

Correspondence.

LETTERS FROM THE HOLY LAND. VII.

BY REV. EDWARD P. HAMMOND.

We left Shechem early on the morning of November 30th, and about three in the afternoon our eyes rested on SHILOH. Its position is so minutely described in Judges, xxi: 19, that there was no doubt as to its locality—"on the north side of Beth-el, on the east of the highway that goeth up from Beth-el to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah."

There, in that central position, the children of Israel first permanently established the tabernacle of the Lord. At its door, Joshua divided the land by lot. There it was, that Hannah's pleading prayer was answered, and thither it was that she brought Samuel, in accordance with her vow "unto the house of the Lord in Shiloh" saying, "I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord." (1 Samuel, i: 28.) There the little boy, "the child Samuel grew before the Lord." (1 Samuel, ii: 21.) There "he ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod." From Ramah his devoted mother came, over the same road we were to travel that afternoon, to bring "a little coat" "from year to year when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice." It was in the temple upon that hill now before us, covered with ruins, that Samuel was called three times by the Lord; though Eli, with all his piety, knew it not until the Lord had called the child "the third time."

Oh, how often are Christians in our day ignorant of the drawings of God's Spirit upon the hearts of their children! Often do little children hear the Saviour calling to them, but, for the want of some guiding hand, are left for years to wander in darkness, and perchance to stray into forbidden paths of sin and sorrow.

Somewhere on that hill-side before us sat Eli, an old man—"ninety and eight years old," when he heard that the ark of God was taken, and his two sons slain by the Philistines, so "that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake and he died." From that hour "Ichabod" was written upon Shiloh. Yes, then "the glory departed from Israel." The ark never returned thither. From that time the name was suggestive of God's hatred of the form of godliness without the power.

To it, as a warning, Jeremiah pointed, as he stood "in the gate of the Lord's house" at Jerusalem saying, "Go ye now unto my place, which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel." Jer. vii: 12. And again he uttered the solemn prediction—"If ye will not hearken unto me, then will I make this house like Shiloh." What a sad sight it is in our day, to see churches, and cities, which seem to have been almost cast away from God's presence. They have not seemed to know the importance of the cry "Take not thy Holy Spirit from us." God grant that the sad history of the once favored Shiloh may be a warning to such churches. May they hear the admonition given to the church of Ephesus, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick from out of his place, except thou repent."

Just after turning our back on Shiloh we met a party of Turkish soldiers, with long guns, coming towards us at an unusually rapid pace. As they neared us one of their horses fell, and most ungraciously down came his rider. It was our greatest wonder that all their horses, yes and ours too, did not fall often, as they passed over that rough road. When the fields by the wayside are cultivated, the stones are very commonly thrown into the highway; thus the poor horses are often obliged to pick their way, as best they can. But these Arabian and Syrian steeds seldom make a misstep. My wife and I became very much attached to our fine horses, and learned at all times to trust them.

It was a long ride that day from Shechem to Bethel. We were in our saddles from a little after sun-rise till it was quite dark. Yes, it really was dark when we reached our encampment. We wondered if Jacob was more fatigued, when he selected some smooth spot, with a stone for his pillow, and laid himself down on that hill-top. After dinner we turned to the twenty-eighth chapter of Genesis and read: "And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillow, and lay down in that place to sleep." Surely, we thought, he had not far to go to find stones enough for his pillow. It must have been a more difficult task to find a place free enough from stones where he might stretch his weary limbs for a night's repose. No wonder that he did not sleep very soundly. But though his was a hard pillow, yet he was blessed with heavenly dreams. "And he dreamed and beheld, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it, and behold the Lord stood above it and said: 'I am with thee.'" It is not surprising that when Jacob awakened out of his sleep, he said: "Surely

the Lord is in this place and I knew it not. This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Well might he call "the name of that place Bethel—the house of God."

That night we slept soundly in our tents, but we could not remember of any heavenly visions granted to us. We were up early to get time for a look at the stones of Bethel. I say stones, for there is not much else to be seen. We could not find any remains of the temple which Jeroboam built after an Egyptian model, that it might rival the one of Jerusalem. But in the thirteenth chapter of 1 Kings we read of how this wicked king, "who made Israel to sin," found his hand suddenly "dried up so that he could not pull it in again to him," after he had sought to lay hold on the man of God, who "cried against the altar in Bethel." This idolatrous worship of the "golden calf" gave to Bethel the name of Bethaven, "the house of idols."

A most wretched set of people in a few poor houses now occupy the second site. Amos' words are verified: "Seek not Bethel, nor enter into Gilgal, for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Bethel shall come to nought." Amos v: 5.

A little way from our encampment, we saw a small company burying a man who had been murdered, or, at least, found dead, the day before. The sight made us feel thankful that we had escaped so many dangers. I could but seek to examine myself to learn whether my heart might truthfully be called Bethel—the house of God. How solemn those words sounded to me "Know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"

Allow me to ask you, my dear reader, is your heart a Bethel, a "house of God," or a Bethaven, a "house of idols?" Is it a temple for the constant indwelling of the Holy Spirit? Has your sad song been, of late—

"What peaceful hours I once enjoyed,
How sweet their memory still,
But they have left an aching void,
The world can never fill?"

O, let your prayer in Christ's name be, "Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause Thine anger toward us to cease," and then in the words of that same sweet eighty-fifth psalm, you can say: "I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints: but let them not turn again to folly. Surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him; that glory may dwell in our land."

CLOGS IN THE PULPIT.

BY REV. E. E. ADAMS, D. D.

The preacher meets a great variety of hindrances to the effectual delivery of his sermon. He may have prepared it with prayerfulness and study. Its heads may be well ordered and its details properly wrought out; it may have logic and illustration, pathos and point; it may begin well and end well, according to the rules of Homiletics; but when it is spread out on the pulpit to be proclaimed and enforced, it may fail to realize the hope and purpose of the speaker, and the end of preaching. Sometimes the obstacle to success is in the pews. The people are chilled by the wintry atmosphere, or debilitated by summer fevers; or sluggish and languid for want of sleep—the hot breath of the ball-room, on the previous night, has not yet left their lungs and brains; the burden of a late supper still weighs on their vital energies; the champagne has left a dull pain in their brows; or "the race for riches" during the week has jaded all their faculties, and they are not to be roused by the themes of eternity;—but too often the failure of a sermon is due to an incident or fact which the preacher can remedy at the time—or which might have been prevented by a little care and foresight. I venture to suggest a few *little things* for the aid of brethren who, doubtless, like myself, are at times, greatly disappointed and grieved to find that their sermons seemed to fail both to secure attention and produce the desired impression.

1. *Commence your sermon with a brief, pointed statement.* A long, involved, blind sentence at the outset fails to take the attention, discourages effort on the part of the hearers to follow the speaker, leads them at once to prepare for a prosy and sleepy discourse, whereas if it be introduced by a plain but striking thought, that can be easily seized, the mind will be set in motion and more easily kept in the track.

2. In the delivery of the sermon, *begin with your ordinary tone*—neither below nor above it. If you pitch your voice on a key too low, the people cannot hear the first sentence, and that will disturb them; if too high, you will find yourself speaking to the steeple throughout the discourse. You will be painfully conscious of failure, exhausted at the close, and chagrined on account of your folly. Whereas, if you begin to speak in your ordinary tone, you can rise or fall afterward, according to the varied sentiments of discourse, and the size of the room and congregation. All will be natural, easy, impressive.

3. Don't address yourself to those who are *vacant, sluggish, indifferent.* You may, sometimes, throw your voice into a deaf ear, and awaken the slumbering soul within. You may look keenly into a vacant eye and elicit a responsive sparkle of intelligence; but if you allow your eyes continually to fall on a persistent sleeper, or on one who evidently does not think of what you are saying, you will find yourself either laboring vio-

lently to get your thoughts into their dull heads, or else in despair conclude that your own dulness and want of adaptation occasions the indifference of your hearers. Select a few pews which you see turned toward you as if already glowing with interest in the theme. Speak to those responsive eyes, those open ears, those thirsting souls. Forget all beside. Feel the magnetic play of emotion. Throw yourself into the stream of sympathy, and you shall find at the close that you have reached the hearts of the people, done good, and preached with real satisfaction to yourself.

4. *Don't preach in a tight collar.* It will make you uneasy; you will twist and pull at it, almost unconsciously while speaking, thus distracting your own mind, interfering with proper action, and diverting the thoughts of the audience. Moreover, when you kindle with the subject and the blood flows more rapidly, you will experience pressure and head-ache, rendering the Sabbath anything but a delight.

5. *Don't preach with your coat buttoned.*

Were you at the bar, or speaking to a political assembly where you would meet an antagonist, and must measure your argument with his, you might naturally gird your coat close about you and button it to the chin; as if putting on armor and strengthening your heart for the encounter. But in the pulpit you are to take a more humble and yet an easy attitude. Nothing that looks like preparation for oratory, like assumed dignity, like being wrapped in self, will be accepted. The preacher must have the air of generous abandonment, of accessibility. He must bend to his hearers, with open arms and heart. On this account "gown and bands" are objectionable. Perhaps some men can preach better in them. They may conceal the awkward angles of a clerical Polyphemus, and give apparent dignity to those who find not adequate dignity in their office and their themes.

6. *Don't preach in gloves.* They savor of affectation. Whatever, in the pulpit, indicates the pretence or the consciousness of gentility, detracts from its power. You cannot preach earnestly in gloves. An audience likes to see the speaker's hand. Half his eloquence is there—"the hiding of his power." Put your gloves in your pocket, my gentle brother, and let the fire of your soul sparkle in your naked fingers as the truth burns on your lips! Let the whole man speak.

7. *Don't preach in your surcoat.* It makes you look and feel heavy. It binds you arms, and smothers your soul. There is as much difference between preaching with an overcoat and without one, as there is between the sound of a muffled drum, and the clear, thrilling battle tone that vibrates from the smooth, uncovered parchment. If you are cold, let your theme and your action warm you. Put your surcoat on the seat behind you. It will be needed after sermon, if you have preached as you ought.

8. *Don't preach in overshoes.* They are heavy, and when you move in the pulpit you will feel as if a weight were checking your motions, and holding your feet to the floor. This sense of heaviness affects the whole body, and the mind; and you labor through your sermon with discomfort, to feel that your effort was a failure. I have spoiled more than one good discourse by such fetters. Paul and Silas prayed and sung praises to God in the stocks, but I doubt whether they could have preached well in heavy, steaming, rubber overshoes. Enter the pulpit stripped for action, yet with zeal tempered by the grandeur and glory of your office, with a soul throbbing to utter the truth of God, and these appendages will be cast off.

WORK ON BAPTISM.

NOTE FROM REV. DR. DUFFIELD.

MR. EDITOR:—Allow me through your columns to direct the attention of your readers to a work which has passed through its second edition, and is subserving the cause of truth in these Western regions with great effect. It is entitled "Scripture Baptism Defended, and Anabaptist notions proved to be anti-Scriptural novelties," by Rev. John Levington. Mr. Levington is an earnest and useful preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church—much respected and beloved for his learning and piety. He has prepared a work on the subject of Baptism which meets the present state of the Christian community. It is not a rabid polemical affair, nor a dry didactic discussion of abstract doctrines; nor a sectarian or denominational apology or defense; but a straight-forward presentation, in an argumentative manner, and with as much logical force as popular and attractive style, of the great and important points of difference between those who do and do not practice infant Baptism and who differ as to the mode of administering the ordinance. It has vindicated the faith and practice of Evangelical churches which regard the validity, and belief in the perpetuity, of the Abrahamic covenant. Ministers will find it an excellent work to circulate where the subject of Baptism as to its mode, and as to infants, is exciting attention or disturbing the minds of any of their members. It will interest both old and young and should have a place in Sunday-school Libraries.

The book was published in Chicago by Poe & Hitecock, and although a Western production, has strong claims upon Eastern readers, and all who would counteract the efforts made to dissuade from infant baptism, and consign to neglect the seal of

the covenant made by God with Abraham and still kept by Him with his believing seed from generation to generation.

Geo. DUFFIELD.

Detroit, April, 1867.

FRAGMENTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF A MISSIONARY TOUR IN INDIA. III.

KAPSEE, Dec. 7, 1866.

Since my last date we have encountered no incident of moment but the breakage of our cart, on the rough roads, involving a delay of two days to repair it, but no loss of time. We keep on with our work, finding villages and hearers in all directions.

This (Kapsee) is a small town of about 3000 inhabitants, the capital of another small Jaghirc, embracing 16 villages and 150 square miles of territory. It is held by the third branch of the house of Ghorepuday, one of the oldest in the Mahratta Empire. The late chief, Ramchunder Bao Ghorepuday, came to his title and inheritance in 1836 and died three years ago. His son, the present chief, a young man of 20 years, enjoys the whole revenue of the Jaghirc, paying a small annual tribute of Rs. 200 to the Kolapoor Government, and the whole administration, political and judicial, is conducted in his name. The chief of this state holds the rank of Sanaputti, or General, in the Kolapoor army, being honored as one of the eight of the highest in the Mahratta Empire, below the Emperor himself. This rank necessitates his attendance on the Kolapoor King on all special occasions, and consequently he is absent from his capital just now, attending on our young King, who has gone to Pooná to be formally recognized and installed on his *gadh* (throne) by our Governor, Sir Bartle Frere—an imposing Durbar with native chiefs from all parts of the Presidency having been summoned for the occasion. Our late King's only sister, Aka Saheb, and her husband (one of the highest in rank among the nobility) were invited by the Governor to this Pooná Durbar; and as a little item, showing the feelings of our highest classes towards us and our mission, I may mention that Aka Saheb sent both her husband and son to invite Mrs. Wilder to accompany her to Pooná and be with her in her interviews with Lady Frere and her daughters. She could not leave her family and mission work so long, or she would gladly have gratified the King's sister by going with her.

The chief of Kapsee not being at home, his minister, an intelligent Brahmin, comes to see me in the temple, where I find a resting place, and now for two and a half hours an audience of fully 300 has given a very attentive hearing to my message. Having wandered some ten miles from my family and camp, I am obliged to break off my discourse abruptly, and even then fail to reach our camp till after 9 P. M., having only a dim starlight for the last five miles.

Kapsee is another desirable mission centre, 12 miles from Neepani and 30 from Kolapoor. I have all confidence that the young Mahratta chief would extend a cordial welcome to a missionary, and that large results would crown persevering efforts to make known Christ and his great salvation here.

The young chief has established a good school, and the demand for our tracts and books was so great that, since returning to camp, I have sent them a fresh supply. * * * *

MARGOOD, Dec. 12.

This is another town of 3000 idolaters, some 10 miles from Kapsee and 24 miles from Kolapoor—another good centre for missionary effort. As we travel westward into the vicinity of the mountains, we find fewer readers and less appreciation of education. For this large population of 3000 there is no school of any kind; but all listen so respectfully to our message, that we long for men and means to bring them under daily Christian teaching.

Mrs. W. being unwell we have remained here five days, but this has given me an opportunity to visit many surrounding villages. At Yemga, with a population of 1000, 250 men came out to hear me. I made the stone steps of their largest temple my pulpit, and the 300 shining rupees, imbedded in the upper step as native offerings to the idol, my text, but found a short way to the true and living God as a more worthy object of worship and vows, and to Jesus Christ as the only Saviour of sinful man.

These rupees frequently found imbedded in the steps of idol temples, have been placed there in fulfillment of vows. If a man is sick, he goes to the temple and makes a vow, promising the god to do this or that if he will heal him. If he wants a field, or oxen to plow it, or a wife, or child, a vow to the god is the first thing thought of. If the person is poor, he vows to perform some kind of penance in honor of the god. If he has means, he generally prefers to give grain or money, and frequently the vow takes this form of a promise to inlay a certain number of rupees in the steps of the idol's temple. At Mulga, we counted in the steps of Bhairooba's temple 1304 rupees. Two empty holes led us to ask if some one had dug out and stolen the two rupees. The people seemed unwilling to admit this, and yet their looks quite convinced me that our suspicions were correct. A Hindu who would dare commit such a sacrilege must be worse than a common thief or robber in their estimation, for he dars the vengeance of their gods; and such an

act is probably far more rare in India than the plunder and destruction of churches in Christian lands.

At Gungapoor I found the opinion prevailed that the superiority of us white people, in conquest, as well as our superior skill in the invention of railroads, steamboats, and telegraphs, of which they had heard, arose from our greater knowledge and skill in the black arts of Mantra.

At Kurjeewun, a small village high up among the mountains, I was surprised and grieved to find no hearers. Only two mahars (low caste men) appeared. Having waited in vain at the Chowdi, the common place of gathering, I made them lead me to the house of the Patil (chief officer of the village.) Not a soul appeared there, but the woman inside replied to our inquiries, assuring us the Patil was not at home. My efforts to gather an audience and gain a hearing seemed wholly in vain, and I was about to give up the attempt, when a bright little girl of ten summers, with a child's curiosity, peeped out of the door to catch a glimpse of the white stranger.

I asked her name, and as my Mahratta words fell on her ear, without pausing to think, she replied, "Mainee," and dodged quickly back out of sight. But after my repeatedly calling her by name and offering to show her a beautiful picture book, she at length timidly ventured in sight again. When she first retreated, I could hear the women chiding her for venturing in my sight; but at length their womanly curiosity so far prevailed as to hold their rebukes in check, and little Mainee very properly inferred they were consenting to her second return.

I must not continue the incident in detail. Suffice it to say, the picture book and kind words availed. Little Mainee banished her fears and came to me outside. Soon a half dozen women appeared in the doorway and verandah; and last of all the old Patil himself and seven other full grown men came out of his house. Other villagers now gathered, and a more interesting and interested audience I have not found on my tour. The simple, plain, precious truths of our holy faith elicited a hearty response from these unsophisticated minds. I have never been sanguine as to the results of hearing the Gospel only once in the life time of the hearer. But when I find men drinking in the words of life with so much sincerity and earnestness, the thought that God can make His word a message of salvation, even though heard but once, does bring comfort to my heart amidst the exposure and fatigue of this work.

The inquiry will arise, why the Patil and villagers at first hid themselves. My questions on this point elicited nothing satisfactory at the time, and I could only attribute it to the excessive timidity of these more simple people of the mountains. But as I came away, the two Mahars, who accompanied me a short distance, intimated that it was the result of some outrage perpetrated by subordinate Europeans, superintending work on a road passing over the mountains to Gudh Inguz. How sad that those representing the Christian faith should belie and dishonor it in the presence of these heathen.

But these poor people have often suffered wrong and outrage from native officials, and where they have come to know much of the better class of European officers, they learn to expect more even handed justice from them than from native Rulers. Hence a Missionary is constantly besieged with petitions which he is obliged to respect, even at the risk of being thought unkind and unmerciful. A petitioner of this class, a Desaie, and a man of some intelligence, formerly enjoying form lands under the Kolapoor Government, pressed me with his petition at the village of Koor. The amount of his petition was, that the brother of a former King, in a fit of passion, shot his grandfather, and to pacify the relatives the murderer got the King, his brother, to give certain lands to the family of the murdered man *in perpetuo*—that these lands had been enjoyed by his father during his life-time and then by himself for many years; but that recently they had been forcibly taken from him—confiscated for no offence or reason. I quoted to him the saying of our Saviour in a similar case, Luke xii: 14, and tried to turn his thoughts to a better and more enduring inheritance, but clinging to the hope of aid from one preaching universal brotherhood and the Divine law of love to our neighbor, he followed me five miles to our camp, and persisted in entreating me to help him regain his lands with an impertinence hard to bear. O for such earnestness and impertinence in the matter of their souls' salvation. Then would our work here become a joy indeed. Then should we speedily see their idols abolished, and the kingdom of God coming with power. And for this let us cease not to pray.

In the love and service of this blessed kingdom,
Yours sincerely,
R. G. WILDER.

THE PRINCESS DAGMAR'S RENUNCIATION OF LUTHERANISM.—After expressing her belief in the seven sacraments, transubstantiation, and the adoration of pictures and prayers to the saints, her royal Highness was made to say, "I believe and confess that the Foundation-head and Supreme Pastor and Bishop of the Holy Greco-Russian Church is our Lord Jesus Christ; and that from Him all bishops, pastors, and teachers are ordained; and that the Ruler and Governor of the said Church is the Holy Ghost. That this Church is the Bride of Christ, I also confess; and that in Her is true salvation to be found, and that no one can possibly be saved in any other except Her; I believe." All her relatives are still groping in Lutheran darkness, far from the Holy Orthodox Church!—*London Pall Mall Gazette.*