

# PACIFIC CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"GO YE, THEREFORE, TEACH ALL NATIONS."

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## Pacific CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

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### Correspondence.

#### Our Washington Letter.

(FROM OUR REGULAR CORRESPONDENT.)

WASHINGTON, May 17, 1879.

The annual council of the regents of the "Ladies Mount Vernon Association" is to meet at Mount Vernon, June 4th. Mrs. Laughton, the regent, will preside for the first time in three years. Last year she was in Europe, and the previous year her husband was too ill for her to attend. She is now at her country place—Torrésdale near Philadelphia. She has not been in Washington since she left with her late husband eighteen months ago. She will as is customary when the Council meets, remain at Mount Vernon during the session. The vice regents from several states also spend their nights as well as days in the old homestead during the meetings of the Council; there are many in Washington who will rejoice to see Mrs. Laughton here again. There are three vice regents to be appointed when the Council meets. One will succeed the lady who represented Missouri, who has died suddenly, another is to be appointed from Kentucky. None save those who visited Mt. Vernon before the present regent, Mrs. Laughton and Col. Hollingsworth, the superintendent assumed its direction, can appreciate its great improvement under their management within eight years the house has been changed from an unfinished barn-like place to a mansion almost entirely furnished and containing many objects which would be of interest apart from their present situation. The furniture now there, is all of the date at which George Washington and his wife resided there even if it was never owned by them, or their relatives. Most of it, however, was either by themselves or their intimate friends.

Since the organization of the select committee on the Freedmen's Bank of which Senator Bruce is the chairman, many letters have been received from depositors in various Southern cities, annually inquiring as to the prospect of receiving any further dividends. It has already been announced that the committee proposes to hold its first meeting on one day of next week and it can be stated for the gratification of the numerous creditors of the concern that it is the earnest purpose of all the members to adopt some plan whereby the remaining assets of the concern can be profitably realized upon, and the expenses attending the winding up of its affairs as very considerably reduced. It is claimed by experts who have looked closely into the matter that the management of the affairs of the institution can be as well conducted at an

expense not exceeding one-third of the present annual outlay. A proposition has been broached to place the institution under the management of the Treasury Department, but the Treasury officials intimate that they do not take kindly to the idea, and it is not impossible that some better plan may be suggested.

Pennsylvania avenue is a never failing picture of interest; it is always full of people coming from unknown regions and going to unknown regions. In the evening there is a crowd around a carriage and span of horses, a man is auctioneering his goods, his wife is the silent partner handing up the articles which he praises to their full value. He has the attention of the crowd, wants their money, and therefore sets himself to persuade them to want his goods. By day sometimes the same prominent locality has the telescopic with his instrument, ten cents a look, but there is no great crowd around him, there are too many people out of work, hungry and suffering, they have no money to pay for star-gazing. The telescopic is a peripatetic showman, somewhat of a philanthropist, for his programmes mix up astronomical information and the wisdom of Solomon; "Never be idle" "Speak the truth" "Make few promises," etc, etc. He finds more patronage in Maine and Massachusetts than anywhere and Baltimore does more star-gazing than Washington. The next group stops for the Hon. Alexander Stevens in his carriage, at his hotel, the National. They lift him out like a child, he stands up tall, emaciated to a skeleton, a man on each side walks him along as you teach a baby to walk. His face is wizened pale; the stranger would think him a consumptive taking his last ride.

A residence in Washington is as trying a test to church people as removal to the Far West, where a man's religious profession often becomes as broad as the prairie and about as intangible. There is plenty of church-going but the spiritual atmosphere is rather foggy or sometimes too aristocratic. Mr. Moody did not come any nearer than Baltimore; he may have been afraid he should have to shake off the dust from his feet and therefore turned his face another way.

Washington is full of colored people, this is their Mecca; Marshal Douglass is their great man a very Samson of strength. He has a fine residence on the elevated land beyond the Anacostic river. The house is painted lead-color, with white trimmings and stands in a grove of cypress trees. They tell us Mr. Douglass owns houses in the city and a fine place on Capitol Hill. His own people look upon him as a man with an Alladin's lamp as if they forgot that with every inch one must work, no man slides down hill to success; he grows to the full stature of greatness through tension of moral and spiritual nerve and muscle that makes him pay value in advance for every success.

In reference to the length of the session the drift of opinion among the managers appear to be that it will last at least until the 1st of July. The friends of the President believe that if an adjournment should take place without providing for the army, that he would not wait until late in the season, as upon the first failure of the Army bill in the first year of his administration, but that he would

immediately reassemble Congress and continue to hold it here until the necessities of the army were provided for.

AUGUST.

### "Our Troubles."

BY J. P. MOOREHEAD.

Editor P. C. Messenger:

DEAR BROTHER,—As many of our brethren have undertaken to write up our troubles, some from one standpoint, and some from another, I thought it would not be out of place for me to try my hand.

If I am not mistaken, they have all missed the mark, at least to some extent. Not but what they all see our troubles or difficulties clear enough, but they do not just see how to meet them; hence a controversy is gotten up between brethren, and these controversies are not conducted in the best of spirit; at least their words make that impression on the minds of many. Sharp words cut both ways, and often do harm where good was intended. I am not satisfied with the controversies that have been going on in our papers. I think it has and will do harm. Why do we differ, because the Bible is silent, we cannot say, "Thus it is written." I fear we are forgetting our watchword—the Bible and the Bible alone.

My opinion is, the greatest trouble we have to contend with is the money question; at least it appears to my mind to lie at the foundation of most of them, and by way of illustration: A church is organized, a meeting house is built, a preacher is employed, a debt is contracted, and everything goes on well for awhile, say one year, then the debt with interest must be paid. Some two, three or four of the best men in the church have put their names to a note, they alone are legally responsible, and generally they alone pay it, with a promise from some of the brethren that we will help you pay it; but these promises are soon forgotten, at least they are not legally binding. Now the preacher is to be settled with, these same good men are on the subscription list for a good portion of his salary, they pay up their part, others fail, some move away, and others, that cannot, or will not pay their part. The preacher now suffers, he feels discouraged, cast down, confidence in the brethren lost, he must move to some other point, teach school, practice medicine, raise wheat, or do something else for a living. The brethren have lost confidence in each other, some will quit going to church, a few of the old folks will meet on Lord's day and say we can keep a house for the Lord without a preacher; they will sing the same songs, pray the same prayers, and make the same good talk every Lord's day.

Now, this is all well enough; but what is the result of such a course as this, the church is not built up, the brethren feel cast down, and it is not at all interesting to the world, and they will not attend; and this will have an influence upon our children to drive them away from the church if not into downright wickedness, or to other churches where they can see or hear something.

These good brethren see the danger, they fear their children are being led away. A council is held, the conclusion is, we must have a preacher, a protracted meeting; the meeting is

appointed, the preacher is sent for, he comes, Saturday night he has about six hearers, Sunday morning about fifteen, Sunday night about twenty, Monday night almost a failure, and so on through the week. Monday morning comes, the preacher is to start home; these good brethren would not allow a public collection to be taken up. O no, but we will make up the money among ourselves, each one putting in two or four bits; in all about five or six dollars is made up in this way; the brethren give it to the preacher, saying, this is not enough, but it is all we can do now, we will try to do better next time; the preacher takes it, goes home; his expenses are paid out of it and he has nothing left.

O, how deeply he feels this; but he must not murmur, or they will think, if they do not say it, that he is preaching for money.

Now, brethren, is this Bible Christianity? You may think so, but I do not.

A church in such condition had better have its funeral preached, and sell the house; if not, it will, sooner or later, be left unto you desolate.

Now where are all these troubles and the general dead condition of the churches traceable to? I say it is for the want of a better system of finances. All thinking brethren, and all the preachers see and know and feel that this is true. Hence there has been many plans proposed, and each proposer of a plan tries to prove he is right by the Bible, and if he can't get his plan adopted, he would not do anything; he thinks the church is all wrong, made up of old fogies and opposed to missionary work, why, because they are opposed to his plan. I think we may oppose the way, or plan of doing a thing, without opposing the thing itself. Much harm has been done in this way, we are divided, there is discord and strife among us. Now this ought not to be, "Be ye all of one mind." If we were all of one mind, we would have no trouble about plans; but why are we not? because we cannot all say of our plans, "Thus it is written."

Now, I am very sure, that we have in California and Oregon, preaching talents sufficient to accomplish the work desired, that is, to build up the church on this coast, if we could control it.

The same is true of the money and means in the two States.

Now is there no way by which all our controversies may be stopped so that we may all go to work as a united body, and redeem the time lost.

Now I do not propose to get into a controversy with any of my brethren, nor do I propose to prove this plan or that plan to be right or wrong; but to show you just what the Bible teaches on this subject, and leave the result with you.

I call attention to H-b. xiii. 16: "But to do good and to communicate forget not." You may call this my text, if you wish so to do.

Question: What does the apostle mean? To do good and to communicate. Whatever he does mean, it was his request that they should not forget it, and to encourage them he says, "With such sacrifice God is well pleased." Do we understand this text? To do good we may all understand. We are to abound in good works. By our good works we are to

let our light shine, that others may see them, and by that means be turned to God. But to communicate we may not understand so well. And while I attempt to help you understand it, I ask your candid attention. I may not be able to please or convince everybody, or indeed but few. But that will have but little influence upon my mind.

The church of Christ, or of God, is a divine government. The church is the body of Christ. When we enter or join the church, we enter into covenant or partnership with Christ, the head of the body.

No government on earth, whether human or divine, has ever existed without some system of finance. The church of Christ, as it is now, is in the main right. Yet in some things we are sadly at fault, and this money question is one of the things where we are lacking, and it is not to be wondered at, when we remember what our teaching was in the early part of this reformation. We have had some controversy among us on this subject, and I fear too much, unless it was conducted in a better spirit, about how the expenses of the church was to be met. Some have tried one way and some another, but all have failed so far to meet the wants of the church; but why have they? I am inclined to think it is for the want of a divine sanction. I may be wrong in thinking so, but if I am, pardon me. It is evident that all the plans are not right, yet I am not fighting any of them now.

Many good brethren have refused to do or give anything unless they can have their own way or plan, the result is confusion and a waste of what little means we do raise.

All organized bodies or governments have a way to raise money. The church is a divine government, governed by a divine law. The New Testament is that divine law. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Do we need instruction on the question now before us? I think we do; we will appeal to this divine law with great confidence. What is the meaning of the word communicate? 1s. To share in common. 2d. To impart for joint or common possession, money or property. 3rd. To bestow, to confer.—Webster.

Now, does the Bible sustain Webster? We will see. "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teaches in all good things." Gal. vi. 6.

(To Continue.)

WHISKEY.—"Whiskey caused it," wrote a mother to me concerning the arrest of her son the other day. A brilliant son of one of our best preachers committed suicide last week. Whiskey did it. A short time since, passing along the wharf, I saw a mangled corpse lying in the mud, just dug out of the canal, where he had been for three months. Whiskey did it. What evils has whiskey no done? Yet good men make it, and sell it, and drink it.

—Remember your sins, to confess them, your temptations, to guard against them; and your obligations, thankfully to acknowledge them.

—Be thankful for past mercies, before you plead for new favors; this is the way to plead successfully; he that offereth praise glorifieth God.