

PACIFIC CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"GO YE, THEREFORE, TEACH ALL NATIONS."

VOL. X.

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Letter from Boston.

NUMBER X.

BOSTON, April 1, 1880.

My Dear Girls:

On last Saturday several of us came in from Wellesley, to spend our vacation sight-seeing in the city. It was only 9 A. M. when we reached our boarding place, and we spent the remainder of the forenoon attending services at a Jewish Synagogue near by. The gentlemen in the audience kept their tall silk hats on, and as most of the service was in Hebrew, you may know we did not feel very much at home. There was considerable moving about and talking, and it all seemed a long way removed from any real worship.

Sunday morning we went to Trinity church to hear the Easter sermon of Philip Brooks. We started an hour and a half early and found we had not gone too soon, as it was but a little while before the grand assembly room and all the galleries were crowded, even the speaker's platform and all the steps were utilized. I have not the least idea how many hundred people were there. A most lovely pyramid of flowers, surmounted by a cross of the same, at the foot of which dozens of Calla lilies were arranged, stood at the right of the speaker, who said so very good things in a very eloquent manner, and one cannot wonder at his popularity after hearing him speak.

In the evening we attended vespers at a grand Catholic cathedral, which was well filled with devout Catholics. The worshippers were entirely different from those at Trinity church in the morning, but there were lilies everywhere about the altar just the same, proclaiming that "Christ our Lord is risen to-day." While myriad tapers were burning, and incense filled the air, some fifty or more little boys dressed in black and white robes sang responses or whatever they are termed. It seemed dreadful to me to see little children being trained up in such a way.

Monday afternoon we visited King's chapel, which you perhaps know all about, it being the third church built in Boston, in colonial days. It is built of stone, and is remarkably well preserved. The pews are square and the walls of each one about as high as my shoulders. When the church was first built families cushioned and furnished their own pews according to individual taste. About eleven years ago the upholstering was all done over in red, and is quite rich, though the

gentleman told us that some of the pews were much richer in the first place, as it was the royal church and very wealthy. The pews have cushioned chairs in them as well as the other seats, and it is the most comfortable place I have found for many a day. We were shown the pew which was once the governor's, and were told also that the same pews yet belonged to the same families they did when things were settled, and half of the first congregation proved loyal and returned to their Queen; except in a few cases where there were no living relatives. It is the only church in the city with the old fashioned sounding board. It is no longer Episcopalian, but still keeps the Bible and Prayer Book presented by George III. There is a large pipe organ with 48 stops, and three banks of keys; the case is in some places handsomely carved. Handel played on it after he was blind, and it was selected by him for this church. It is 125 years old, and there is a crown on the top which would indicate, if nothing else did, that it was made in some other country than a republic. There is a monument in honor of its members that fell in the Rebellion; there are busts also of some of those who helped build the church, and others whose memory is held dear by the members. The most that is modern are the painted windows back of the altar, which were put in about twelve years ago and cost the handsome sum of \$10,000. We were told that the morning after the great fire in Chicago this church sent \$30,000, and afterward several members sent \$5,000 each, and would not allow it put in the papers. The congregation now is very wealthy, there being thirteen or more who can count their wealth by the million.

Tuesday we visited the mute school. It is wonderful how the deaf learn to talk. We were in half-a-dozen rooms where the smaller ones were just beginning to learn, and where the older ones were being taught geography and history. They used no motions, but had learned to understand all the teacher said from the movement of the lips, and they answered as any children would except they cannot control their voices very well. They are taught to use the language of more mature people, and their original essays sound too old for them. There were 81 in all, and but six that could hear anything at all, and that not what we would call hearing.

About half after nine o'clock this morning we started for the blind asylum, which is in south Boston, quite a distance from here. The buildings are situated on Dorchester heights, and from the upper windows of the buildings there is a splendid view of the harbor and surroundings, and it does seem strange that the intelligent people of Boston should have their institution for the blind where there is so much to be enjoyed through the sense of sight, while the poor deaf children have nothing to look at but a high brick wall. This was their open day, and the examinations in various branches were very interesting. I was particularly pleased with the way a little boy passed his examination in geography. He had the map of Africa before him, and took up each division as the teacher called for it, always giving the capital. When he had taken Africa to pieces, the teacher, to confuse him, took some of the United States from another

part of the table, and gave them to him, but he could always give the name and position and capital. The band composed of blind young men made good music; a solo on one of the instruments was specially good. A colored young lady sang an Italian solo which was tolerable, though to my notion plain English would have been in better taste.

But I must not forget to tell you something of Laura Bridgeman, of whom we have read so often, and to whom Dickens has devoted a chapter in his American Notes. She can neither hear nor see, and is getting to be quite old. She talked for some time with one of the teachers using the hand alphabet. I cannot comprehend how she could first have been taught even that means of communicating with others, when she could neither see, hear, nor speak. She has a pleasant face and does not look as if all the sunshine had been taken out of her life. This is a most beautiful day and I could not help thinking how much we had to enjoy that was entirely shut out from those whose happy patience had just taught us a lesson of thankfulness that our lives had been cast in pleasanter places than theirs. There are altogether about 120 pupils in the blind asylum.

For variety we have spent some time in the public library, turning the leaves of huge volumes, 3 by 4 feet, containing representations of the frescoes of the Vatican, climbed to the top of the City Hall, wandered up and down the rooms given over to household decorative art prizing the old blue plates and venerable bric-a-brac; peeped into Japanese stores and gazed longingly at laces and ribbons hung up so gorgeously in millinery windows.

We have planned a long tour for to-morrow, but really I am making you too long a visit this time.

CASSIE STUMP.

Autobiographical Sketches.

ELDER D. D. WEDDLE.

MOHAWK, OR., April 13, 1880.

Bro. Campbell:

If the MESSENGER will allow me a little space in its columns, I will give, through them, a reminiscence of my life from boyhood till the present time, which will, no doubt, be interesting to some of the many readers of the MESSENGER.

I desire to bring to view the difference in the style of preaching in 1812 and in 1880. But few men on this coast have made a trial to do this—none, so far as I know, except old Bros. McBride and G. O. Burnett. When I read their sketches of pioneer preaching, in the MESSENGER, years ago, my spirit was stirred within me, and seeing that I had come up side by side with them, it constrained me to offer my mite of testimony in support of theirs.

I was born in Lee county, Virginia, August 10, 1799. My father was a native of Fredricksburg, Md. My grandfather was from Germany. My father was a Presbyterian. He had me sprinkled when I was eight days old. My mother was raised by a Regular Baptist. They were almost a unit on predestination; both had been brought up in that superstition; such impressions are difficult to remove from the young mind. This subject of predestination was the hardest thing which I, a young unlearned boy, had to contend with in my raising. I went to school two weeks and learned

to spell in three letters. I had to help my father work to make something to live on. My grandmother, on my mother's side, at that time lived with us. She, taking an interest in my learning, taught me how to spell and read a little. She taught me also to reverence God, and how to pray, in her way. Young people, at that time, were taught to repeat what was called the Lord's prayer. We repeated that prayer after our grandmother, at her bedside, at night, many times. But I never learned the true import of the language used until we heard a preacher call it the apostles' prayer. From that time I began to look differently at many things from which I had drawn a wrong conception. But, let me say here, that the teaching of a loving grandmother, even though wrong, is hard to erase. It takes the word of God to do it. So it was, I have overcome it all; and now let me say to all Christians, be sure to teach your children right while young. The teaching by you in childhood is very apt to be the germ from which the main trunk will spring, giving shape and character to after life. I remember well the first preacher I ever heard preach. I was seven years old. He was a Baptist. It was the first discourse ever preached on Cling river, above the state line, on the Virginia side. If I had not heard any more after that, I never should have craved to become a good man. The man who had called this old preacher into the settlement was a New Yorker, a very old frail man. When time for service came, the people could not get into the house to be seated, so they went to the grove, and in place of a stand they took along a fine center table. When the preacher rose to speak, he got up on the table. This gave the old gentleman great offence. He rose, and with a rap on the head of the speaker caused him to get down, which he did reluctantly, saying he feared the bugs and worms would crawl up his trousers. This novel scene at church made a lasting impression on my mind. What would we think of such an incident enacted in 1880?

The next meeting I remember going to was when I was eleven years old. I went with my mother over Clinch mountain. This was a Methodist meeting, and here I got a great scare on this wise: Shouting and jerking were common at every meeting in those days; also class-meetings with closed doors. After the preacher had gone through the discourse, the class-leader went to shut the door. My mother gave me a sign to go out. I went out, but very reluctantly. As I passed out, the door closed. I did not like this treatment, it was much against my will; for I was not acquainted with that way of shutting boys out of the house from their mothers. There was another boy shut out also who was well acquainted with the usages of the Methodist church. He saw I was scared and took it into his head to scare me worse. So as soon as the shouting commenced he took me into a basement story of the house which placed us in a position to hear all that was going on over our heads. That time I shall never forget while living, for it causes me to this day to dislike class-meetings. My mother took part in the shouting; and while I was in the basement story of the house I could hear her voice and distinguish it from the rest. This excited me to such a degree as almost to cause me

to take spasms. The shouting continued for some fifteen minutes, when the meeting adjourned. I have never had such a scare since.

This, and the incident with the old Baptist preacher whom old grandpa Lewis knocked off his fine center table, were not calculated to make me admire religion, notwithstanding what my grandmother had taught me.

These incidents took place between 1806 and 1811. I was then twelve years old; and from that till 1818, I took little notice of the preaching.

The first thing I saw and heard that fixed my attention was an appointment given out for a Presbyterian minister. I went more to see than to hear; but I heard one thing in particular which, with subsequent expression similar in character, shook my faith in preachers. When he arose in the stand he looked up, and said, that God had sent him there to preach to the people. Next Lord's day came a Baptist, who made about the same statement. The next one who came along was a Methodist; and he stated that God had sent him there and had called him to the work. This caused me to distrust all three of their theories.

When I reached my 21st year I moved, with my father, into Hawkins county, Tennessee, where I married my present wife, now 77 years old. We were married August 6, 1820. In 1823 we removed to Jackson county, Indiana, and in 1821 to Monroe county, where, in 1828, I heard the first Gospel sermon, on a day and time long to be remembered by those that heard it. The brother who preached was James Lancesford, a disciple of Eld. John Smith, of Kentucky. The result of his day's labor was sixteen immersed. At that time, my father and mother and myself and wife rubbed off the "mark of the beast." I thought I could get on without opposition; but shortly afterwards I found Paul's words true, that "they that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." This persecution came, not from the world, but from the sects. Ah! yes, from their preachers. But, thanks be to God, notwithstanding all the opposition I have had, I have overcome them.

And now to conclude this article, let us all try to overcome our enemies by our kindness to them; remembering at all times to speak where the Bible speaks, and where it is silent let us be silent, for this will give us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. So let it be! In my next I will give you a short sketch of my preaching in Indiana and Ohio.

—The Methodist Episcopal Church had at the close of the year 1879, 1,524,006 members and 176,196 probationers. The gain in members for the year was 21,608, and the loss in probationers 15,467; so that taking the total of members and probationers—1,700,302—the net gain for the year was only 6146. The number of churches was 16,955, which shows an increase of 395. The value of the churches is estimated at \$62,520,417, being a decrease of \$6,228,741 from the previous year.

—Dr. Coplestone, the Bishop of Colombo, Ceylon, has arrived in England in order to "confer with certain English Bishops, that, after hearing their wishes and advice, he may endeavor to arrive at conditions under which license and ordination may be granted to the members of the Church Missionary Society." The conflict with the missionaries is of long standing.