

Correspondence.

MILLENNARIANISM—ITS TENDENCY.

EDITOR OF AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN: Permit one of your readers to express his profound sense of the service done to the cause of practical piety, by the essay, completed in your last, from the pen of Rev. W. T. Eva. The satisfaction felt, however, has been greatly modified, by the presumptive argument he has made in favor of the millenarian theory, comprised in numerous Scripture citations, which he has not attempted, in detail, to explain away.

But my object in writing, was not to praise the task already performed, or invite a more exhaustive exposition, but to add my testimony as to the general drift and influence of Millenarianism, as seen in its advocates in our day. First then, I take pleasure in testifying to the truth of Mr. Eva's remark, "that this theory seems to lie directly in the way of all earnest, zealous, continuous effort for the conversion and salvation of the world." I have never known a genuine Millenarian who was an active revivalist; tho' I have known some who had been such, but ceased to be on embracing the Advent doctrine; nay, more, I have never known one who was active in promoting temperance, anti-slavery, or social reform of any kind. Verily, these brethren "have their conversation in heaven," in so remarkable a degree, that they cannot see or feel their personal responsibility for the prevalence in the world of vice and misery, which are the works of the devil, and which Christ came to destroy. They distrust the truth of God as a means of conversion, and the efficacy of fasting and prayer for procuring a descent of the Spirit; and as a consequence, rush into the cold, "sensual" theory that God has no cure for depravity but by sweeping judgments like the deluge, and the subversion of the Jewish Church and polity by Vespaian. They overlook the fact stated by Mr. Eva, "that the same means by which a single soul is saved, are those by which millions of souls are to be saved."

On this point I beg to remark further, that the first practical illustration I ever received of this doctrine, was the deprecating remark of a Christian brother—who was urged to do something to remove the prevalent intemperance and oppression of the land—"That Christianity was not designed to reform the world or cure its evils, but to be a witness of the truth, and gather the saints together and keep them, till the Master would come and cure the world by another judgment."

If this is not a species of unbelief, it surely is an ignoring of the power of the Gospel, as a puller-down of strongholds.

But I have seen still worse effects from the earnest advocacy of the Second Advent doctrine; I have known those who, from a continuous study of Daniel and other Scripture writers concerning the "kingdoms" of the world "as set up and cast down," have reached the most despotic theories, totally at war with the genius of Reformed Christianity and Republican liberty. I have heard such assert that a pure despotism, like the Assyrian, was gold, and most like the Theocracy which is to prevail under the Lord, during the Millennium; and that the base clay of the image of Daniel represents the popular element now being infused into the governments of all civilized nations. Can a theory be true which leads to such results?

Millenarians are accustomed to urge the great importance of watching, that the Lord come not and find us asleep, but waiting his coming. Now, to those that are ready, by faith and a regenerated heart, the time matters nothing. This proves that faith and repentance, and not the "coming," is the special call of the Gospel; for those who are fitted by the first are also fitted for the latter. People who are "ready" and busy, are never concerned about the time. This is finely illustrated by the story, recorded in verse by Whittier, of the Connecticut Assemblyman, who, in the midst of a dark storm happening (some fifty years ago) on the very day predicted as the end of the world, moved that "the House proceed to the order of the day," as he wanted his Master, in any event, to find him busy, and in the line of his duty.

Now I take it, that the outgrowth of this system is clearly traceable to the cold and backslidden state of the Church. The Lord's people have been idle in the vineyard, and this has grown up as tares, to choke the word and make it unfruitful. What should we think, at reading as a conclusion to the biographies of the eminent Whitefield and Wesley, that, having been instrumental in saving thousands and thousands of souls, by preaching faith in Christ, and the duty of immediate repentance, that they turned a short corner, and told their hearers that, after all, the Gospel was not for the restoration of the world, from the debasement of the Fall; and that there was no hope for prevailing wickedness, but in a personal appearing of the Lord and in a general judgment! I do not know a Second Adventist who has the spirit of a Reformer, as every Christian ought to have, or who holds himself personally responsible, if necessary, to resist evil unto blood.

I confess that my judgment of this "tree," is alone by its "fruits." Will not some of our

* Our observation does not, on this point, fully accord with that of our correspondent.—Ed.

ministers give us such a doctrinal exposition as will furnish a better foundation to stand upon?

A LAYMAN.

NORRISTOWN, March 18, 1867.

REV. E. P. HAMMOND'S LETTERS FROM PALESTINE, No. 4.

On our way from Tiberias to Nazareth, we passed through what many suppose to be the Cana of Galilee, where Jesus performed His first miracle. In a little chapel the monks pointed out to us two of the "six water pots of stone," in which they affirmed the water was changed to wine. Cana is now, as it doubtless was then, an obscure town. But it was in that quiet place, among some of the relatives of His mother, our Lord first "manifested forth His glory," (John ii: 11.) He was just about to commence His public ministry. He had called His disciples, and perhaps they were in some doubt as to the character of their new Master, and their faith in Him needed to be strengthened. The desired result was therefore accomplished, for it is written, "And His disciples believed on Him."

After a ride of a few hours, over a fearfully rough road, we reached Nazareth. We found it situated at the west end of a beautiful valley, and surrounded by lofty hills. During our two days' stay in and about Nazareth, we visited all the places which tradition has connected with the life of our Saviour. We had little faith that any of these traditions were well founded. As there never has been but one fountain that has supplied the whole town with water, we could but think that Jesus must often have drunk from that sparkling spring. As often as we visited the fountain, we found crowds of maidens, some of them really attractive in their appearance, with water pots upon their heads waiting for their turn to fill them.

Rev. Mr. Hubert, the missionary, took me into his Protestant school, where I should think were some fifty children. At his request I told them about the children in America, who had learned to love the Saviour, who once lived on that very hill-side. During our stay in Nazareth, I felt a nearness to the Saviour, such as I thought I had never before experienced. It led me to contemplate the humanity of Christ, in a way I had never done before. New chords of sympathy bound my heart to His. And I felt as I had never before, that I could go to Him with every sorrow and find in Him a sympathizing friend, who had been "tempted in all points like as we are." How often I wished that we might know more of our Saviour's history, during His long residence in that quiet valley!

MOUNT TABOR.

While at Nazareth, we made an excursion to Mount Tabor, situated some seven miles distant. The monks of the new Greek Convent, located on its summit, have recently constructed a good road all the way to the top. The day was all that could be desired. The eminence can scarcely be called a mountain, for it is only 1400 feet above the plain, and 1900 above the sea; yet the view from its top is quite extensive, owing to its isolated position. Though we could not regard it as the "Mount of Transfiguration," still our visit was full of interest. There is evidence that a town and fortress covered the oblong area on its summit, in the days of Christ. It would not, therefore, have been a place to which our Lord and His disciples would have retired from the gaze of men. Besides, in comparing the account given of this event by Matthew and Mark, it appears that Christ, a week before the transfiguration, was near Casarea Philippi, and that on His way from thence, He visited Capernaum. (Luke ix: 51, and Matthew xvii: 24.) But taking Mount Hermon to be "the holy mount," all the Scripture narrative seems natural. We were interested in looking up all those places in our Bibles, in which Mount Tabor is mentioned. We found it celebrated as one of the wonderful works of God. "The north and the south thou hast created them—Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name." Ps. lxxxix: 12. It appears at one time to have been the scene of idolatrous rites; for Hosea thus records the words of God, "Hear ye this, O priests: and hearken, ye houses of Israel, and give ye ear, O house of the king. For judgment is toward you, because ye have been a snare on Mispah and a net spread upon Tabor." We read the fourth chapter of Judges telling how Barak "went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him," and with the "Lord, discomfited Sisera and all his chariots, and all his host." In the great plain of Esdraelon, which lay spread out at our feet, we could easily imagine the scene. To the south, in full view, lay Endor and Nain. Our glasses made them appear very near to us, and we read the account of Saul's sad visit to the witch of Endor, and of our Saviour's raising the widow's son at Nain. (1 Samuel xxviii; and Luke vii.) While we were impressed with the fact that the great plain before us had been for ages the battle-field where multitudes, since the days of Saul and Barak, had been slain, it was far more pleasant to think of Him who gladdened the heart of that weeping widow by restoring her son to life again. Somewhere along the sides of the declivity of little Hermon, near where the village of Nain lay, Jesus must have met the mournful procession on their way to the burial place. Very likely His heart was more deeply moved as He drew near and looked upon the face of the young man as it was exposed upon the bier (a common sight in the east.) There it lay, cold and rigid as mar-

ble. But the life-giving words, "Young man, I say unto you arise," causes the blood to tinge those cheeks; and behold! "He that was dead sat up and began to speak." No wonder that "the people of the city" glorified God saying, that God had visited His people." As from Tabor's eminence I looked down upon the few houses where once stood the "city called Nain," thinking of this miracle, the thought occurred to me, Why did not the Omnipotent and compassionate Saviour come but a little sooner to that distressed mother? Why did He allow those long hours of suffering between the death of her son and the dreaded burial? But the answer which our Lord gave to the disciples concerning the death of Lazarus came to my mind. "I am glad for your sake that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe." As the dark cloud in the background is necessary to the richness and beauty of the rainbow, so the Saviour knew that the deeper the sorrow of that weeping heart the greater would be its joy.

"Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer,
Bring me to the Saviour's feet,
Lay me low and keep me there."

Before leaving Tabor we rode around among its ruins partly for the purpose of learning the real shape of its top. The accounts and pictures which we had seen of it failed to agree in their representations. But a little observation soon taught us the reason for their apparent discrepancies. From the east, it presents the appearance of a truncated cone; from the west, it appears wedge-shaped; and from the north and south it describes the arc of a circle. We could not help but learn a lesson of candor and caution from these facts. How often do we hear people with the utmost regard for truth, giving an entirely different account of some mutual acquaintance, or, it may be, of some preacher of the day. Tabor has been aptly described as "the copy pyramid, the leafiest hill in the Holy Land." Thus we found it on the 25th of Nov. And from it so many places of biblical interest may be seen that it is one of those places on which travellers love to linger.

From its top also may be seen the battle-field where General Kleber and Napoleon Bonaparte, with a handful of 3,000 defeated with vast slaughter, 30,000 of the Turks. Before leaving, we visited the Greek Convent, built where, more than six centuries ago, a Christian church crumbled to ruins. Now only five or six monks live, where, centuries ago, hundreds made it their home. As we looked down on that beautiful fertile plain at our feet, we thought of what it might have been, if its ancient people had not so sinned against God, causing the land to be "utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled." James Montgomery's lines represent a scene sadly in contrast with what we saw from Tabor and in fact throughout all Palestine.

"He climbed the mountain, and behold!
The land before him lay,
Here Jordan's bounding waters rolled,
There Carmel stretched away.
There stranger lives the Patriarchs led,
There promised Canaan smiled
From Northern Lebanon out-spread
To Araby, the wild.

A land of fountains and of rills,
With milk and honey fraught;
Whose stones were iron, from whose hills
Marble and brass were wrought.

A land of corn and wine and oil,
Whose trees with fruitage hung,
While birds to soothe the labourers' toil,
Among the branches sung.

Valleys stood thick with golden grain,
Goats bounded on the rocks;
And white and dark, on slope and plain,
Roamed pasturing herds and flocks."

FRAGMENTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF A MISSIONARY TOUR IN INDIA.—No. II.

Beautiful as is the garden in which we are stopping here in *Kagul*, it would be easy to draw a dark picture of the idolatry and superstition around us, though probably you hardly need facts to deepen convictions on this point. One item, however, bearing on the character and origin of Hindu idolatry, I will mention.

In this very garden, not far from the elegant bungalow we occupy, is a temple, comparatively new. Passing near it, I had the curiosity to look in at the idol. It was the statue of a man, and like the temple, bore evidence of modern make. I asked the gardeners and work-people near me, what god it was, for the most ignorant generally recognize each of their 330,000,000 of gods by their looks and names. Some of them told me it was *Mahadev* (great god,) but most of them merely called it *dev* (god.) Not satisfied with their explanations, I catechised an old and trusted servant of the *Bae Sahab*, who has been on the premises some forty years, and who, though unable to read or write, has his cranium stuffed with overflowing with volumes of historical facts. From this old man, I elicited the fact that the idol in this temple, is the statue of *Raoji Kakudi Sahab*, an old *Karbhari* of the estate under *Iyng Rao*;—that he administered the estate with great fidelity, and when he died, some thirty years ago, he left a large sum of money, which, in his death-letter (will), he enjoined should be used in building this temple, carving his statue, consecrating and deifying it by sacred brahman rites, and performing daily pooja (worship) to it to the end of time.

The thing was done. The name of *Raoji Kakudi Sahab* is remembered only by a few of the oldest people, and when these die will be wholly forgotten—as also the origin of the temple. But this (of massive cut stone) will endure for ages, and the new god enshrined in it will continue to be worshipped by succeeding generations in perpetuity—unless Christ sends new fire from heaven into the hearts of His church and people, and inspires more earnest efforts to obey His last command.

We leave *Kagul* truly thankful that so much of God's truth, orally and by the printed page, has found favorable access to so many minds and hearts, praying God to bless it, and cause it to spring up and bear fruit to His praise, and earnestly longing to see this post occupied by some man of God, impelled by love and zeal to find his life-work and joy in efforts to win these idolaters to Christ.

KURNOOR, NOV. 30.

Here we are, encamped in the centre of a small village of only five hundred souls. We have found shelter from the burning sun in an old unoccupied building, with no article of furniture, but in spreading our beds and blankets on the earth floor we only follow the example of the Great Missionary "who went about doing good" and of all His Missionary Apostles.

The people of this place are extremely simple and ignorant in regard to every thing but their idol-gods and superstitions. There is only one man among them able to read—the village accountant. He may gladly accept a Bible and read it to all who gather to hear him. I have good audiences here, every night, and during the three past days have visited some dozen villages, within a circle of six or eight miles around us. Only a mile in one direction is the large village of *Kongunooli*, with a population of over five thousand (5000), where the village officers and heads of the people received me most courteously and more than two hundred have come and listened, each time I have been there, as long as I had time and strength to address them.

Being here in the midst of the people, Mrs. W. has had special facilities for interviews with the women, and has found them delighted to listen to her words, some of them seeming to be much interested and impressed by the strange and new truths of the Gospel.

NEEPANI, DEC. 5.

With one intervening camp on the way from *Kurnoor*, we find ourselves in this large town of ten thousand idolaters, and twenty-five miles from *Kolapoor*. *Neepani*, sixty years ago, was the capital of a large independent principality, engaged in frequent conflicts with neighboring States, and able to cope with the whole force of the *Kolapoor* kingdom. Its turbulent chief, *Shidaji Rao*, was reported the best soldier and ablest General in the *Mahratti* Empire. In 1808, the king of *Kolapoor*, *Shivaji* by name, grandfather of our king just deceased, led his whole army in person against this notable chief, but was defeated and wounded, and fled back to *Kolapoor* with the fragment of his army completely disorganized, leaving his principal officers, and five thousand men slain on the field of battle. *Shidaji Rao* proposed to follow up his advantage and attack *Kolapoor*, but the old *Peshwa* at *Poona* interfered, effected a reconciliation between *Neepani* and *Kolapoor*, and to render it permanent, arranged to have a *Kolapoor* princess given in marriage to the *Neepani* chief. This marriage was celebrated at *Kolapoor* with great pomp, June 21st, 1809, but no sooner were the public ceremonies over, than the crafty *Neepani* chief absconded with his royal bride the same night, and disregarding all his new family ties, he soon invaded the kingdom, and again defeated the whole *Kolapoor* army. But at this point of time, British interference came in to check both the contending parties and prevent any enlargement of this *Neepani* principality. Indeed, for some reason, a full third of its territory was then made over to *Kolapoor*, though subsequently taken back and engrossed in the *British Raj*. And such, we now find, is the status of this whole *Neepani* principality. Its last chief died only a few years since, but all that remains of him and his principality is his old Fort and Palace and two youthful widows—all else has become British. The reasons and details of absorption may be left to politicians. While admitting the wiser rule of the British, all things considered, it is still hard to suppress sympathy for the relics of these old chiefs and ruling families, thus suddenly "wiped out."

The senior widow of this late chief had the courtesy to invite Mrs. W. to visit her. We found her living in the old palace within the fort outside the native town, and both the fort and palace showed evidence of the large resources of the chief who built them; for there had been much regard to strength and permanence, with no parsimonious display of taste and ornament.

Our reception produced a conflict of emotions, alternating between the sad and the ludicrous. When a Hindu king, chief or nobleman invites us to an interview, he always meets us at the entrance of his palace or durbar, surrounded with a train of attendants. As we approached the palace of this *Bae Sahab* yesterday, we expected only attendants to receive us, as the lady of course would not appear among men. But we were surprised to find a bright little boy of four summers standing to receive us, with all the insignia of native royalty, and right well did the little fellow do the honors of the occasion, though

when he led the way into the durbar room, this young sprig of would-be-royalty had to be carried in the arms—or rather astride the hip of his attendant. We found the explanation of this to be, that the poor widow had adopted this child as an heir to inherit the rights, power and prerogatives of her husband, the late chief, and was training him in all the forms and etiquette of royalty, sacrificing all her private resources to keep up her costly establishment, in the forlorn hope that the British Government would yet recognize the adoption and restore the principality to her family, with this child as its chief—a hope to be deferred till her heart is sick and the grave closes over her and the dear child too.

While Mrs. W. had her interview with the *Bae Sahab* and women of the *Zenana*, with Bible in hand and the sermon on the Mount for my text, I had a valuable opportunity in the durbar to explain to some sixty officials and attendants the divine principles and teachings of our holy faith.

My audiences each day in town have been larger, sometimes rising to two and three hundred; and though many *Brahmans* are always present, they seem little inclined to controversy, while the common people nod assent and often give audible expression to their strong feelings of approval as they listen to the truth.

We find here a nice school of one hundred and fifty pupils, a large number of readers, and more eager demand for our scripture and tracts than in any place before visited. * * *

Yesterday morning, as I was going early to my preaching service in town I met a crowd of excited people just outside the gate, and on looking for the cause of their excitement, I observed a poor man in their midst, innocent of all clothing but a rag around his loins, rolling over and over through dirt and filth amidst the surging mass of spectators, and gradually nearing the high road. In answer to my inquiries, I learned that having suffered from pains and contortions in his limbs, the man two years ago went to the god *Kalaba* at *Gudh Inguz* for help, that he remained there a whole year constantly worshipping the god, and had finally made a vow to *Kalaba*, that if he would heal him, he would perform *Dundvat* (penance) by rolling in this way from *Neepani*, some twenty miles, to the god's shrine at *Gudh Inguz*. The true God had healed the poor man, or at least he fancied himself better, and now he was hastening to fulfil his vow.

Such penance is frequent among the Hindus, but generally performed by measuring the distance with the length of the body—i. e., they fall prostrate on the face and reaching forward with the hand make a mark on the ground, then rising they bring the feet to the mark and again prostrate the body. Many perform this penance, travelling sometimes hundreds of miles in this way to the great shrines; especially to *Vithoba* at *Panderapoor*. This man chose the slower and more tedious process of rolling, expecting thus to make more merit and win more favor with the god. He stopped at my request and listened, with the crowd, to my words for some time, but no arguments or entreaties could divert him from his purpose. The whole force of their inveterate superstitions binds them to the strict performance of such vows. I never succeeded in dissuading from such performances except in a single instance. This was the case of a young girl, whose parents had induced her to make a vow to swing on the hooks in honor of the god *Khandoba*, if he would prosper their efforts to find a husband for her. At length the husband was found, the marriage duly performed, and next came preparations to fulfil the vow. Thousands gathered to witness the act, and the parents brought up the poor girl to the post in front of *Khandoba's* shrine on the top of a mountain. I came upon the scene on one of my preaching tours, and was so moved by the sight of the preparations and of the trembling girl, that I left no effort untried with the parents and brothers of the girl and the officers of their village, to dissuade from the cruel act. For two and a half hours my best endeavors availed only to cause delay. But then a quarrel arose between two officiating priests, each of whom claimed the privilege of cutting the poor girl's back and inserting the hook, and the paltry fee for so doing. Aided by this quarrel, I succeeded in persuading the parents and brothers of the girl to release her, and she bounded off down the mountain with manifest joy at her deliverance. Knowing the strength of Hindu superstition, I am not without fears that the poor girl may have been made to swing on a subsequent occasion, but the distance of scene has prevented my ascertaining.

This place, *Neepani*, is another most desirable centre for a mission station. With its population of ten thousand, and fifty flourishing villages within a dozen miles, it commands a large and promising field. I have visited a dozen of the nearest villages since we reached here, and every where find eager listeners. Not that they are ready and anxious to embrace the Gospel, for they never heard it before—but they are ready to listen and be taught; and as Christ's promise faith not, a man of true love: to souls might win many bright stars here for his crown of rejoicing. O, that some devoted young man would fix his heart on *Neepani*, and come set up his banner here in the name of our Divine Redeemer.

In the love of the Gospel, yours sincerely,

E. G. WILDER.

P. S.—We have been gratified to find love of knowledge and public spirit; enough here to induce an effort to get up a library. They have gathered a few books, and the teachers and other influential persons requested copies of our scriptures and Christian tracts and books as an addition to their collection. We are most happy to gratify them and place samples of our Christian books where they will become so widely known. W.