabled to meet our all our difficulties, and to go forward with our noble enterprise, with renewed vigor and success.

We hope that the liberality displayed during the past month, will serve to stimulate others to like prompt measures for our relief.

Thanks! Thanks!

We tender our grateful acknowledgments to the many friends, who have so kindly remembered us, and who have given such substantial tokens of their consideration, during the past few weeks. Among them, we would name, especially, the Welsh Neck and Savannah River Associations, whose liberal contributions will be noticed in our table of receipts; the Georgia Baptist Convention; and, also, a brother and sister in Alabama, who have donated the price of two native purchases. If we can secure a few more such generous friends and supporters, we shall be placed above our present perplexing hindrances; and why should we not find these friends? Our cause is every way worthy, and the claims of the Indians fully established. Brothers, give us your names.

Funeral Chicago.

Rev. Dr. Howell, so long and intimately connected with the progress of the Baptist cause in Tennessee, has resigned his charge of the First Baptist Church in Nashville, to assume the pastoral care of the Second Baptist Church in Richmond, Va.

The Baptists of Tennessee are much of their present prosperity in the benevolent exertions of brother Howell, and he will be to them a loss that cannot be repaired; but we are happy to know, that when they leave our Virginia brethren will gain, and we can heartily congratulate them on this acquisition.

Mr. No information has been received from brother Walker, since his departure from Louisville, except that he had passed Fort Smith, on his way to the South Sea.

There are Reports—There have been some reports, that a vessel, and some other persons, are on their way to the coast, and that they will give, and we can heartily congratulate them on this acquisition.

Literary Notices.

The Union Bible Dictionary. Am. S. S. Union. This work is too well and widely known to need any further commendation from us. The edition before us is issued in a neat and substantial style, and no Sunday School Teacher or Scholar should be without a copy.

Illustrated Sketches of countries and places mentioned in Bible History. By J. P. Kennedy. Am. S. S. Union.

The basis of the above excellent publication is a translation from a German work, issued by the "Cath. Publishing Union;" but the translator has not produced a work suited to the Sabbath Schools of this country, and he has unobtainably succeeded. The work is liberally illustrated with plates and colored maps.

Both of the above works can be obtained at the Depository on Fourth Street, in this city.

The Mother's Magazine and Family Journal. New York: Alfred French, 126 Nassau St.

This is a large and beautifully printed and illustrated monthly—in object being fully set forth in the title. The editorial corps consists of Mrs. Elizabeth Sewall, Rev. Davies Wood, and Myron Peck, who are assisted by a large list of talented contributors. We have read carefully the contents of the March number, and we can speak in high terms of their excellence; such is also the testimony of our better half, who takes a great interest in works of this character, and who has had much experience in the management of family affairs, and we place great reliance upon her judgment. The work is published at the low price of one dollar per annum; and we advise our readers, generally, to secure the substance it is so well calculated to give, by subscribing for a copy.

Two Discourses on the subject of Baptism. By Rev. Joseph Walker. Philadelphia, P. D. & Morris.

These discourses were called forth by a challenge from our Methodist brethren. One is on the efficacy, and the other, the subjects of Christian baptism; and, in our opinion, they make out a very strong case for the baptism side of the argument; and we hope they will have a wide circulation.

Elements of a Church's Property. A Sermon delivered in the St. Francis Street Baptist Church, Mobile, by Dr. T. G. Kim.

The subject of this sermon is a highly important one, and our esteemed friend and brother has treated it with great ability. It is well arranged, pointed and nervous in style, which are the predominant peculiarities of all brother Kim's efforts. We trust his influence may be felt far and wide, even beyond his own Church, for whose benefit it was primarily delivered. It is issued in good taste, which is rather a rare circumstance with occasional sermons.

The Southern Journal of Education. Knoxville, Tenn. G. A. Scott, Editor.

This is a monthly journal of sixteen royal octavo pages, devoted to the important subject of popular education. We have read its pages with more than usual interest. Its editorial department is conducted with marked ability; and, on the part which it occupies is one of the greatest importance to the South and West, and we trust that it may secure a wide circulation; and we would especially commend it to the attention and patronage of all who are engaged in the noble cause of giving instruction, as a most valuable assistant.

EMIGRATION OF THE FLORIDA INDIANS. The Tallahassee Florida of the 5th inst., does the same upon which the Florida Indians have agreed to emigrate, and says that it is believed that the Indians will all be on the shore of the bay by the last of May. The following are the names:

... (names of individuals) ...

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

Crocks.

LETTER FROM REV. E. F. BUCKNER, Dated Feb. 12th, 1850.

Health of Family—Suffering of the Winter—Baptism—Declension—Visit to a Neg Settlement—Reluctant Hearers, &c.

Since my last communication, I have been confined to my bed, for three weeks, with an attack of winter-fever; but I am now able to resume my labors, and the health of my family is tolerably good.

From the first of January until now, the winter has been so extremely cold, that traveling through the prairie has been, for the most part, impracticable; consequently, our congregations have been smaller than usual, and accessions to the church have been few.

I have the pleasure of informing the friends of missions, that, at our last church meeting, four were baptized into the fellowship of the Methodist church by Elder Jacob, and five were restored.

It is usually the case, that during Christmas week, and at the time of the national books in June and July, many members betray their weakness, by yielding to the temptations common on those occasions; which will account for the backslidings indicated by the restoration of these persons alluded to in the above.

On last Sabbath I visited a settlement of Crocks in the Cherokee Nation, about forty miles on the military road leading to Fort Smith, who had never heard of the gospel. I was accompanied by brother D. N. McIntosh, (one of the young brethren baptized last November,) who kindly proffered to interpret for me. I was at no loss to know how to frame a discourse to suit the capacities and present condition of the people, thus I was anxious to witness its efficacy.

On our arrival, we found a large congregation of Crocks and Cherokees assembled at the house of our friend, William Drew, at whose kind invitation we had visited the neighborhood. The Crocks would not come into the house during the forenoon services;—each was their curriculum about the gospel;—but stood off at some distance; so that it was necessary that we should go to the house of our friend, and preach to them there. We were not unassisted of the gospel of Christ, &c.

Some of them had heard my father preach when I was a small boy, and one had been baptized by my uncle in the old nation; and it afforded me no little comfort that God had spared my life to unite with those who had gone before, in pointing them to the "Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world."

In the afternoon, sister Drew succeeded in persuading the Crocks to come into the house, and I preached to them from Mark xvi. 16. They paid respectful attention, and most of them shed tears of penitence. One of them said to sister Drew, "I did not suppose the gospel would be so interesting. I wish the man would have kept on, and told us all the laws of God." Friend Drew is working an interest in Christ, and I trust that he will soon be numbered with the believers. He entertained the whole congregation with an excellent dinner.

Chattahoochee.

LETTER FROM REV. E. F. BUCKNER, Dated January 2nd, 1850.

Mad Waters—Candidate waiting for Baptism—One Baptism—Probable Visit of Mrs. Potts to the State.

A short time since, I wrote you, giving all the religious information I could, and I am sorry that I am not able at this time necessarily to add to it. In consequence of high winds, I have not been able to attend at our place of meeting, (Mad Waters,) from this place. This has been a season of unobtainable to me, as there is still an unobtainable state of feeling in that neighborhood. Several have been waiting for some time for baptism, but when my regular time arrives for going down, (from in our hands,) the waters are so high I cannot get down;—so I am compelled to forego the pleasure of meeting with our dear people there. Since I last wrote you, you have been baptized at our place of meeting, four miles from this. Several more have been attending meetings here in the vicinity of my place, and we are very glad to hear that they are all prospering, and are going on to God's glory. We are very glad to hear that you are all prospering, and are going on to God's glory. We are very glad to hear that you are all prospering, and are going on to God's glory.

... (continuation of the letter) ...

