

Correspondence.

REV. E. P. HAMMOND'S LETTERS FROM PALESTINE.

On the 14th of December, our party commenced our journey through the Holy Land.

Though we numbered only four, still we found eighteen horses and mules and nine men were needed to take us safely and comfortably through. Our tents were not used the first night, as we had been invited to spend the night with Rev. Samuel Jessup in Sidon, while Dr. Budington and wife, our pleasant travelling companions from Brooklyn, accepted the hospitality of Rev. Mr. Eddy. Both these men, sent out by the American Board, we found full of zeal for the Master. We were at family worship at Mr. Eddy's, where were present four native converts. We heard one of them pray in his own tongue. Though we could not understand the words he used, still we felt that he prayed in the Spirit, and we joined with him. Eight hours in the saddle the first day made sleep most refreshing to us, but the next day we were on our horses early again.

A little after eight o'clock, we took a look at the modern city, which stands where Sidon, the grandson of Noah, founded the city, which has been called "the Mother of all the Phœnicians." We found it any thing but attractive in appearance. It has now a population of only 9000. We were glad enough to get out of its filthy, crooked streets towards our missionary friends, and to turn our faces towards the "Tomb of the Kings," where we found the French Consul making excavations. Not a name could we find to tell of all the proud monarchs of "Great Zidon" once sat upon her throne. We were told that sarcophagi of admirable workmanship, as well as beautiful marble columns had been broken up and burnt to make lime. This may be one reason we saw so few ruins.

On our way to Tyre, we passed ancient Sarepta or Zarepheth. While upon the spot, we read with deep interest the seventeenth chapter of 1 Kings, giving the account of Elijah's visit to that city.

After another long ride of more than eight hours, we found our tents pitched by the side of the wall of Tyre, close to the ruins of the ancient city, which are now all scattered about in the water. The next morning, as the Doctor and I went in bathing, we laid our clothes on a large, red granite pillar, half imbedded in the sand. If you will turn to the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh chapters of Ezekiel, you will find a most graphic account of the destruction of that wicked city. We, too, could but exclaim, "How art thou destroyed that wast inhabited of sea-faring men, the renowned city which wast strong in the sea, she and her inhabitants, which caused their terror to be on all that haunt it." As we looked in vain for traces of old Tyre, or Palætyrus, which Alexander the Great cast into the sea, for a bridge over which to lead his armies to the capture of insular Tyre, the words of that old prophet seemed to say in our ears, "For thus saith the Lord God, When I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited; when I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall cover thee; I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more; though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found." We thought, too, of the time when Paul visited the city (Acts xxi. 3-7). He must have found warm friends and true Christians even among that wicked people; for he says, "They all brought us on our way, with their wives and children, till we were out of the city, and we kneeled down on the shore and prayed."

A few miles east of Tyre, we found the tomb of Hiram. It was most impressive to look upon those great stones, piled up twenty-one feet high, and to reflect that since the days of Solomon, these had marked the last resting place of his friend, who rendered such valuable assistance in furnishing material for the temple. We halted for lunch at Kanah. Michael Hany, our most excellent dragoman, in a short time spread out for us, under an olive tree, his tables, for which our long ride in the cool air had given us an appetite. But before we were half through, all the village children had gathered around us. The way we took from Tyre to Baniyas was not very much frequented, so we were quite a novelty in Kanah. We seized upon the opportunity to hold a children's meeting. No bell had to be rung, for they were all there. Michael interpreted while we tried to tell them about the children in America, and especially how some of them have learned to love the Saviour. They seemed quite moved at the thought that we had come all the way from America, to visit the land where the Lord Jesus died on the cross to save sinners.

Our way from Kanah lay through one of the deep, solemn gorges of the "Hills of Naphtali." We had read in Dr. Thompson's "Land and the Book" that it was one of those "wadies" which "now abound in large leopards, in bears, wolves, hyenas, and many other kinds of destructive animals." For a path, we had only the rocky bed of a mountain torrent. In fact, we often made the remark, that the "hills" might, with as much propriety, have been called mountains. Were they not in the vicinity of Mount Hermon, 10,000 feet high, they might have been so called. Repeatedly we had to dismount to let the horses leap over great rocks. Just at sunset we reached

the summit. In front of us, lay Tibnen crowned with its ancient castle, built by the crusaders. We found our tents pitched just beneath its ruins, which we took much interest in exploring the next day. As we gazed upon those acres of massive ruins, we were more impressed than ever with the great work of the crusaders in seeking to rescue from the hands of the Mohammedans the sacred places in Palestine. We learned that for eighty years this stronghold, built A. D. 1107, was held by the Christians. It was captured by Saladin, whose tomb we remembered to have seen at Damascus.

A few years after, the Christians, under the Duke of Brabant, attempted to re-take it. For four weeks they battered away at its high walls, and when it was quite ready to capitulate, dissensions arose among the besiegers, and all their efforts were lost.

Alas! how often do God's people follow the disastrous example of these crusaders! Who does not remember the time, in almost every community, when Satan's kingdom seemed ready, like this castle, to surrender; and when it appeared as if only a little more prayer and united effort would accomplish the desired result?

On our way to Baniyas (Cæsarea Philippi), the first object of attraction was the extensive view from a high hill called Munaiah. Fifteen hundred feet below us lay the valley and lake of Huleh or Merom. The lofty summit of Lebanon was all a-glow with the bright light of the morning sun. To the south of us lay the hills of Galilee and Samaria. Pages would not suffice to speak of all we saw and felt from that high lookout. The view might be likened to that from the Rigi in Switzerland, owing more especially to its isolated position. On every side of us were places of scriptural interest.

Below, were the sources of the sacred river, in which the Son of God was baptized. The scene left an impression on our minds which no words can describe. From that high eminence we got a very good idea of the principal localities in Northern Palestine. In a few hours' time we were by the side of one of the cool "Fountains of Jordan," which spring up from the earth just by the side of old Dan, the city which marks the northern boundary of the possessions of the children of Israel. The amount of water which we there saw bubbling up, fresh and sparkling from the earth, was sufficient to turn a large water-wheel. I had never seen any thing like it.

We found scarcely "one stone left upon another" to mark the spot where stood Dan, the city which Benhadad smote, nearly a thousand years before the advent of the Son of God. (1 Kings xv. 20.)

As we were toiling up the hill from Dan to Cæsarea Philippi, now called Baniyas, we met Rev. Mr. Eddy, who had kindly come down to meet us, that he might point out to us some of the most interesting ruins of that city, where Christ healed the demoniac after coming down from the mount of transfiguration. We found traces of a large city scattered in all directions. It must have contained many fine buildings, for we found within its fallen or crumbling walls massive stones and beautiful prostrate columns.

We were soon at another source of the Jordan, where we saw quite a large stream bursting from beneath the great "cave of Baniyas," by the side of which were the ruins of the temple of Panium. On the face of the rock, hundreds of feet in perpendicular height, were Greek inscriptions, showing the temple to have been of heathen origin. But the chief thought which impressed our minds at Baniyas, was the assurance that our Saviour had been there in the days of His incarnation, and that He had doubtless drank of the same fountain which was so refreshing to us after our long ride. The view from the eminence on which Baniyas is situated, all alive, as it is with sparkling streams of water, gushing from the foot of Mount Hermon, reminded me a little of my visit, five years since, to Tirol, fifteen miles from Rome, where Horace and Macenas had their country seats. But while that was classic ground, this was more sacred by the visit of Jesus the Messiah. After healing the blind man at Bethesda, he doubtless came along the east bank of the Jordan, into the coast of Cæsarea Philippi. (Matt. xvi. 13.) Most likely in or near the city took place his conversation with regard to his divinity, when Peter exclaimed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them, Moses and Elias, talking with him." (Matt. 17.) There seems to be little doubt in the minds of those who have made it a matter of study, that on some point of Mount Hermon, rather than on Mount Tabor, the heavenly visitants "appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." (Luke ix. 31.) No one supposes it was on the top, but as we turned our eyes up Hermon's lofty sides, we could easily fix upon numerous projecting points, where the scene might have transpired.

Every true Christian is both a laborer and a soldier, working with one hand fighting with the other, and called by the sound of the Gospel alternately to his work and to the conflict. Neh. iv. 17.

CONSISTENCY vs. HYPOCRISY.

A WORD FOR THE MINISTER'S WIFE.

Mrs. Sharp remarked one day, "I do not think it looks well for a minister's wife to dress so gay as Mrs. Meek does. We are taught to look up to the minister's family for an example in all things."

Indeed! Madam, what is there that should lead you to prescribe a rule of conduct on the ground that she is a minister's wife? Does she hold any office that makes her different from any other woman in the parish? Did the parish have any thing to do or say in the choice that placed her in that position? Has she taken any vow or made any profession that requires the duty of plain dressing any more than any woman in the church? Certainly not. She has professed religion, united with the church and taken the covenant, neither more nor less than you and every other sister in the church. If she is under any obligation to heed your remark, then all are.

Or is it because her husband is a minister that she ought to live more strictly? If so, it were well if the Lord would provide more ministers, and would ordain that all the brethren of the church should hold the office for a time, that their wives might be brought under obligation, to keep his commandments, if there is no other way.

Or is it because her husband occupies a prominent place in the community, that makes her example of more importance? It is true that the Scriptures have noticed this reason. But do not lose sight of the rule in the application. If that be your reason, then ought the wife of Hon. Mr. Office to dress plainly. There is also Mrs. Merchant, able to expend more money than any other sister in the church, and holding the most influential position in the society of the town. Whatever enterprise is undertaken, it must have her sanction. If she adopts it, it is carried through; if she opposes it, it is killed. She has a far more prominent place than the minister's wife. Have you ever said that you thought Mrs. Merchant, the observed of all observers, should dress in a very plain way, because of her prominent position? It is safe to say you never did. You have more likely said that she was excusable for her extravagance, that she ought to dress according to the circle she moved in.

Did I not hear you say, once, that you would yourself like to have a set of nice furs like those of Mrs. Merchant? yet the minister's wife never wore furs, nor expects to while her husband remains in the ministry. She would be glad to have money enough to pay their family expenses, and educate her children, scarcely hoping for a competence for old age. I doubt, Mrs. Sharp, whether you had in your mind one valid reason for your remark about Mrs. Meek.

But have you considered what was really implied by your basing the rule upon the ground that she was the minister's wife? You meant to excuse all the other ladies of the church, yourself included, from the performance of a certain irksome duty. And who are you, pretending to deal out indulgences for sin in the church of Christ? Where did you get your authority? We know there are those who pretend to have such authority, but they tell whence and how it comes, and put a respectable appearance upon it. We, in our church, are accustomed to call it a false and blasphemous claim. But how do you dare to give to any one license to sin? If there is any thing that the minister's wife ought to do, it is commanded in the law of Christ, which law has made no exceptions. If you intend to break the law, trusting that at the judgment there will be respect of persons, you will find out your mistake to your sorrow. The matter of the dress of the minister's wife is one on which there might be room for difference of opinion. The law concerning what is befitting a woman professing godliness, needs to be interpreted with sound wisdom, and with great caution, lest there be error leaning to the side of selfishness. It is quite possible that it might have been better for the minister's wife to expend less upon her wardrobe, that she might show to the world that dress was not a matter of the first importance, since we look for another country, even a heavenly—that she should have saved more for the future, or for the poor or the cause of Christ. But the decision of that question, in her case, would apply to every woman in the church, including Mrs. Merchant and Mrs. Sharp. The rule is essentially the same for all.

Whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, the same shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven. If you deliberately adhere to the principle of your remark, you have yet to learn the elements of the kingdom of God, and what is the nature of its binding force upon yourself. You cannot be allowed to claim the name of Christian unless you mean sincerely to obey all of Christ's commands.

Your remark also implied, that the fundamental duties of Christian life may originate in man, rather than in God; that a person may have the choice of two different courses of life, one of which will make the law of God of none effect, and the other will make it applicable. It contains the seed principle of that error of Romanism called Voluntary Humility. You assume that the minister's wife was bound to greater sanctity, but had she occupied a different position, she might have been excused. There is scarcely a step from this to the notion, that there is a great merit in assuming such a position. Here we can see the origin of the Romish idea of the sanctity of the priesthood, and popehood

and sainthood; and let this idea find a place in the hearts of the people, and there will grow up that other of the supererogatory merit of that sanctity, and a new method of atonement will be adopted, whereby men may be saved some other way than by the merits of the only name given under heaven whereby we must be saved. This consciousness of superior sanctity on the part of the saint would lead to pride and consequent corruption, and to ignoring of the fact that all are dependent upon God, as mere servants, who, when they have done all that was commanded, would be merely unprofitable, and to forgetting that he that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin. If any wonder how the mystery of iniquity began to work in the primitive church, let them look about them.

Furthermore, that remark was made in the real Pharisaical Spirit of lading others with heavy burdens, and not lifting them with one of their fingers. Besides that, it contained another idea of Phariseeism—the rule was drawn not from the law of God, but from the traditions of men.

This tradition is no doubt shaped somewhat by the model which ministers' wives have furnished. As far as it conforms to the law of God, let it be followed, but only because it is the law of God. In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. The remark was also uttered with something of a self-righteous feeling,—the critic and denouncer thinking that she was more righteous in her station than the other in hers.—Puritan.

REMARKABLE RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT IN SHANTUNG PROVINCE.

FOO CHOW, Nov., 1866.

A communication with the above caption has just appeared in the *China Mail*, Hong Kong. It is from the pen of Rev. J. Doolittle, of the North China Mission, and, therefore, reliable. As your readers may not otherwise see a narrative whose facts seem so strange, yet blessed here, I cheerfully communicate it through your columns. I must condense somewhat, but will be faithful in every essential particular.

About last February an aged stranger was seen in one of the streets of Tientsin (where Mr. Doolittle resides) inquiring where he could get information about the Roman Catholic religion. Some one directed him to the Protestant chapel of the English Methodist (new connection) Mission. He eagerly sought the place, and found the native assistant preaching from the Beatitudes on the "blessedness of the pure in heart." He manifested great joy on hearing the discourse, and subsequently made the following statements:

"He lived in Loh-Ting, distant from Tientsin about 450 li (over 100 English miles) and about 7 or 8 only from the south border of Chili province. His age was 68 years. Some months previous he was sick, and believed himself near death. He felt that he was a very great sinner, and unprepared. His mind was deeply depressed, and he could find no rest nor satisfaction. One night he dreamed that he was conducted by a superior being, to the gate of a magnificent palace. He had never seen any thing so grand and beautiful. Looking in, he saw that it was filled with splendor, and inhabited by many happy beings like his conductor. On attempting to enter, he was told that such as he were not admitted. No unclean or vile person was allowed within. And then the great difference between himself and these happy ones was pointed out to him. He was assured, however, that he was not to die for some time, and that, if he became pure, after death he could enter the palace and join in its pursuits. He awoke astonished, but could not comprehend the dream. Full of longing to understand it, he slept again, and dreamed substantially the same dream. In the morning he told it to his friends, but no one could give a satisfactory explanation. He recovered from his illness, but his distress of mind increased in view of the vision. At length it occurred to him that there were some native Roman Catholics in his neighborhood. He went to them and described his feelings and his dream, but they were utterly unable to answer his inquiries. They directed him, however, to go to Tientsin, and seek instructions from Roman Catholics there. He started without delay, and, on reaching the city, was directed to the Protestant chapel above referred to.

His story and evident sincerity excited much interest at the time: For several weeks he attended the chapel services, read Christian books, and learned all he could about the new doctrine, which he embraced joyfully. Finally, he returned to his distant home, carrying with him the precious books.

After several weeks had elapsed, he appeared again at Tientsin, with a letter signed by a number of his neighbors, who had become deeply interested in the statement of his experience at that city, and in the truths of the books. The letter requested that a native Christian might be sent to Loh-Ting to explain them more fully. It also stated that the interest was widening, and that many desired instruction.

In accordance with this request, the Methodist Mission sent back with the old gentleman a supply of books and a native assistant. The latter was absent about a month, and on his return gave wonderful accounts of the serious attachment of a comparatively large number of the people to the Gospel. Soon afterwards, two colporteurs were sent to Loh-Ting, who spent a month there. On their return they confirmed the previous accounts,

and bore an invitation for a foreign missionary to go and administer baptism to those who should be judged suitable candidates. But as one of the two members of the mission was then absent at Shanghai, and the other could not be spared from his post, a native preacher and his wife were sent instead of the foreign missionary.

On the 4th of September, one of the missionaries started for the place, and in nine or ten days sent back intelligence of a deeply interesting nature, more than confirming the statements made by the natives. The other missionary then went to Loh-Ting and assisted his associate in the work of examination and baptism. They both returned on the 29th of September, and made known the following interesting facts:—After careful and prayerful examination, they baptized 45 persons, of whom 18 are women and 27 are men. There are several tens more, a good portion of whom are females, who desire baptism. The village of Loh-Ting district, where the chief interest centres, bears the name of the family clan, of which the old gentleman above mentioned is the head. It is a small village, surrounded by similar ones, only a few li apart. The interest extends in all directions. Some come on Saturday afternoon from 20 to 40 li and more, bringing food and bedding, so as to attend the Sabbath services, returning Sabbath afternoon after the second service. One old man, aged 72, living 45 li distant, was heard to say that, if the foreign teachers could afford to come 450 li, he could come 45, and so he walks that distance Saturday afternoon to hear the Gospel.

The native helper, before the missionaries arrived, remarked publicly, one Sabbath, on the duty of destroying their idols and instruments of superstition. On the following day, 17 families brought their images, pictures, etc., and burned them in the helper's presence.

The Sabbath is strictly observed in some things. The Christians, of their own accord, have made a rule that, during the intermissions of the services while preparing and eating their meals, no secular topics of conversation shall be introduced, as those relating to their farming and gathering the crops. As those attending the meetings are farmers or laborers on farms, it is manifest that the rule is a practical one, and evidences their earnestness and sincerity.

Those living in the village go to their farm-work early in the morning. Returning for breakfast about 9 o'clock, they meet in the chapel for worship about half an hour, and then go again to their work. In the evening, after supper, they assemble again for worship.

The women are not so reserved as respectable Chinese females usually are, often meeting in the same building with the men, and manifesting a desire to hear the word for themselves. The wife of the native helper has a good influence among them, and sometimes 20 or 30 of them bring their needle-work, etc., to her house, and set and work while she reads and explains the Bible. Some of them, too, can read.

These Christians are said to pray with fervency and propriety, and to sing hymns, if not according to rules of music, yet with animation, with the Spirit, if not with the understanding. They have, what cannot be said generally of native Christians, an affecting and profound sense of their personal sinfulness and unworthiness. They manifest an ardent desire for the conversion of their families and neighbors, of which their prayers, as well as their daily conduct, give abundant evidence.

Our missionary brother, in conclusion, speaks of the above movement as "unprecedented," so far as China is concerned, and requests the reader to "remember that the work was commenced and carried on, till less than one month ago, without the presence of a foreign missionary, and that previous to last spring no one in Loh-Ting knew any thing about the Bible or its doctrines as explained by Protestant missionaries." The future, he says, will tell more perfectly than we now know the real nature and extent of the work. It appears to be an extensive and genuine turning from idolatry to the worship of the true God.

I beg that your readers will ponder carefully the deep significance of this movement. Look at the wonderful providences and the precious promise for the future. Surely, God is with us, and China's redemption seems near at hand. Dear brethren in the ministry, and all who love Christ and the souls for whom he died, take this account to your monthly concerts and family altars, to the secret place, too, and pray over it. Men are needed simply to guide such movements and other more ordinary operations. Who will come in the love of Jesus and lend a helping hand in this grand work of China's regeneration?

As ever, yours truly, C. C. BALDWIN.

LEON GOZLAN was born in Marseilles, in 1806, of Hebrew parents, or perhaps of a Hebrew father and Christian mother. He looked like a Jew, and passed for an Israelite all his life and for twelve hours after his death. Preparations had been made to bury him with the ceremonies of the synagogue. Two rabbins had sat up with the body all night to recite the prayers of their creed. An hour before the time appointed for the funeral, his son-in-law (M. Duval, the well-known architect) discovered while hunting among the papers, the certificate of his Christian baptism. The funeral was countermanded, the rabbins retired, and the priests were sent for. What a striking illustration of the looseness of family ties in France; neither wife nor daughter knew whether their nearest kinsman was Jew or Chris-