

MISSION FIELD.

The Missionary Concert.

BY REV. M. JAMISON, D. D.

Has the missionary concert been revived? At our Baptist anniversary meeting it is often highly commended as a means of securing a deeper interest in the work abroad. But in going about among the churches, I have failed to see in many places any compliance with the recommendation. Pastors do not know what they lose by their neglect in this respect. I say pastors, because in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the fault is theirs. And their loss is evident in the meagreness and indefiniteness of their knowledge as to foreign mission-work, which would be remedied by faithful preparation for a monthly prayer-meeting. Will not some pastors turn over a new leaf, and give the concert a fair trial as a means of increasing their own intelligent interest in missions, and that of their churches?

THE BEST TIME FOR THE MEETING.

The old practice was to have a special meeting in addition to the regular meetings of the week. The modern and more practicable way is to devote a regular prayer-meeting of the week to the purpose. This secures at least the prayer-meeting attendance. The meeting last preceded or next after the first Sunday in each month is a good one to fix upon. Enough churches probably hold such meetings at the same hour, to secure, to some extent, a union of prayer, which originally occurred in the name of "concord" to the meeting. The day once decided upon, the purpose and plan of the meeting should be interfered with in only very exceptional circumstances. If every church is a society for the conversion of the world,—and is it not?—will any one say that it is too much to spend an hour each month in gazing intently and prayerfully at some portion of the foreign field? Should it occur to any one that such a meeting would be unprofitable if there were no religious interest in the church, it would be well to recall an incident in the ministry of Dr. Binney in Savannah. He was asked in the midst of a revival if it would not be well to omit the missionary concert. He answered, "No, no! If we have any excitement in our church that can be checked or diverted by prayer for the salvation of souls in the darkest of heathen lands, the sooner it is checked the better. We want the spirit of Him who though rich, for our sakes became poor, revived among us. Any other excitement is spurious."

PREPARATIONS.

Pastors must give at their missionary prayer-meetings some definite information on the topic under consideration. A meeting was once held with Africa for a subject. The leader opened the meeting, and asked those called on to pray; but the good brother declined. He said, "If you had made some definite statement of what is being done, or needs to be done, the encouragements and discouragements, I would have prayed; but my knowledge is too vague." He wanted information. The leader good-naturedly gave the facts called for, and then the communications. Every pastor should be sure to give sufficient information at the outset, so that no one may feel inclined to make a similar protest. If pastors take and wisely use *The Magazine*, there will be no lack of information as to our own missions. In the Annual Report (the July number of *The Magazine*) may be found a report, from the hand of nearly every one of our missionaries, which will give you a clear and definite view of the work in its distant field, with its assurance that his work had been specially considered and prayed for by his brethren. Do you object to this plan, that you do not know any of the missionaries personally? Then, pray, do not remain unacquainted with them any longer, when there is such an easy and certainly allowable way of coming into communication with them. The objection recalls Mrs. Partington's reason for not wishing to be introduced to the company,—she was not acquainted with any of them! There is no one of our nearly two hundred foreign mission-workers who would receive otherwise than cordially a sincere expression of interest in his work; and, if the hand that wrote it was within reach, it would very readily receive a hearty and cordial reply. Any lingering apprehension that such a self-introduction of a pastor and his people would be regarded as an intrusion. One word of warning. Do not ask or expect the missionaries to write personal letters to your meeting. They can do this in but few cases. Rather form a habit of reading their printed letters, as if written to you personally. These are for our representatives, and their letters are their reports of their work to you.

AN ILLUSTRATION.

I was present recently at a good meeting of the kind I am recommending. The subject was Japan. After opening exercises, the pastor went to the map, pointed out the country, gave the name of the islands, the character of the people, commerce, etc. A brother then gave some facts as to population and the reading habits of the people. Another brother spoke of the prevalent religions of Japan, sketched the history of mission work in the islands, and gave the number of missionaries and their ratio to the whole number of the people. He then gave the names of all our Baptist missionaries from the leader, "Work, Workers, and Wants," with some facts concerning the work of some of them. The recentness of the introduction of Christianity, and the remarkable progress in so short a time, were referred to. Then followed several prayers for Japan, the missionaries and their converts, and for the progress of the work.

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Because of his profound learning, and because the question to be tried was a question of Biblical law, and because he was in the regular line of succession, I insisted on him as the presiding judge. There were many distinguished lights present, and I was anxious to participate in the trial. The reader will remember that "there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together," at Troas. And so I had many lights in the court in my humble "sanctum;" and by no means the least among them was the Rev. J. R. Graves, LL. D., in his two books against inter-communion. The reader will recognize the importance of this trial, when I remind him that Troas had been made to occupy a prominent place in the discussions on inter-communion. When Dr. Graves went about writing against inter-communion, and began to affirm that "there is not a precedent for, nor an example of, inter-communion in the New Testament" (Inter com. p. 291), he, of course, found it absolutely necessary to get Troas out of the way, for Troas was a witness constantly confronting him with a manifest "example of inter-communion in the New Testament," and therefore Troas must be spirited away, invalidated, blown up by an earthquake, or some how kept out of court in the trial of this cause; and so our author plies it with great vigor in both of his late books,—the one under the name of "Old Landmarkism—What is It?"

THE CASE STATED.

Although Dr. Graves in his attacks on Troas might be expected to be the plaintiff, yet, as his is the negative claim, and I wish to indicate Troas, I will take the affirmative and appear for the plaintiff, and, please your honor, I will put my case in court as follows: There was a church at Troas; they did celebrate the Lord's Supper; it was a case of inter-communion, and therefore it is an example of that practice. Dr. Graves appears with a demurrer, and, with his accustomed courtesy, says, if it please the honor of the court, "No one ever has proved, or can prove that there was a church at Troas, in the first century, at the period of Paul's last visit; and therefore the expression, 'When we come together to eat bread,' refers to a common repast, and not to the Lord's Supper." (p. 291.)

NOW THE PLEADINGS.

PLAINTIFF.—Now, let us read the Scriptures on the subject: "And there accompanied him (Paul) into Asia Soter of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe; and Timothy; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus." "These going before, tarried for us," says Luke, "at Troas. And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto the town to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days. And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together." Then follows the account of the young man Eutychus, who went to sleep while Paul was preaching, fell out of the window, was taken up dead, and Paul went down and re-animated him. "When he (Paul) therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even until break of day, so he departed." (Acts 20: 6-12.)

THE REV. J. D. RENFROE.

When they found that the witness would not stand in their favor, they endeavored to keep him out of court, lest he should speak against them. —Alexander Carson.

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To Our Subscribers.

The date to which your subscription is paid is printed opposite your name on the margin of the paper.

The VALUE OF CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY.

God never left himself without a witness. The world is his witness.

Creation is a broad book, inscribed by God's finger. "It is our belief that the earth and sea and sky, and all that in them is, began to be by the creative fiat of the Almighty."

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.

There is in the world what is called liberal Christianity, which finds apostles in learned men who make themselves popular and notorious.

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material representation of it, to which you look with so much feeling. By the cross is meant, not wood, nor silver, nor gold, but the great satisfaction to divine justice, by the Son of God in behalf of sinners, the glorious offering, which was the object of Messiah's mission, and which Jehovah was graciously pleased to approve and accept.

The cross is but the symbol. It was the offering itself which gave it significance, and by which it has become forever associated with all those blessings which so expand themselves from everlasting to everlasting; whose depths reach those that have sunk lowest into the abyss of crime and misery, and whose heights throw a radiance even upon the throne and crown of the eternal God himself.

The cross lifts men from the mire and filth of sin, and makes them pure and holy; transforms them from children of Satan and of darkness into children of God and of light; from rebels deserving death into affectionate subjects worthy of acceptance; it transmutes the soul, sullied and stained and black with sin, into a jewel spotless and pure, fit to be worn in the crown of the King of kings in the courts of Heaven.

Through the efficacy of the Cross, the redeemed become the best witnesses for God, the best representatives of his character in its completeness.

If God's greatness appears to be so far dependent on his creatures, it is his will—a mark of his condescension. We must not undervalue it. God is not dependent on particular people.

When a renowned and widely-known professor of religion—it may be a popular preacher of extensive reputation—falls, it has been said that Christianity receives a shock to shatter it for a century.

No one man, however widely known or justly popular, holds the kingdom of Christ on his shoulders. Christianity has conquered and will conquer now and for every generation.

A cedar of Lebanon may fall; a goody tree, grand in its stateliness, in whose loftiness we have taken pride. It may be struck by lightning. With a loud, resounding crash, it may come to the ground, but with it only a few twigs and sapplings immediately around: the great forest still stands.

The trees are rooted deep, grappled with eternal rock. They are unshaken. If a conspicuous man falls, must all Christians fall? Those rooted in the Word of God—who have encircled the Rock of Ages, shall stand. We deliver no judgment, but we have a clearly-defined opinion and an ardent hope, which opinion and hope will, we believe, be justified.

The church founded by Jesus Christ has withstood the fires of Pagan and Papal tyranny. It will not fall. Founded upon eternal truth, it cannot fail.

DEATH OF DR. WILLIAM T. BRANTLY. Rev. Wm. T. Brantly, D. D., of Baltimore, after preaching twice on Sunday, March 5th, was taken suddenly ill with heart disease at 1 o'clock Monday morning and died before a physician could reach him.

Dr. Brantly was born in Beaufort, S. C. He graduated from Brown University, Rhode Island. In 1871 he succeeded Dr. Richard Fuller as pastor of the Seventh church, Baltimore. In 1878 he became associate editor of the Religious Herald.

He was a genial and graceful writer and a beloved and efficient pastor. His loss will be seriously felt, not only by his church and the paper with which he was connected, but by the denomination at large.

We call special attention to the plain, forcible article in regard to the American Bible Society, taken from the Independent, the leading Congregational paper on the continent, and ask for it the careful reading of every one who receives it.

No Baptist who respects himself and has proper regard for Baptist principles, can long doubt as to the course to be pursued. In this connection, we take occasion to commend, most heartily, the action of Drs. Winkler, McIntosh, and Gwaltney. All of them, good men, wise and true, have done just what we would have expected. See the correspondence in another column.

Inter-communication.—Addendum. The following paragraph should have been inserted in Dr. Renfrow's article on the first page of this paper, but was not sent us with the article, and did not reach us until the outside pages had gone to press.

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help supplements the weakness—surely it cannot be expected to supply the indifference or the slothfulness of any man.—Baptist Courier.

They are considerable heads of us which the Baptists have built up a good church. The house of worship here is used by all denominations.

At Jemison we have a regularly organized church, but it is neither strong nor prosperous. There are only about a dozen members, and only two of these are male members.

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congratulate the pastor, superintendent and teachers on the efficiency of their school, and bid them God-speed in the good work.

An earnest superintendent and earnest teachers are necessary to build up an effective Sunday-school.

If church members, as far as practicable, will attend the Sunday-school, they will give the young and the unconverted around them with a sense of its value and importance.

The presence of the pastor in the Sunday-school will be inspiring alike to young and old, to teachers and pupils. He should be present so that he may at least "smile upon the work."

Let the spirit of benevolence be cultivated in our Sunday-schools—let the spirit of selfishness, away with the idea of encouraging attendants upon the Sunday-school to bring offerings to be returned to them in the form of books, papers, etc.

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Alabama Baptist.

THE FAMILY GIBBLE.

From the Watchman.

How a Whole Week was Spoiled.

She was ten years old, open-hearted, affectionate and generous. But—No, I will not tell you, little readers. You can find out for yourselves what the matter was with this little girl of whom I am going to write.

The warm summer days were slipping by. Vacation was more than half gone. It did not seem possible, but it was nevertheless, for King Goldenrod had already appeared in royal array with his train of ever constant attendants, a veritable court of color, proclaiming the gorgeousness of midsummer.

The weeks so far had been spent at home, but as home was as pretty a country spot as could be found, with ways enough to do, Besie had not thought of wishing herself elsewhere.

A mile and a half from the house lay the broad blue ocean, where, in the almost landlocked bay, Besie had learned to row like any old sailor. The beach, smooth and sandy, with its background of boat-houses, prettily converted into rooms, where one could sit in the shade with books or work and watch the sail-dotted waters before them, was as familiar a sight to her as the walls of their own sitting room, for she certainly spent as much of her time there as she did at home. They had been more stationary, would daily have borne the imprint of many little feet travelling to the sunlit water's edge.

So you cannot wonder with such pleasant surroundings and with plenty of boys and girls to play with, that Besie had far had a very happy summer.

Almost every night after tea, between daylight and dark, there was a game of "I spy" in which every one joined, though just now several sprightly members were absent. And there were so many places to hide in, for the whole street was allowed, and some of the trees were just splendid.

To us, the game was in full swing, as usual. But it was getting dark, and mamma from the vine-covered piazza had already spoken more than once. "In a minute," Besie had replied, but a good many minutes went by before she came up the steps. It had been a merry game, and the laughter and shouts sent up so easily from young throats would have made one's own ache with its exuberance.

There was a general breaking-up now. Besie had dropped on the steps without speaking.

"It is fully eight o'clock. I want you to go to bed," said her mother.

"I don't want to. I can't," throwing off her hat and half lying on the piazza. "I'm so tired."

"I know you are," without a trace of impatience in her voice, "and that is why I want you to go to bed and get all the sleep you can. You've played all day, and you need it."

"Still no movement of the figure before her."

"Besie, I am sorry to have to speak again. You've had a pleasant time; don't you think so?"

"I don't know," repeated Besie, from the end of the very one's gone circuit into the ends of my. I haven't enjoyed it from the girl's gone, abruptly.

"Turned down the door and opened the window. What happened to the forehead and mouth, especially? There could not have been much more change if some saving disease had led to its traces there. Perhaps she was in pain. A stranger might have thought she was going to be very ill—and yet, that could not be, for Mrs. Reynolds would have been alarmed; she could not have sat so still and calm. Yet a close observer might have detected a shade of anxiety on her quiet face, as she looked at her little daughter.

"Finally Besie arose, but taking her own time."

"Won't you come up with me?" "Not to-night," said her mother.

"You don't come up with me at all," still loitering very slowly towards the door.

Mrs. Reynolds made no reply, but when Besie at last crawled it could not be termed walking up the stairs, she leaned back in her chair with a little sigh.

A new fashion had sprung up among the young people of Kosedale. Almost every house in the neighborhood could boast of a baby. Besie felt that they were a little behind the times in that respect, but the next best thing was to take care of some one else's. "This was very easily done. So every pleasant morning, while it was yet fresh and cool, numerous baby-carriages might have been seen trundled along to her little impromptu nursery. Besie loved children younger than herself. If she were hidden from sight and only her voice heard, you would never have imagined it was only a little girl talking to them. One lady declared she should put a cup on those brown locks, and a long white apron, that other badge of her station, on her small figure, for she was very much superior, she said, to any real nurse.

On this particular morning the babies were out in full force, and as soon as she had finished her breakfast, Besie, dressed in a blue and white baby-carriage, went to get her daughter. She called to her, and Besie with a scream of delight ran into her arms.

Uncle Frank knew at once what the trouble was. "I saw she was a little homesick when night came," he said, "but I was in hopes she would get over it. You said she was a little homesick, but I tried to persuade her sister to let Besie remain, after all. Aunt Jane, too, was quite urgent for the rest of the visit, but Mrs. Reynolds thought it better to take her home, after thanking them all for their kind wishes. Besie went up to get her things, Aunt Jane followed her, and Mrs. Reynolds was left alone with her brother."

"It is the old story," a child untroubled by the pressure of his own understanding. That evening at home on the piazza, it all came out. "Frankie's a nice little boy, and I love Uncle Frank, but Aunt Jane was the one who made me homesick."

"Because she is,—well, fretful!" asked her mother.

"Yes, indeed. That's just it!" Besie nodded her head emphatically.

"Poor Aunt Jane! She has a very unfortunate disposition, and makes every one around her so tired and unhappy. When she was young, she probably allowed little things to annoy her, or was even fretful sometimes without any cause."

Mrs. Reynolds paused a moment. Her daughter was strangely quiet. She got on:

"Her fault has increased with the years, as all faults do. It has grown like a noxious weed, and I believe it has about killed the better part of her nature."

"She spoils my whole week," murmured Besie.

do. Oh dear! how hateful everybody is. "Besie," said mamma quietly when she had finished, "go find Flossie. You two seem to get along quite well together, and for the rest of this morning, at least, I wish you would try to be amiable."

"Flossie," said Besie, "I want her own way," murmured Besie, slightly brightening.

"And so you can have yours," said indignantly. "Well, never mind now," as Besie was about to speak. "Amuse yourselves until dinner time. Play house under the trees where it is cool. You can't ask Bridget for some cooking, and after dinner I will tell you something."

These plans seemed to suit. Besie ran off, and for the remainder of the morning peace reigned. Once, on going down stairs, Mrs. Reynolds looked out of a back window and saw them under the big apple-tree in the grass. It was so warm, however, that they did not take cold, though their clothes were changed in the open air. Besie had brought out her tea set, and they partook of a light lunch every ten minutes. There was no breaking in affairs, though there came near being one.

"I had my mouth," Flossie suddenly broke out with. Now very few girls of Besie's age think much about their looks, unless older (but not wiser) people allude to such topics before them. But it was a little natural in this case to think the remark was called forth by admiration. So when Mrs. Reynolds glanced up now, she explained, "It is so much bigger than mine, and I could eat twice as much of these nice cookies, you see."

Besie almost gasped at the impudence of her friend, not to mention the exceeding untruth she had given utterance to. But this little episode blew over, and the morning as a whole was a success.

"How nice! how splendid! I guess I do want to go," this last being in answer to a question put by Mrs. Reynolds at the dinner table.

"But you have never been away alone, remember, though I've no doubt you will be taken good care of. You may be homesick."

Besie, declining all likelihood of this, wanted to pack at once, but on her mother explaining that Uncle Frank must first know the decision, she was content to wait a little longer.

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