

# AMERICAN MESSENGER.

BEHOLD I BRING YOU GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY WHICH SHALL BE TO ALL PEOPLE.—LUKE 2:10.

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For the American Messenger.

## Swearing Henry.

Having to preach one cold winter's night in a large, poorly heated church, I observed most of the congregation gathered round the stoves. Before sermon they were requested, if sufficiently warmed, to be seated together in front.

The subject of discourse that evening led me to a description of "the wicked;" and among the classes of the "wicked" enumerated, prominence was given to the *profane swearer*, as emphatically "wicked," irreverently taking his Maker's name in vain, and frequently seeming to pride himself in the multitude and magnitude of his oaths. One man in the end of a pew was most earnestly attentive, with head erect, eyes extended, and his cheeks covered with a reddened flush. At the close of the service, as others gathered round the stoves again, he walked out with a heavy and hasty step, as if he wished no one to speak to him.

About ten days after, I was informed of a child that was sick and ready to die, and was advised to visit the family. It was said to be a child of Mr. Henry; but as there were others of the same name I was told that he was called, by way of distinction, "Swearing Henry." Yet he was an influential citizen, an extensive farmer, an obliging neighbor, free from other low vices, and paid some respect to religious institutions.

I called at his house. The little sufferer was rapidly approaching its end, and the weeping mother watching it with assiduous care. It was two years old, she said, the only daughter in a family of eight, and a great favorite, especially of the father, who idolized it and mourned at the prospect of its death. But she said that, though glad to see me, she hoped I would not be there when her husband came in. I had given him offence in a sermon he had heard me preach, and she feared he might not treat me well. He had said that I preached it expressly for him, and held him up to the whole congregation, who knew I was pointing him out all the while. She could not convince him that either she or some other person had not gone to me with a history of his character; and he was certain that I had purposely requested the congregation to sit in front of me that night, so as to get him there and "then give it to him." He had been greatly agitated ever since. His appetite had failed, and he could not sleep. He had been alternately sullen and silent, then unreasonable and harsh, when he would vow vengeance on the minister, and especially on his informant. At times he had been even more profane than she had ever known him, then relapsed into his previous silence again, and for the last two days had said little, but seemed full of trouble.

I had scarcely assured her that "the whole was a *grand mistake*," I having previously known nothing of the man, nor of his character, when a man came in whom I recognized at once as the hearer in the end of the pew, who had given such earnest heed to the discourse. This was the veritable "Swearing Henry." Little had I suspected that so notable a person had sat in God's house, while holding up the *profane swearer* as so "wicked" in God's sight.

He now appeared confused on seeing me, looked stern, and made no return to my salutation. His wife informed him of his great mistake, and of my denial of any particular knowledge of him until I had heard of their affliction. With an expression of mystery on his countenance, he then said to me, "Well, I am not acquainted with you, but suppose you ought to be a man of *truth*, any how." "I am," said I, "and would rather lose that right hand than be guilty of falsehood."

The man looked confounded, stared upon me for some seconds, wiped his eyes which were becoming suffused in tears, and then proceeded: "I see the Almighty is following me up. I am just such a sinner as the sermon described. *Swearing* has been my great sin, and I thought you knew all about it. I am a great sinner. Oh, what an example I have set my family! And now the Almighty is taking away the dearest of my children. I was very angry at you, but have more reason to be angry at myself. I have suffered every thing the last two days. I was wishing I could see you, and am glad you have come. If there is such a place as hell, I know I am fit for that place, and I beg you to pray that I may be delivered." He spoke with such emotion that his family were as much affected as himself, nor could my own heart remain unmoved.

I sympathized with them, and spoke of the wisdom of God in sending afflictions, to make us think of him and of our duty towards him. I spoke of the heinous nature of *sin* against so good and holy a Being, and especially of the sin of which he confessed himself guilty. I expressed the opinion that the merciful God had ordered all the late incidents to lead him to reflection and repentance, and exhorted him to flee to Christ and sue for pardon without delay.

The spirit of the strong man was broken. He admitted every thing, penitently wept, and again requested me to pray. I called for the Bible, read a short portion, and then complied with his request. As the last word of prayer died upon my lips, he himself broke forth: "O Lord, O God, I am a great sinner. O Father in heaven, I have sinned by *swearing* more than all men. What an example I have given my children. Oh, almighty Father, pardon my great sins, and save my soul if it can be saved, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

The effect upon us all was overwhelming; and reminded me of David roaring by reason of the disquietude of his heart. "How wonderful is God!" thought I. "Here is an avowed *swearer* addressing him with the voice of *prayer*. Well may every swearer tremble and cry out. Would that every similar transgressor was now present to witness this scene."

We parted. The following day at evening the little sufferer died, and two days after, the funeral services were held in the church. My friend occupied the same pew he occupied on the previous occasion, with a countenance solemn as the grave, eyes intently fixed, and cheeks glistening with rills of descending tears. As the implied truths of the words, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me," were unfolded, his earnest face seemed lighted up with an expression not to be described. That very day he found peace to his riven soul. In the graveyard he came up to the minister, on whom he had once vowed vengeance, and throwing an arm round his neck, said, "Dear sir, I deserved God's wrath, but think I have found his mercy. I mean to follow my child to where you

think she now is. Come and see me, and pray with me soon."

And to the praise of sovereign mercy be it spoken, "Swearing Henry" has ever since been distinguished as *praying Henry*! His humble Christian life has been a source of joy to God's people, and a standing reproof to all around him who take their Maker's name in vain. c. n.

For the American Messenger.

## "No Man Cared for my Soul."

This despairing lamentation was uttered by David when he was forsaken of friends and persecuted by enemies. It is called by the translators, "The prayer of David when he was hid in the cave." The significance and necessity of such a prayer is manifest, for in God only could he trust: "I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul."

The same complaint is supposed to be applicable to sinners when their salvation is neglected by Christians. Happy for them, when human refuge fails, if they are driven to the Rock of ages. But why should unbelievers ever suppose that the church is not interested in their salvation? This impression comes from the fact that so many professing Christians, with whom they have daily intercourse, do not speak to them personally upon the concerns of the soul. Discretion and the spirit of compassion are indeed necessary in the performance of this work of love; but the entire omission of the duty is inconsistent with a profession of faith in Christ. It implies a timidity and a feebleness of faith unjustifiable, because the admonition, "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," rests upon this firm assurance: "forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

An oppressive conviction of his own imperfections, with the fear of repulse and reproach, makes the Christian reluctant to admonish the wicked, or to express his vivid sense of the guilt and final ruin of an impenitent life. But such fears and grounds of hesitation often prove to be imaginary, and, moreover, are not to be regarded in questions of duty or benevolence. Men of the world, reckless as they may seem to be of the consequences of transgression, have periods of solemn reflection, when they would willingly converse with a Christian friend, and privately ask a remembrance in his prayers. But they are strangely reluctant—it is one evil of the fall—to make known their feelings. They carry the heavy burden of conviction in secret, putting themselves in the way of receiving Christian counsel, and earnestly hoping that the subject of personal religion will be introduced. But the social interview is occupied by other topics, and the one thing needful is omitted. No wonder if they despairingly complain that Christians feel no concern nor compassion for them. In the hidden depths of their own wounded spirit, they say, and with some reason too, "Either these professing Christians do not believe their own creed, or they are religious only in name. They sympathize with us, and are kind in our temporal afflictions: they are alive to peril and suffering pertaining to the present life; but they are silent in regard to the eternal misery which, as they profess, awaits us in unbelief. This is to us incomprehensible. How is it possible to reconcile such indifference with a religion whose very essence is said to be love?"

Every thing real, or even apparent in the character of professing Christians, which leads to such reflections, is inconsistent with their heavenly calling, and very injurious in its influence upon unregenerate men. They expect Christians to be "living epistles, seen and read of all men." And this the gospel requires. Paul had "great heaviness and continual sorrow in his heart" on account of his Jewish brethren. His "heart's desire and prayer to God for them was, that they might be saved." Some degree of earnest and manifest desire for the salvation of sinners is essential to Christian character, and the good hope through grace. The most abandoned sinner should never have reason to say, "No man cared for my soul."

But there is an error much worse than neglect of duty, for which some professing Christians need to be admonished. It is that of standing aloof from wicked men, and speaking openly, indiscreetly, severely, and perhaps extravagantly, of their vices and character. This is a manifest violation of the Christian precepts which direct us "to speak evil of no man," but to be "gentle, meek, and patient towards all men." We must needs infer that they who so disobey the precepts of the gospel, do not kindly warn and entreat the erring, nor pray for them; but avoid their presence. Is this "in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves?" Have we so learned Christ? A member of the church says, for instance, "Mr. O. is a man of wealth and talents, but he is the vilest man in town, a perfect nuisance." This estimate of his character becomes known to Mr. O., and what can be the effect but to provoke retaliation, and imbitter his spirit the more against the name and profession of Christianity? No; "in patience possess ye your souls." Let us pity the poor lost man, and seek his salvation. By kindness and earnest prayer, and the labors of love, he may become a burning and a shining light in the church of Christ. Is he a vile sinner? "Such were some of you; but ye are washed; but ye are sanctified; but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." 1 Cor. 6:10, 11.

For the American Messenger.

## God's Voice in the Ballroom.

If all the sorrows occasioned by a recent western railroad disaster were written down, they would constitute one of the saddest chapters ever recorded.

Some of the incidents of that calamity have been published far and wide. Some of them have been mentioned only in private. Respect for the wounded feelings of those who are yet in bitterness by reason of their irreparable loss, has doubtless suggested the suppression of the facts about to be stated. Should these lines meet the eyes of any whose wounds may be made to bleed afresh by this publication, let them remember that we are responsible to God for the improvement of this painful dispensation of his providence. He has permitted these scenes to pass before our eyes. It is our duty to make a practical application.

The place of my residence is most intimately connected with the railroad on which the calamity occurred. On the morning after the fatal night, business called me into the vicinity of the telegraph-office. I then heard the brief but awful import of the message received. It stated that up-

wards of thirty were killed, and among these was a certain young man known to almost every one in our city. He was noted for his splendid personal appearance, as well as for his noble qualities of heart. He was loved by all who knew him. The news of his sudden death cast a gloom over the business men of our place, and it was hard to realize that he who, only a few hours before, had passed along these streets, was now in eternity.

The news of the disaster reached us on Tuesday morning. The next evening had been designated as the time for opening a magnificent hotel just completed. Guests from a distance in great numbers had been invited. Extensive preparations had been made. It was resolved that the festival and ball should be the greatest that had ever been witnessed in this part of our land. The proprietors, in their princely liberality, had spared no pains or expense to carry out this great design. The citizens all felt deeply interested in the opening of such a splendid and popular establishment. Many of them were making extensive and costly preparations for the ball.

On Tuesday morning, at the very time that the sad message reached our city, a young married woman, the mother of two lovely children, was busily engaged in making certain purchases to complete her equipment for the following evening. Her doting husband had given her special directions to procure these articles. He had left the city only a short time before, and she expected to meet him at the depot that very morning. While yet engaged in one of the stores, the message came. It brought the news that the young man mentioned above, *her husband*, was among the killed. He was on his return to attend that ball.

That night his mangled remains were brought home. So completely was that noble form disfigured, that his most intimate friends could identify it only by certain articles found upon it. That stricken wife and those orphan children never again looked upon the face of their beloved. The mutilated fragments were placed in a metallic coffin. On Wednesday morning, I saw those remains, under the care of the Masonic fraternity, passing along the streets. Knowing as I did the facts just stated, it was to me the saddest procession I ever saw. E. B. R.

For the American Messenger.

## The Power of Example.

Dr. John Godman was an eminent anatomist and naturalist, who, dying at the early age of thirty-one, had already made himself distinguished through the country.

For the greater part of his life he was avowedly an infidel of the French school, rejecting the Bible, and blind to the wonderful proofs furnished by his profession of the existence and power and wisdom of God. But while lecturing in New York, only three years before his death, to his medical class, he was called to the sick, and, as it proved, the dying bed of one of his students who was a Christian. Visiting this young man repeatedly, and witnessing his joyous anticipations of heaven, and his triumph over death, he saw what, as a sceptic, he was unable to comprehend. His philosophy could not explain it. But he turned to the Bible, and there the secret was unfolded. There he found that Christ was the conqueror of death, and that to the believer in Him its sting is taken away.

Now Dr. Godman turned to the study of the Scriptures, and soon found joy and peace in believing; so that, when he finished his course, commending his little family to the Father of the fatherless and the widow's God and portion, with uplifted eyes and a beaming countenance he resigned his spirit to the Redeemer, and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

Before this, however, in the last sickness of his friend Dr. Judson, who, though a brother of the devoted missionary, was an open infidel, Dr. Godman addressed to him a letter which was the means of his conversion, pointing out the way to conquer the fear of death. "Philosophy," he says, "is a fool, and pride a madman. Many persons die with what is called manly firmness; they put on as smooth a face as they can to impose on the spectators, and die firmly. But this is all deception. The true state of their minds at the very time, in nine cases out of ten, is worse than the most horrible imaginings of hell itself. But the man who dies as a man ought to die, is the humble-minded believing Christian. He does not die manfully, but he rests in Jesus."

Dr. Judson also, pointed by this letter to the only Saviour, died in the faith; and through the testimony of his death, one other at least was pointed to the cross of Christ, and led to rest all his hopes upon it. And perhaps this written and published testimony may point some wandering soul to the Lamb of God. Are you prepared for death? On what foundation are you building against that hour? With Godman and Judson, will you not rest your hopes on the rock Christ Jesus?

## Spurgeon, the London Whitefield.

There may be other spirits in heaven that rejoice, besides the angels. Those persons are our friends who have gone before us. I have not many relations in heaven, but I have one whom I dearly love, who, I doubt not, often prayed for me; for she nursed me when I was a child, and brought me up during part of my infancy, and now she sits before the throne in glory—suddenly snatched away. I fancy she looked upon her darling grandson; and as she saw him in the ways of sin and vice and folly, she could not look with sorrow, for there are no tears in the eyes of glorified ones; she could not look with regret, because they cannot know such a feeling before the throne of God; but ah, that moment when, by sovereign grace, I was constrained to pray, when all alone I bent my knee and wrestled, methinks I see her as she said, "Behold, he prayeth; behold, he prayeth." Oh, I can picture her countenance. She seemed to have two heavens for a moment, a double bliss, a heaven in me as well as in herself, when she could say, "Behold, he prayeth." Ah, young man, there is your mother walking the golden streets. She is looking down upon you this hour. She nursed you; on her breast you lay when but a child, and she consecrated you to Jesus Christ. From heaven, she has been watching you with that intense anxiety which is compatible with happiness; this morning she is looking upon you. What sayest thou, young man? Does Christ by his Spirit say in thy heart, "Come unto me?" Dost thou drop the tear of repentance? Methinks I see thy mother as she cries, "Behold, he prayeth." Once more she bends before the throne of God, and says, "I thank thee, O thou ever-gracious One, that he who was my child on earth, has now become thy child in light."

For the American Messenger.

## Fear Not.

Is darkness round about thy way;  
Can faith discern no promised ray  
To mark thy pathway with its light?  
Fear not—for God will lead thee right

Does bitter sorrow rend thy heart,  
And tears of anguish often start?  
Fear not—but trust thy gracious God;  
His gentle hand controls the rod.

Are plans for future good made void,  
Thy fondest earthly hopes destroyed?  
Fear not—for all things work for good  
To souls once washed in Jesus' blood.

Amid the throng, art thou alone—  
No friends thy heart can call its own?  
Fear not—if Christ is ever near,  
His loving smile thy soul will cheer.

Do fierce temptations thee assail,  
And conflicts cause thy heart to fail?  
Fear not—for God will give thee strength,  
And conquer all thy foes at length.

Do toils seem more than flesh can bear—  
Thy spirits faint from ceaseless care?  
Fear not—nor be at all dismayed,  
For God's right hand will give thee aid.

Dost thou recoil from death's cold strife?  
Fear not—Christ died to give thee life;  
The Holy Comforter will bless,  
And Jesus be thy righteousness.

In all the wants and woes of life,  
In all its pleasures and its strife,  
Fear not—but trust the Mighty One  
In Three, the Father, Spirit, Son.

July 11, 1850.

Lella Grey.

## The Resurrection.

The lamented Rev. A. Kingman Nott, the youthful pastor of a large Baptist church in New York, whose sudden death by drowning spread sadness over the community, preaching a few months since on the resurrection to a crowded congregation in the Academy of Music, said:

"There is not a departed joy, or hope, or expectation of the Christian, but will be restored to him in the resurrection of his Lord. I mourn not so much over the body or person of my friend who is gone, as I mourn over the loves and hopes that have been blasted and withered by the same touch of death and buried with him; but the resurrection of the Lord teaches me that there is a day to dawn when there will be restored to me in heaven all that I have loved and lost; and not more eagerly will I clasp to my arms the forms of those who are dear, than I will lay to my heart these blessed memories which I thought had gone perhaps for ever, and which now have come bounding back to me. I care not what or how trivial they may be, they shall all come back. There will not be a treasure over which the jealous eye of the Lord will not watch, and which his careful hand will not restore to the arms and fixed possession of his followers.

"Nothing valuable, nothing dear to the Christian, is too trivial to be treasured by the Lord. Nothing good perishes. It is impossible. Out of the world's wreck, all that is worth saving will be saved. Every corner of the creation will be searched, the sea shall give up the dead that are in it, and death and the grave shall give up the dead that are in them. The trivialities of life! who does not know, though he may blush to have it said, that the dearest and most intimate affections of the heart are often called forth by objects so slight that we would not have another know it—the little things which we have laid away in a corner of our hearts, and upon which we doat so fondly? Has not a parent's fountain of tears been broken up by the sight of a little stray shoe, which once imprisoned a tiny foot that is since enshrouded in the grave? Who does not confess this element of our nature—not of human weakness, but of human power? In the great day of the resurrection there will be nothing missing. The Jesus who, in the mighty act of conquering Death, remembered to lay aside his shroud with care, and folded the napkin and put it away in a place by itself, will overlook nothing. The widow's mite will be returned a thousand fold into her bosom as a mine of overflowing wealth. The cup of cold water given to a disciple will flow back a fountain of everlasting joy. Nothing, I care not whether it be a soft ringlet or the memory of a child's smile, that has been cherished by a saint of the Lord, but will be sacredly preserved, while the earth returns to chaos, and given back to him.

"Oh, then, what a glorious morn will the resurrection be! Methinks I see the glad procession coming up—a multitude, to which the throng I beheld to-night is but a drop in the vast ocean, whom no man can number! I see them coming up in robes of white, with crowns of everlasting joy upon their heads, and palms of victory in their hands. I hear their shouts of gladness as they cry, 'Victory! worthy is the Lamb that hath redeemed us!' Fathers and mothers grasp children long lost. Husbands and wives, separated many centuries, fall again into each other's arms. I hear a voice which calls my own name! I start as did Mary when Jesus gently uttered that word, 'Mary!' That voice! I had dreamed of it all through my life, ever since my boyhood. I know it; and the child is clasped in the arms of its mother, who cries out, 'My son!' and the child looks up and whispers, 'Mother!' in the old familiar strain, and rests again in the bosom that gave it life. I behold these reunions: no one comes alone or empty-handed, but all go up with arms full and laps laden with treasures, which the grave and the sea had buried, but which now are all restored for ever with the coming back of Jesus."

THE MESSENGER.—A pastor in New Jersey says of Mary —, "To benefit the ignorant and neglected families, she started forth to reach their dwellings, traversed the rugged hills, compassing many a weary mile, and succeeded in procuring forty subscribers to the American Messenger; to whose blessed monthly visits the language of the prophet may be applied: 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.'"

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS IN DAKOTA, OR SIOUX.—REV. S. R. Riggs of the Dakota mission expresses thanks for Pilgrim's Progress, printed by the American Tract Society for that tribe of our Aborigines. "A very nice book it is," he says; "our people are much pleased with it."



## AMERICAN MESSENGER.

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER, 1859.

## New England Branch.

The sundering of the Branch Tract Society in Boston from the National Society with which it has so long and happily cooperated, is indeed a mysterious event in the dispensations of an inscrutable Providence. We believe the two long tried Committees were essentially one in spirit and in aim, and that the separation was occasioned in a great degree by extraneous circumstances for which neither of the Committees was directly responsible, and by misapprehensions some of which are distinctly corrected and we hope permanently removed by the official document inserted in another column. Some prominent events in the history of the late Branch are vividly before our minds, and we think must interest all who wish the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom.

1. *Its original organization on a truly catholic basis.* The active founders and liberal donors in 1814, Porter, Woods, Stuart, Edwards, Adams, Farrar, Morse, Codman, Huntington, Church, Payson, Bartlet, Brown, Reed, Hooper, Ropes, Walley, Homes, Homer, and others, were almost all of them Congregationalists. How came they, before God and men, to adopt a Constitution, with an act of incorporation, binding them to issue only those gospel truths in which true Christians harmonize? Those who well knew the men, and the times in which they acted, can answer this question, and the answer honors at once their memory and the Master they served. The great revival of spiritual religion at the beginning of the century had roused the stagnant churches to see that men must be born again by the power of the Spirit or for ever perish, and that Christians were bound to publish salvation by Christ to every creature. Under these impressions, with a noble liberality and largeness of view, they organized "the New England Tract Society." Their aim had no limits of denomination or locality. Wherever souls could be saved they wished the Society to extend its benefits.

There was another influence which guided them, the example and success of the parent Religious Tract Society, formed in London fifteen years before by Burder, Bogue, Rowland Hill, and men of kindred spirit. The substance of the London Society's exposition of their principles, the New England Society adopted as their own appeal to the Christian community, and issued it, with the Constitution, etc., as their first Tract. Their creed was summarily expressed in the following glowing terms, which were rung out almost as far as the English language was spoken on both sides of the Atlantic, and on which substantially the British and American Tract Societies have steadfastly acted, as the only principle on which a permanent union can practically exist. Among "the qualities which should be sought for, and are united in a good Tract," the original address of both Societies designates as first,

"Pure Truth. This, flowing from the sacred fountain of the Bible, should run from beginning to end, uncontaminated with error, undisturbed by human systems; clear as crystal, like the river of life. There should be nothing in it of the shibboleth of a sect; nothing to recommend one denomination, or to throw odium on another; nothing of the acrimony of contending parties against those that differ from them: but pure, good-natured Christianity, in which all the followers of the Lamb who are looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life, can unite with pleasure, as in one great common cause. Nor should any worldly scheme be interwoven with the truth, or attempted to be concealed under its folds. Here should not be seen the slightest vestige of any carnal end, in any form, or for any purpose, however laudable some may think it; nothing but divine truth, unmingled, unadulterated, and pure as it came from heaven, fit for the whole human race to imbibe."

That such was the spirit and aim of the Committee and officers of the New England Society in 1822, we well knew as then engaging in their service; and how earnestly they then labored to extend its blessings over the whole land. The next year the name of the Society was changed to "the American Tract Society." Located in Andover, an inland town, their only means of extending their work over the country was that of establishing in the principal towns Depositories of Tracts for sale, and they had in 1824 one hundred and twenty-two such Depositories, of which twenty-six were in the Southern and South-western states.

2. *Its becoming a Branch of the National Society formed in New York in 1825.* While the Society, whose printing was done at Andover and its anniversaries held in Boston, was endeavoring to diffuse its blessings throughout the whole country, the New York Religious Tract Society, formed two years earlier, was projecting the same design, and in December, 1824, invited the Society at Andover and Boston to remove to New York, and avail itself of the high commercial advantages of that city.

The eastern Society held a special meeting in Boston, January 11, 1825, when they resolved, "That this Society cordially receives overtures from a Committee in the city of New York, inviting us to cooperate in measures for imparting energy and efficiency to the Tract system of this country;" and the Society referred it to their Executive Committee to correspond on the subject, and take such measures as they should think would "best promote the Tract system of this country."

Pending these negotiations, \$20,000 was raised in New York for a Tract-house; a preliminary public meeting was held; and delegates from all the Tract Societies in the country were invited to meet in Convention in New York, May 10, to organize a National Institution. That Convention was held; a Constitution was agreed on, and the next day the Society was solemnly organized with perfect unanimity. Dr. Justin Edwards, then Secretary of the Society at Boston, was elected a member of the Publishing Committee, and a Delegation consisting of Rev. Drs. Milnor, Spring, Sommers, Edwards, Knox, and Sumnerfield, was appointed to attend the coming anniversary of the Society in Boston, and invite it to become a Branch.

The four first named of the Delegation were present at that anniversary, and on the ensuing day the Society met to receive the Delegation and act on this subject. The incidents of that meeting are vivid to our recollection. Dr. Edwards, as Secretary of the Society at Boston, and just elected a member of the Publishing Committee of the National Institution, and also pastor of the church at Andover where those worshipped who manufactured the books, made such a calm, clear, candid statement of all the facts in the case as few other men could make; and the solemn question then arose whether, for the greatest good, that Society should become a Branch. On this question there was no debate of parties opposed to each other; no allusion was made to the transfer of the manufacturing, or how the Publishing Committee of which Dr. Edwards was already a member should hereafter be constituted; kindness and courtesy, and a sense of responsibility reigned. Dr. Woods drew a resolution in favor of the union which he read, and while he was proposing some amendments, Dr. Griffin drew and offered the following which was adopted we believe without a dissenting voice: namely,

"Resolved, That it is highly desirable for this Society to become a Branch of the National Society established in New York, and that the Executive Committee be author-

ized to consummate this union upon such principles as will promote the great object of both Societies."

The Delegation then met the Executive Committee; the terms of union were agreed on, and were reported to and sanctioned by the Executive Committee in New York; and public statements of these harmonious results were made to the Christian community, both by Dr. Woods as chairman of the Committee at Boston, and by Dr. Milnor chairman of the Delegation and of the Executive Committee at New York.

This happy union of unshaken Christian confidence and active cooperation existed more than thirty years; and the unending songs of heaven will tell the story of the triumphs won to the Redeemer by his blessing on these united labors, extended all over our country, including the labors of many hundreds of colporteurs and the cooperation of thousands of private Christians, and diffused in every accessible portion of the world.

3. *The Society at Boston a few years since strengthened these bonds of union by revising its Constitution,* with the assistance of Hon. Simon Greenleaf, the distinguished jurist, then a member of that Committee. The catholic principle was guarded in this revision by requiring, that it distribute "such books and tracts as may be calculated to receive the approbation of Christians of all denominations usually termed evangelical;" and that "no book or tract shall be published or circulated so long as any member of the Executive Committee shall object to the same."

4. *The Separation.* This was proposed in the business meeting in Boston, May 1858, but referred to the Executive Committee, and consummated May 1859; the Executive Committee was reduced from twelve to seven, dropping four long tried members. That Committee is now authorized to fill its own vacancies; and the Constitution changed to require that no book or Tract be issued so long as any member of "the Committee of Publication" (now comprising three members) shall object. Near the close of the meeting in 1858, a resolution was adopted "that the Executive Committee be instructed to pay over no money to New York except for publications"—thus suddenly arresting every donation and legacy intended to support the National Society's five hundred colporteurs or to aid any part of its operations throughout the world.

The official document in another column distinctly shows that the Executive Committee of the National Society at New York have steadfastly pursued their original course of action, still publishing from their unchanged stereotype-plates. They continue to publish, as hitherto, on all points whatsoever, whether doctrines or morals, duties, evils or vices, the whole revealed truth of God as presented in Scripture language in its own "divinely inspired aspect and connection;" and to publish the writings of good men, so far as adapted to be useful, and so far as they believe vital Christians harmonize in their interpretation of the inspired word. To accommodate a large body of Christians who cherish these views, a New England Branch has now been organized, through which all who adhere to the original catholic principle, as understood and acted on in past years, may still cooperate with the National Society, while others are free to act according to the dictates of their own conscience.

W. A. H.

## The American Messenger.

We tender our thanks to able writers who avail themselves of our columns to address near two hundred thousand families on the great salvation. Facts from pastors illustrating the work of the Spirit in the hearts of men, like the narrative of "Swearing Henry" in another column, are specially acceptable.

We take this occasion to announce to all subscribers for the Messenger, The Child's Paper, and Botschafter who have heretofore been supplied through the Branch Society at 28 Cornhill, Boston, that as that Society have withdrawn from the National Institution, and issued a monthly paper of their own, all orders and subscriptions for the American Messenger, Child's Paper, and Botschafter, and all communications and remittances of funds intended for the National Society will receive prompt attention if addressed to George Punchard, Secretary of the New England Branch, No. 3 Cornhill, Boston.

## The Value of Colportage.

The successful prosecution of Colportage by the American Tract Society for eighteen years, has demonstrated its efficiency as a means of evangelizing the destitute masses.

In addition to its direct work of carrying evangelical truth from house to house, and urging upon the inmates the claims of a crucified Redeemer, its indirect influence in neutralizing the power of a vicious literature, in creating a taste for better books, and especially in suggesting and stimulating individual and local effort for Christ, is incalculable.

There are many thousand Christians in the various churches who have the ability and the disposition and the time to work for the Master, and only wait for some available mode of acting. To such, the earnest colporteur, speeding from house to house on his mission of love, is an exemplar showing them how they may go about doing good; and thousands have thus been stimulated to personal effort for the salvation of men. Thus each faithful colporteur leaves behind him scores of quickened laborers in the vineyard of his Lord.

How wide-spread and blessed is this indirect result, few imagine; but it must be great, when we remember that there are now actually at work among the churches, and exploring the waste places of our land, of these self-sacrificing laborers, including students for their vacations, in the Northern and Middle states, 193; in the Western states, 165; in the Southern and South-western states, 236.

These 594 zealous workers, bringing printed and spoken truth into close contact with the hearts of the masses, are living epistles known and read of all men.

How many of the 15,000 souls visited daily by these living epistles will be led to Christ, how many who are already Christians will be invigorated in the divine life, and led to more strenuous exertion for the salvation of others, none can tell; but sure we are, from the known and recorded results, that souls are saved and God is glorified by this instrumentality.

As in all the history of this enterprise, so now, the Committee never refuse a commission to any candidate who gives satisfactory evidence of having the true colporteur qualifications and spirit. Are there not scores of godly men, from Maine to Texas, who could each support an additional laborer? Every such patron is welcomed to a participation in the work and its gracious reward. The Committee solicit earnestly and hopefully an immediate increase of donations to support the many laborers who are found willing to enter on this self-denying service.

## Results of One-third of the Year.

The receipts of the American Tract Society for the four months of the Society's current year, ending August 1, have been for publications sold, \$58,086 27, and in donations and legacies, \$28,616 48; in all, \$86,702 75; being a few hundred dollars less than for the corresponding months of the previous year.

During the same period grants have been made to the destitute through colporteurs, home, and foreign missionaries, to mission Sunday-schools, to seamen's chaplains, Port Societies, and other channels to the amount of 16,094,130 pages, and the applications for grants are constantly increasing, especially for the foreign population and for seamen.

To enable the Society to meet the demands thus made upon it, and to sustain its large number of colporteurs, laboring among the destitute, and to furnish the necessary pecuniary aid for Tract operations at the various mission stations in foreign lands, will require prompt and generous contributions.

Donations may be forwarded to O. R. Kingsbury, Assistant Treasurer, 150 Nassau-street, New York; or to George Punchard, Secretary of the New England Branch, No. 3 Cornhill, Boston.

## The Righteousness of God.

There are some books of the Bible which can only be read with thorough profit when you have found the key. Luther somewhere tells us that he used to be greatly damped by this expression in the outset of the epistle to the Romans: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed." By "righteousness" Luther understood the justice of God, his attributes of moral rectitude; and so understanding it, he could scarcely see the superiority of the gospel over the law, and at all events his troubled conscience could find no comfort in it. But when at last it was revealed to him that the term here alludes, not to an attribute of God, but to the atonement of Immanuel—that it means, not justice, but God's justifying righteousness, the righteousness which God incarnate wrought out, and which is imputed to the sinner believing—the whole epistle was lit up with a joyful illumination, and the context and many other passages which used to look so dark and hostile, at once "leaped up and fondled" him with friendly recognition. To Luther, ever after, the gospel was glorious as the revelation and the vehicle to the sinner of a righteousness divine.

Hamilton of London.

## Divine Providence in Particulars.

The bitterness of our griefs arises from our denying or forgetting that whatsoever lies heavy in our lot is laid there by the hand of Him who is ordering all things for our good. However vexing may be the annoyances of our pilgrim state, the loving soul can bear much from the hand of a compassionate Creator and Redeemer. He who plans in wisdom and executes in power is your Keeper, your Shield, and your exceeding great Reward. Nothing is too hard for his might, nothing too little for his condescension.

You may use a child-like confidence in coming to your Father in heaven; you may unobscure before him your smallest disquietudes. The strongest Christians are those who, from holy habit, hasten with every thing to God. Summon this doctrine to your aid, not merely when the weightier class of calamities oppress you, but amidst the perturbations of ordinary life, the collisions of business, the perplexities of the household, the mutations of health and spirits. The very moods which make our wheels drag slowly through the daily task, the tempers of those around us, the petty disappointment and chagrin, the slight, the cross, the look of unkindness, and the silence of rebuke—all are dispensed in season and in love. Happy is the soul which, having secured an interest in Providence by securing acceptance in Christ, can roll its burden on the Lord, and lie down secure amidst the tempest, because its Father is at the helm.

Rev. Dr. James W. Alexander.

## The Revival in Ireland.

The remarkable religious movement in the north of Ireland seems to be making constant progress, pervading all classes of society, and uniting in closer bands the members of evangelical churches. In towns, villages, and country districts, where the people formerly spent the evenings in frivolous and sinful amusements, they now collect by the wayside or at the church to listen to the word of God and to preaching. The Moderator of the late Irish General Assembly said, in his address before that body, "As we scan the tokens of new life that everywhere present themselves throughout our borders, we are instinctively reminded of the marvels of the Pentecostal jubilee itself." Many Roman-catholics have become the hopeful subjects of this revival, to the great indignation of the priests, who, while they denounce the movement, seek to turn it to account by selling holy water, medals, and charms, for "this sickness," as they call it.

In connection with this revival, a great union prayer-meeting was held in Belfast, in the spacious grounds of the Royal Botanic Gardens. Special trains of great length were run by the railroad companies to accommodate those from the surrounding country who desired to be present. It was computed that fifteen thousand persons came in from abroad, and that from thirty-five to forty thousand persons were present at the services. The streets were thronged with staid and solemn people, the majority with Bibles or hymn-books in their hands, on their way to the place of meeting. The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Irish Presbyterian church presided, and was supported by the different Protestant ministers of the city and vicinity. The exercises consisted of singing, short addresses, and prayer. As the whole of the vast multitude could not hear the speakers on the central platform, various subordinate meetings, numbering twenty sometimes, were formed. A number of persons, during the exercises, were struck down under a sense of deep and overpowering conviction of sin. At the close of the meeting, the immense concourse of people left the gardens in the most orderly manner, the majority evidently impressed with the conviction that it had been good for them to be there.

## The Bible the only Revelation.

One great, appalling fact meets the student of history. It is, that however men may advance in mere literature and science, the progress of the world outside the Bible has ever been downward. Paul has traced this history, and painted it in lurid colors in the first chapter of the Romans. The whole theory of modern Pantheism, in respect to a secret law of spiritual progress upward, is a lie; false in its premises, and false in its facts. No nation without the Bible has ever advanced from a corrupt to a pure faith. The traditions, the pure truths of an earlier and happier faith are gradually corrupted. Men never advance upon them. They go down from pure Deism to Polytheism, and then to the most horrible corruptions of their new faith.

Turning from this scene of darkness and despair, where hope dies and religion passes into superstition or doubt, we open the Bible. Here the grand truths that bless and save, are written out broadly. The law is here in plain, unmistakable characters. It is here shining out as the sun in his glory—surrounded by the presence, and confirmed by the manifest authority of God. All the truths most essential for such a fallen race to know are here, not in obscure oracles, not in mere symbols, but in characters

of light and glory. Nay, more, these truths are brought out and illustrated in the lives of individuals and nations.

It reveals to us a glorious Captain of salvation made perfect through suffering, who is everywhere leading up to the heights of glory a vast multitude of ransomed souls. Oh, glorious and blessed wisdom of the Infinite, shining from these blessed pages, whose calm light penetrates the dark heart and with divine power creates anew our fallen nature, imparts peace amid the war of passion, gives strength in conscious weakness, joy in the hour of deepest sorrow, and hope triumphant when the earth and all it contains is slipping from beneath, and eternity waits for our coming.

Rev. Dr. Fisher, President of Hamilton College.

## Finland.

An interesting letter is received from Miss Emily Bockelman of Jacobstad, in the north of Finland, enclosing a donation of \$10, from her father Captain Bockelman of the ship Aallotar, and requesting Finnish Tracts, and publications in Swedish, which were granted to the amount of \$25, and sent to care of Rev. James Buck, Bethel Union, Liverpool. Her letter breathes indeed the spirit of the gospel of Christ as one taught from above, and she says many of the common people in Finland are hungry for religious tracts and books. She expresses a great desire to visit this country, that she may become more acquainted with Christians here who are so actively engaged in spreading the gospel in all lands, not forgetting those who do business in the great waters.

## Appeal from Antioch, Syria.

The Southern Armenian mission, at their annual meeting at Antioch near the close of April, expressed their thanks to the American Tract Society for funds granted the last year, and requested \$2,000 for the current year. They had issued the Bible Text-Book, and a volume of Tracts in Armenian, and now are anxious to prepare works in Armeno-Turkish: that is, Tracts in the Turkish language printed in the Armenian character. Mr. J. Caffing, who writes in behalf of the mission, says:

"Our churches are growing larger. Their number is increasing. The number of places where the gospel is preached greatly multiplying, the number where it might be preached is greater still. Mind that has been long asleep is now awake, inquiring, and hungry for the truth. Shall these hungry, inquiring souls not have the truth in their own language?"

"It will interest you to learn that a little church was organized yesterday here in Antioch, and the Lord's supper administered the first time in its simple, scriptural form and significance, perhaps for centuries. Thus the kingdom of heaven is again drawing near to this interesting part of the world."

## New England Branch of the American Tract Society.

THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY, NEW YORK, TO ITS PATRONS AND FRIENDS, ESPECIALLY IN NEW ENGLAND.

The American Tract Society at Boston has recently dissolved the connection which for thirty-four years has existed between it and the American Tract Society at New York. It is admitted that this separation has been occasioned by the public excitement in reference to the subject of slavery. The Constitutions of these two Societies contain virtually the same requirements and limitations. To these an interpretation has now been given by the official acts of the Boston Society so diverse from the judgment of the other, as to terminate in sundering, by the Boston Society, our long-cherished relations. Asking only for ourselves the liberty to prosecute our own work, unmolested and unobstructed, we are the last to impose any restrictions upon the liberty of others, or to utter a word which is inconsistent with Christian courtesy in regard to those who dissent from us.

The Executive Committee of the American Tract Society, formed in New York in 1825 by a convention of delegates from all sections of the United States, take this occasion to announce the course they deem it proper to pursue in that important section of which Boston is the commercial centre, and to present a statement of the principles according to which they endeavor to fulfill their trust.

The fundamental principle of Christian union, understood and harmoniously acted on by the Committee and Executive officers of this Society for thirty-four years, is substantially this: To publish all the truths of the Inspired word, which promise to be generally useful, and in respect to which there is agreement among evangelical Christians. This simple and comprehensive test is applied to every treatise proposed for publication by the Society, whether it relate to slavery or any other topic.

The Committee have not considered themselves as required or expected to publish every thing, even of acknowledged importance. There seems to be an impression in some quarters that this Society occupies the position of an independent religious teacher, whose office it is to inculcate all truth in its relative proportions, and who may be chargeable with culpable dereliction if he shuns to declare any portion of the counsel of God. This is not the ground occupied by the American Tract Society. It has never pledged itself to issue publications on all ethical and religious subjects. It has regarded itself as interdicted by the terms of its organization from publishing on questions of morals and religion which are in dispute among the Christian men who compose its constituency. In acknowledging this limitation, the executive officers are very far from admitting that the topics thus excepted are matters of indifference; but being controverted points among a membership of different names and sections, they are on that account excluded from the legitimate province of this Society.

On all subjects of public importance, the Committee as individuals have their personal and independent opinions, which they feel at the fullest liberty to express in other spheres and through other appropriate channels; but they would regard themselves as guilty of a breach of trust and honor, should they publish their individual sentiments and preferences on any subject through the presses of this Society, in the face of a decided opposition from a part of their constituency. The Committee confess themselves unable to discern in all this any compromise of Christian principle, any unmanly or unchristian subservency to sectional prejudice, since it is the fundamental principle of this Society that men who disagree on many subjects, and those of the gravest importance, may combine together for a certain other purpose in which they do agree—THE SALVATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL BY THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST. Shall they act as arbiters between differing parties, and issue their own opinions as judicial decisions? Or shall they not rather forego the publication of matters in dispute, and adhere to that one class of truths which, according to the belief of all evangelical Christians, are inspired of God to bear hope and life to the human soul?

The question now before the Committee and the country is not whether to organize a new national Society upon such a basis; but, an organization having been made and supported by the representatives of all sections upon this simple principle of evangelical union, Whether those who are entrusted with its executive responsibility can be justified in departing from its Constitution.