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Iriginal Communications.

VISIT TO BETHLEHEM AND THE HOLY PLACES, BY REV. V. D. COLLINS.

I suppose one of the dearest wishes of every | eth forth trees." Christian heart, is to visit the Holy Places made sacred by the footsteps of Christ. Not many years ago.

At mid-day, one Friday, just as the Turkish guard were closing the gates of Jerusalem for Mohammedan worship on Mount Moriah, I passed out of the Jaffa gate on foot, to visit, by the same road, the spot which, long centuries before, the wise men had sought by the guiding Star. At the present time there are but five gates to Jerusalem. These are closed each day at sundown; and also two hours at mid-day on Fridays, because there is a tradition or belief among the Turks, that if ever Jerusalem is lost to them, it will be by not holding this precaution.

The distance from Jerusalem to Bethlehem is about six miles in a southerly direction. After leaving the Jaffa gate I turned to the left, down the valley of Gihon, and crossed it on a solid causeway which forms the southern dam of the lower pool of Gihon, and then ascended on a rough stony path, the hill of Evil Council. This was the giving, by Turkey, on demand of the is the hill upon which stood the country seat of French Emperor, a duplicate siver key to the Cataphas, where the Jews met to take counsel, and plot to destroy Christ. From this hill, as one looks back, he beholds Mount Zion, the southern walls, the Mosque of Omar, and the Mount of Olives-a grand and impressive sight viewed by so many millions of earnest and devout men and women in all ages! About midway between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. I passed the Convent of Elias; and in a few, minutes reached the Tomb of Rachel, where I rested. This tomb is very sacred to the Jews; and many come here to meditate and pray. It undoubted of the Virgin Mary." A large number of lamps ly covers the spot where Rachel died and was buried. As I sat there, in the noon-tide heat, I' thought of Jacob and his beloved Rachel, and of the wise men, who, like myself, had passed this spot seeking Bethlehem. I thought, especially, of Joseph and Mary on their way to be enrolled; and resting at this tomb (where a mother in Israel had died in child-birth) as they returned with the infant Jesus to the temple to offer sacrifice and to present the child to God.

Since the journey of the Holy Family, what a long array of pilgrims, scholars, crusaders, and men of peace have streamed over this rugged road, and every year increasing-seeking the birth-place of Jesus.

The highway from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, though not very hilly, is exceedingly rocky ; not only does the living rock crop out continually, but the road is full of loose stones, both small and great. Here and there, it is true, little vallies are observed nestled between the hills. clothed in living green, or covered with grain or trees. The general landscape, however, is rugged and barren; while off towards the east, atur looks awful in her silence, with her blackcned, torn, volcanic rocks, and her solemn gorges through which now and then, I caught gimpses of the silent Sea of Death. The first view of Bethlchem is quite picturesque, or even imposing, covering the ridge and northern slope of a hill on the southern side of a deep and extensive valley, running nearly east and west. Approaching the town thus, across a valley, it has quite a cheerful appearance-its white walls and flat-roofed houses producing a fine contrast with the foliage of the trees and shrubbery of the vallies. The ruins around the town prove its former greatness; while a monasterv. over the spot of nativity, with walls and battlements, has the appearance of a fortress, which, in reality, it is, in times of danger. A rough path across the head of the valley, through vineyards and olive groves, soon took me into the city of David, where the root of Jesse came forth, who is now the ensign-the object of all earnest hearts on earth and in heaven. I need not say that the experience of the first hour spent in threading the streets of Bethlehem, was of genuine, unalloyed satisfaction. I met, no where, the scowl and contempt of the Mussulman; but pleasant smiles and cheerful faces greeted me on every side-for Bethlehem is a Christian town. I walked through nearly all its indrrow streets; visited several Christian homes: broke bread with the families, and finally sought the monastery and church of the Naand a stand of the stand and a data tivity. The town of Beihlehem has, at the present time, about 3,000 inhabitants, chiefly Catholics, Greeks, and Armenians; generally very ignorant and poor, but industrions, virtuous, and happy. The finest looking women and children to be seen in Palestine, are to be found in Bethdehem. The houses are strongly and compactly be After visiting another grotto; where Jerome built of stone, while the streets are narrow,

tion, prove what Solomon was able to do in horticulture, in landscape gardening and botanical studies. "I made me," he declares, "great works. I planted me vineyards; I made me gardens and orchards; and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruits, I made me pools of water. to water therewith, the wood that bringforce, in grand and awful desolation.

The chief occupation of the inhabitants of Betblehem, besides horticulture, and the months since, I spent a day at Bethlehem, and ordinary tillage of the land, is in lue visited the spot where Christ was born, 1869 manufacture of all kinds of holy wares. mementoes of the place, from wood; nother of pearl, ivory wood, and Dead-Sea lava stone.

After having examined the town, sufficiently, I made my way to the birth-place of Jesus, situated in the Eastern suburb. It is said to be a natural grotto, now under a church, first erected, by the Empress Helena, who thus fixed the exact location of many of the so-called holy places,

In connection with the church of the Nativity, occupied by the Greek Communion, is the monastery where the priests reside, and where pilgrims lodge from time to time. From different parts of the monastery to the grotto of the Nativity, there are several passages the Greek Church possessing the main entrance, unlocked by a silver key. For centuries, the Latin Church has been compelled to enter the grotto by an indirect route, and has used every influence, to obtain, an equal advantage with the Greeks. It Latin Church, that fired the train of events which brought on the Crimean war. This grotto is some 37 feet long; 11 feet wide, and 9 feet high; and the floor and walls are covered with a greenish colored marble. The walls are hung, here and there, with tapestries and paintings by Italian and Spanish masters. At one end of the grotto is a semicircular recess, and in the center of it. on the floor, is a star, wrought in marble and jasper, encircled by silver, on which are carved the words, "Here Jesus Christ was born were burning above, shedding a flood of mellow light upon the birth place of the Saviour of mankind. Near by is the manger-simply a block of stone hollowed out; and over it, a picture representing a stable, with horses and cattle feeding. Directly opposite is the altar of the wise men, marking the place where they sat when offering, their presents of gold, frankincense an I myrrh. Over this altar is a picture representing them in the act of bestowing their gifts. They are painted to represent kings; and among them is

an Ethiopian. While standing in this grotto of the Nativity, beneath the mellow light of many golden lamps, and amidst the profoundest silence, contemplating the spot, the event, and the results of that birth in a manger, a poor, foot-sore pilgrim woman entered, knelt, and then kissing the spot of birth, broke forth into tears and sobs! This tender sight of the true heart of woman, as well as my to the same sanctuary, and thence to the grave. own meditations, awakened the deepest emotions of my nature. And I could not place my own hand on the jasper star, and on the cold stone of manger, without experiencing a thrill of awa in thus coming in contact with relics associated with holy memories, and handed down through the ages. and on family discover emphasized all Whether I was standing in the very stable where Christ was born, or not, I did not stop to argue, I was, at least, standing, in (Bethlehem, without the shadow of a doubt, at the very fountain-head of history, where an event occurred, which, to-day, is, gratefully acknowledged, and celebrated throughout the world, starting thrills word -- would that I had kept it better. of joy in millions of human hearts. Tradition affirms that the grottoes around Bethlehemiwere anciently used as stables, in connection with the inns or khans. Indeed, Palestine abounds in ancient tombs, excavations, grottees and caverns, and they are now occasionally used by the inhabtants, and by travellers, as places of shelter. al do not think it a very strange thing humanly speaking, that Joseph and Mary, coming to Beth lehem, as, probably, hundreds of others did, during the enrollment, should have occupied a spot near the beasts of burden, such as camels, horses Holy Family were compelled, like others, to take. up their abode in the open court, or in one of the grottoes near by, used as a place of shelter for man and beast. In many parts of India, Spain, South America and China, I have seen what may be styled, inns, where travellers are not much better accommodated than was the Holy Family, at the inn of Bethlehem. L have often seen whole families lodging in their carts, or on the ground

like a thread of emerald, with its wealth of trees and vegetation, in that otherwise batren land. Here and there, eastward down the mighty gorge, I could catch glimpses of the Sea of Death; while beyond, stretching north and south, were the dark mountains of Moab, piled up by volcanic

THAT LITTLE SHAKER.

There it hangs on its nail, at the end of the wardrobe. It is old-half-worn-the straw is broken-and why let it hang there? Ah ! stranger, it has a history. Shall'I tell you? 'That little shaker once covered my idol. Often as I looked out my study window, the form that little shaker covered went tripping by, to feed the chickens, or again as I looked out, it was playing "keep house," or "keep school," with another somewhat larger.

Occasionally there was a rap at my study door, and a sweet, gentle voice would call ' Papa, may I come in ?" " Not now, darlingwait a little," and away, tripping, light and happy went the little shaker.

By and by it returned, and again, " Papa may I come in now?", "" Yes, darling." Open flies the door-in rushes Nellie-my little angelchild now.

I can see that sweet face, and hear that gentle loving voice now, just as but yesterday, and though the memories are sad, yet are they pleasant. That little shaker, like Bro. Cuyler's "Empty Crib," (which I hope some day to read,) is dearer to me than jewels, or gold ; for the associations are very precious. God knew I loved the dear child too well, and I knew it too; but how could I help it? She was so gentle, and so amiable, and so unselfish, that she won the love of every one. It was a large space in my heart she filled a part of which belonged to my Saviour, and this was one reason why the Lord took her. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Another reason was, that, as a pastor, I might know better how to sympathize with the afflicted of my flock. Two little brothers used to pass, hand in hand, daily, on their way to school They were in the infant department in our Sab bath School. One day, as the elder was near the school-house, a wild steer, passing, rushed suddenly upon him, tossed him high, and made an awful wound in his side, from which he died that night. And as I went to console that dear mother, my feelings were kindred, for two years ago my darling was a class mate with her dear.

boy-now I trust they are both with Jesus. And still another reason for removing my loyely one was, my own sanctification and growth in grace. It was a cold day in January, 1867, when I carried her to church (for the snow was too deep for her to walk) for the last time. She never went out again, until little more than a week after, when we followed her precious dust Just then commenced a blessed revival, that added a large number to our church and to other churches.

the green valley of the sacred Jordan, winding | mediate attention to religion, and the danger of delay, than these facts-that there can be no hope of preparation beyond the period of threescore and ten, and that anywhere within that period life may terminate, or that there is a possibility, and in fact a strong probability, that that outer limit will not be reached.

(2.) The great purposes to be accomplished in the world can be better secured by the present arrangement than they could be by one which would greatly protract the life of man. The preing. sent arrangement has all the advantage of bringing new and varied powers upon the earth to meet the new circumstances of the world in the development of the divine plans; the advantage of bringing more actors on the stage, and of preparing more immortal beings for a future world; the advantage of greatly multiplying the number of the redeemed, and consequently of glorifying the Redeemer and augumenting the joys of heaven ; the advantage of preventing the evils which would arise from the vast accumulation of wealth' and power in the hands of a few individuals, and creating a permanent tyranny in the hands of a few-it being far better for the liberty and happiness of the mass of men that a man of accumulated or accumulating wealth should lose his hold on his property at the age of three-score and ten, and that it should be distributed in society, than that he should be allowed to go on absorbing the wealth of the world for a thousand years, as it was of advantage to the world that Xerxes, Cæsar, Alexander, and Napoleon should die rather than that they should live to confirm and establish a tyranny for centuries. It is an advantage to the world that men should die; that, having accomplished the great purpose of life, they should give place to others; and that what they have gained in any respect should go into the common stock for the good of the world at large, and for the benefit of coming generations, rather than that it should be retained by themselves under the form of vast, monopolies. At the same time it is to be remarked, that a man will be more likely to attend to the interests of his soul when he knows that the affairs of the world are of so little importance to him, and that all that he can acquire must soon-very soon-pass into other hands, than he would if he felt that what he could gain would continue to be his, and would be constantly increasing for a thousand years. As man,

therefore, is a fallen being; and his great interests lie beyond the grave; as this is essentially a world of probation; as all that any one can gain here is a trifle of no value compared with the great interests beyond the tomb; as it is important that man should constantly feel and realize this; as it is important that all the means possible should be used to fix his attention on these facts, and to prevent his jeoparding his eternal interests by neglect and delay; and as the period of

seventy years furnishes ample time to prepare for the world beyond, and to secure the salvation of the soul, we can see that it is a wise and benevolept arrangement by which the existence of man on the earth is bounded by three-score and ten years, or by which this should be fixed as the outer limit of human life. Man must be content with this. He has no power to remove the limit. Science, time, experience, prudence, medicines, do nothing to modify this law of our being, or to secure to us any longer duration on earth than God has asssigned us. Death mocks at all the boastings of science in this respect, and, so far as anything future can be considered as certain, it is certain that the period of human life settled in the time of Moses will continue to be the boundary, to the end of time. The tables of life Insurance and Annuity companies now acted on will continue without essential modification to be the tables employed to the end of time. on worthand more of the the New a

siderable money for church-building during the coming season. Preparatory arrangements have also been made for starting a Sabbath school both in Hamilton and Silver Spring, at the east and west base of the mountain. While visiting the various families in these places a surprising want of books, even Testaments, was discovered. And so very far is this place outside the ordinary channels of communication it is difficult to obtain them, save by heavy expense and long wait-

TREASURINA.

During my mission in Treasure City the first native was added to the fast multiplying inhabitants-a daughter-and the mother a member of the Presbyterian Church. An impromptu consultation of mine owners, agents and others was had respecting some fitting expression of interest towards the first citizen. As the name of the city is Treasure, from the untold amount of wealth supposed to lie underneath; the name of the child must needs have some connection therewith. The English appellation was Latinized, and made feminine-the name must be Treasuring. This on condition, that the godfathers should endow the nominee with a silver brick and other valuables connected with the treasures of the new location.

So, after my last sermon here, the child was duly recognized to be by covenant in connection with Christ's family, and according to the forms of baptism practised in our Church, sealed as a member-receiving at the same time, the pleasing name of Treasurina. يافريني والدارية العاريق الاف

ANOTHER INCIDENT.

Among the new-comers, in order to get or increase wealth, are a husband and wife-he a Jew. she a devoted Catholic. Through invitation, persuasion, curiosity or other motive, the husband was at one of our very interesting evening prayermeetings, held in a tent near his own dwelling. On going home from which, his wife was on her knees at her evening devotions. Seeing which, he did what he had never done before;-he approached softly, kneeling down beside her, putting his face between his hands and remaining there until she had ended. The wife hardly believing her senses at length asked ; "George, why have you done this?" "I was at a prayer-meeting tonight and on coming home saw you at prayers and could not refrain from kneeling alongside." Early next morning the wife was out joyously to tell what had happened to some who had been at the prayer-meeting. At the next meeting for praver, husband and wife were both present.

A. M. STEWART. .e. Ioraan

COLORADO FOR CHRIST. Partly for health and to visit our children in, Denver, Col., we (wife and self) spent a few weeks in that delightful region during the extreme hot weather last summer. I say delightful, because of its grand scenery, its pure air, its cool mountain streams, clear as chrystal, fresh and constant from the snowy range, its rich minerals, its fertile soil, its enterprising inhabitants, its beautiful cities and villages, quite up to the snowy range and its undoubted future for wealth and influence among the stars of our American galaxy. While I beheld all this with admiration, my spirit was stirred within me, and I was led to exclaim, "Say not, four months and then cometh harvest! behold I say unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. The harvest truly is great but the labors are few." Over these vast plains, where the Indians now roam and massacre unoffending women and children, and in these Rocky Mountains quite up to where the white drapery covers their venerable heads. Christ's ministers must go and preach his Gospel and secure this beautiful country for Christ, to whom it belongs, from the grasp of Infidelity, Romanism and Satan. I had the pleasure of preaching Christ to attentive hearers at Denver and Golden City. Yours in the bonds of Christian love, M. G. Cass.

I once visited an establishment much on the Inand in close proximity to the drivers and guests of the inni it is the alter of an analy y taken ton

translated the Bible into the Latin "Vulgate;" gloomy and not over clean. The vineyards and I was taken to the upper terrace of the convent, groves of olive and fig-trees about the town, to enjoy the view of the country around. The ble to an early attention to religion. As it is, it prove that some of the inhabitants are far re- atmosphere was remarkably clear and serene. requires all the force of the fact that a man canmoved from poverty. As of old, the pools of Below me and to the north were the valley and not hope to live beyond three score and ten, and Solomon, three miles away, supply, the vallies hill-sides where Ruth gleaned after the reapers that anywhere within that period be may be and hopefully attended has been organized in Trea. Lincoln and Geary in the social arrangements of

That affliction was sanctified to my good, and to that of others. May its influence never cease. Since then my prayer and my song have been where the Nearer, my God, to thee, and a super

Nearer to thee; Ev'n though it be a cross. That raiseth me."

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With the Psalmist I can say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, for, before I was af flicted, I went astray, but, now have I kept thy cleaders an geiladan may alada's erin s**w**a and de<u>r see ala an a</u>n aladar an al

ber cent. In this importance respect. New York THE LIMIT OF THREE SOORE AND TEN. FROM BARNES SERMON. In regard to man, and especially to man con sidered as a fallen and sinful being, and with reference to the problem of redemption, the following may be suggested as, reasons for fixing the limit of his probation at three-score years and

ten. (1.) It cannot be doubted that the time is sufficiently long to enable him to prepare for the and asses. The inp, or khan, being crowded, the future world. The plan of salvation is so simple, and the terms are so easy, that far within that period any one can do all that is needful to be done to prepare for a future state, even for a vast eternity, and, if a man closing life at seventy, is not prepared for heaven, it could not be alleged as an excuse that ample time has not been allowed him for such a preparation. Indeed, a very brief period of life is all that is necessary to prepare a man to die. It may be added, on this point, near their animals, when all the shelter of the that if a man is not prepared for another world inn was occupied. In fact, in Jerusalem itself, at the age of seventy-if he has spent threescore and ten years on the earth in impenitence. dian, Spanish and old Jewish plan, where I saw and sin, the probability would be very slight that compensating good be effected by the stay, I have he continues, "the standard of the gubernatoricamels, horses and donkeys, under the same roof, an addition to life would be likely to lead him to no fears of snow, and no special objection to al receptions has been raised within the past few prepare for the world to come, for no mere increase of years would be likely to turn the mind of a heary sinner to God. It should be remembered, also, that a prospect of such a lengthened existence on earth would be every way unfavora-

REV. A. M. STEWART'S LETTERS. XXVIIT. Treasure City, Nev., Dec. 1868.

My visit to White Pine District is about to terminate, duty calling elsewhere. The stay and labors have already been lengthened beyond intention or arrangement on first coming. Amid so intense and fevered an interest in connection with silver hunting, a feeble effort has been made to induce this marvellous community to think of something better. The extreme beauty of the November weather, running into December, has also conduced to this prolonged stay. Even now the locality is left with many regrets. Left, however, with the promise and hope of return when the snow storms have gone, in order to carry on. and if possible, perfect, various matters and plans which have already been started.

snow is said to fall on these mountains to the is no surprise to those who know the stanchness depth of eight or ten feet. There are certainly as yet not shelters erected sufficient for half the people who are still flocking hither. Could any roughing it out with this multitude through the years." We quote this last as evidence of a winter. No place possible can however be had public sentiment approving the Governor's course, for continued preaching in-doors; and nothing and as encouragement to others in high places to special can be effected in such a place without a go and do likewise. For instance, we should church building. Even now, and with money like to see the Union Lesgue of this city dis-

Solomon, three miles away, supply, the vallies hill-sides where Ruth gleaned alter the reapers that anywhere within the town with water by means of the ancient ---where David, in his youth, tended the sheep, and where angels announced to the sheepherds, as great the information of the sheep vallies which, to day, by their wealth of vegeta- the promised Messiah. Towards the north-east pressing on the mind the importance of an im- with over twenty names, and a promise of con- cry for the friends of Temperance.

OUR TEMPERANCE GOVERNOR.

Governor Geary held his annual reception in the Executive mansion at Harrisburg on the evening of the seventh. It is described by the reporters as the most brilliant one he has ever given. His Excellency and lady received their guests in person, and not a few of our readers know from experience how admirably they can Winter seems now fairly setting in, and the do it. One thing more the reporter adds, which of our Governor's temperance principles : intoxicating beverages formed no part of the entertainment." "In this and many other respects," sufficient, lumber could not be had the present season for building. A prayer-meeting held twice a week and very closely follow such illustrious examples as those of