

# Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS: FERVENT IN SPIRIT."

NEW SERIES.  
Vol. II. No. 15.

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1857.

WHOLE SERIES.  
Vol. XXI. No. 45.

## Poetry.

### Seed Time.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters,"  
Sow in faith the little seed;  
Be not idle, faint, or weary;  
God's eternal promise plead.  
With the old man and the stripling,  
With the rich and with the poor;  
Think that, when to-morrow dawneth,  
Seed time MAY be thine no more.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters,"  
Sow in faith the little seed;  
Wind and drought, and rain and sunshine,  
Still each other shall succeed.  
In the morning, in the evening,  
Scatter still with bounteous hand:  
Here and there, some grain, forgotten,  
Germinates in fruitful land.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters,"  
Sow in faith the little seed;  
Be of great results expectant,  
For the harvest is decreed.  
Now thou knowest not the issue,  
Now thou must confide in God;  
He can cause thy work to prosper,  
Guiding all events for good.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters,"  
Sow in faith the little seed;  
Of an unseen blessing hallow  
Some unthought-of word or deed.  
God shall give thee sweet rejoicing  
After many anxious days;  
And the everlasting anthem  
Shall declare the Master's praise."

## Religious Miscellany.

### Our future knowledge.

[The following well-written paper, we believe, by the initials, is from the pen of the talented successor of the great Robert Hall, as pastor of the Baptist Church at Bristol. We had much pleasure in forming his acquaintance while pursuing his studies at Stegny College. His late work "The Cry of the Labourer; an appeal to the churches for the better support of their pastors," has given him an important position in the denomination at home.—Ed. C. M.]

Knowledge is an element of dignity, and a source of happiness. It was a feature in the primeval man; it will bear a prominent part in the condition of the glorified. "Here we know in part; then shall we know even as also we are known. Here we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face." Man's knowledge in Paradise as to freedom from error was perfect. Sin has perverted the judgment, enfeebled the reason, dimmed the perception, and blinded man with error. When man ceased to know God, it is not surprising that he should become deplorably ignorant of his works. In departing from God he departed from the fountain of truth. Evil has enslaved his nature; his affections are polluted; his conscience is defiled. The knowledge to be attained in the heavenly state will far exceed man's knowledge in Eden; how much more will it transcend that which the fallen man possesses!

The capacity for knowledge will be enlarged. It is now limited by the structure of the brain, and the mind's connection with the body. Beyond a certain point our knowledge can never pass. Too great a tension of thought injures the nervous system, and induces insanity or death. Physical necessities and secular occupations render it impossible for the capacity of knowledge to be here cultivated to the utmost. Time, judgment, memory, are wasted upon subordinate though inevitable employments. Few can habitually cultivate their intellects, and even their time and attention are often diverted from the pursuit. Our judgments are erring, our memories defective. Sin has impaired all our faculties. Some tribes of men are so reduced that their capacity for knowledge is not raised far above the brute. The average capacity of the race is low. Only a few minds are capable of considerable grasp. Great knowledge is rare. Much that has been acquired has to be unlearned. Many opinions, taken up in the search for truth, are eventually proved erroneous. One half of the world's teachers have advanced dogmas which the other half has employed itself in refuting. The process

of acquiring knowledge is slow and tedious. We overtake all the branches of a question step by step, a little more rapidly than the child, but still by slow degrees, as the faculties are strengthened by exercise. When this knowledge has been acquired a portion of it is only retained, and much of that not long. It is rarely at our disposal at the moment we want it. Every man is conscious of possessing thoughts and information which he cannot readily recall. Many have forgotten more than others learned; and always far more is forgotten than retained. It stimulated our intellectual life for the time, and was not without its influence on our habits, but as an available treasure it has passed away. This is all a proof of the feebleness and narrowness of our faculties.

It must be an element of our future condition that our knowledge, as far as it extends, will be free from error; that none of the moral influences and infirmities, which now becloud our judgments and dim our perceptions, will there exist; that the true, the beautiful, and the good, will never be mistaken. Our capacity of knowledge will not be enfeebled by the body. The spirit will put forth its energies without impediment. No exercise of the glorified intellect will be trammelled. The soarings of a Milton, and the abstractions of a Newton, will be as the lisplings of infancy to the comprehensiveness and power of heavenly minds. When the body is raised from the sepulchre, it will be conformed to the habitudes of the world of spirits,—an appropriate vehicle for the spirit in its activity, not a prison to restrict its powers,—a means of new and exalted improvement, not a burden and a snare. No disease or decay will assail it there. Its necessities will not divert from higher and nobler pursuits, nor will low and earthly tastes allure from supernal joys. Knowledge, when attained in heaven, will not be lost or impaired. It will remain our everlasting portion. It will be the stepping-stone to further progress. The capacity will strengthen with the exercise, and the mind be ever enlarging its treasures.

In the present state, however great the capacity, the range of knowledge is limited. We are acquainted with only two classes of objects, matter and mind. All that we know of them is the manner they affect ourselves and others. There may be other orders of existence with which other beings are acquainted, which await our discovery in heaven. Even of these two orders our information is very small. The avenues of knowledge are few. Other beings may possess additional faculties for which the present life affords no sphere. These may acquaint us with new and more wonderful operations of the Almighty than are now within our range. What know we of spirit, either our own or others? What know we of spiritual existence other than our own? What know we of the mode by which spirits have intercourse with each other, or the order, laws, and economy of their society? On all such subjects we stand only on the verge of knowledge, we acquire only the alphabet. What know we of matter and the orders of life which abound in the universe? Our information is limited to this globe. We know many of the tribes which inhabit the earth, we know a little of the earth's crust. But we meet at every step profound mysteries. We cannot understand any of the great principles at work in nature, and to which we assign so imposing a nomenclature. The principle of gravitation, the law of chemical affinity, the growth of vegetable and animal life, the union of body and soul, every blade of grass, every stone, every drop of water, teaches the philosopher the profoundness of his ignorance. Questions may be asked on the most insignificant object, which the accumulated wisdom of the race would fail to solve. What know we of the past history of our globe, or of man upon it, or the geological epochs which preceded his arrival on the scene? If we knew far more than we do of the earth, we should still remain ignorant of all beyond and above it. You sun and moon, you planets and stars, what questions arise respecting them! Their distances, uses, inhabitants, econo-

mies, and the overwhelming secrets of the circumambient universe; where every star is the centre of a group of worlds, and from the most distant nebulae visible through our largest telescope to the most distant region visible from it, the creation is found still expanding in magnitude and glory, every part tremulous with life, and the whole presenting new and ever varying exhibitions of God's wonder-working power and beneficence.

We are at liberty to suppose that in the future life, the range of our knowledge will be unlimited, that since angels, who will be our companions, are acquainted with the operations of Jehovah in many parts of his vast dominions, have watched the birth and progress of time, and have borne his high behests into all worlds at his pleasure, a wider field will be opened to ourselves than is now within the reach of imagination. Perhaps a rapidity of perception and inference, amounting almost to intuition, may then await us. What is now the result of laborious observation may be discernable at a glance. The intricate mechanism of animal and vegetable life may become self-transparent and self-explaining, as a machine complex to a child appears simple to a man. Intercourse with other minds may be rapid and easy. The successive links of a long train of reasoning which now requires elaboration and expansion to produce conviction, may then be appreciable in a moment. Other generations will tell us the history of our own world in those successive eras of which we have heard, but of which information has been lost; and all that is important in the planet's history it will be ours to know. Other worlds will disclose to us their secrets. Other orders of inhabitants may be found in different parts of Jehovah's empire as much above ourselves as we are above the animal tribes, and revealing new aspects of the divine character and government. Sight is now limited by the structure of the eye, and our movements are restricted by the mechanism of the frame; but for ought we know, the laws of gravitation, and the structure of the body, may then no longer impede our movements, but the presence of the spirit may be removed quick as desire and thought to any portion of the universe.

The extent of our knowledge of God's revealed mercy will be indefinitely increased. It will awaken far deeper interest than now. It will present its glories in more immediate relation to our happiness. It will be connected with that revelation of the divine character which specially affects our world, and is the glory of the heaven to which we are raised. Our range will be indefinitely widened. Mysteries which oppress us at every step in the bible,—mysteries connected with the first apostasy, the gradual revelation, and the protracted triumph of christianity,—mysteries connected with the dispensations of Providence, the individual believer, to families, and to nations,—all the difficulties which have staggered our faith, and distressed our hearts, will then be removed. The path of God in this lower world will appear a path of light and glory, every step worthy of himself, and glorifying his purity and love. Then shall we know more of the magnitude of his mercy, the misery from which we have been rescued, the extent of the Redeemer's sacrifice, the infinitude of his love.

This knowledge of his works and his redeeming mercy will only be a fragment of a fragment of a deeper and more glorious knowledge that we shall have of God himself. We shall dwell in his presence. We shall enjoy his everlasting friendship and smile. We shall look upon the pure and ever blessed One. He, the fountain of purity, of wisdom, of goodness, will be the everlasting field of the human intellect, and his smile the everlasting portion of the human heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." In his works they will never experience complete satisfaction; they will attain the consummation of their blessedness in himself. To know and enjoy God will be their unutterable felicity for ever. They will "delight themselves in God." If the almighty can fill

them with knowledge, admiration, and happiness, by the wonders of his creation, and the disclosures of redeeming mercy, how much more exalted felicity can he furnish them by a revelation of himself. The intellect will find satisfaction in the illimitable, and the heart will repose on the bosom of the Infinite.

N. H.

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## Revision of the Common English Version.

Few persons are aware how much care and labor are necessary for a thorough revision of the common English version. Even the right collocation of the particle *also* will often seriously improve the sense, and bring it in accordance with the original.

The Greek *kai*, "also," being originally a conjunction, is naturally placed before the word which it specially modifies; while the English *also*, (i. e. "altogether" or "entirely so,") being more of an adverb, is naturally placed after the same.

The following are examples of wrong collocation:

Mat. ii. 8: "And when ye have found Him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship Him *also*." Better,—"And when ye have found Him, bring me word again, that I *also* may come and worship Him."

Mat. x. 32: "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess Me before men, him will I confess *also* before My Father which is in Heaven." Better, "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess Me before men, him will I *also* confess before My Father which is in Heaven." Commence the next verse where the collocation of *also* is correct.

Mat. xvii. 12: "Likewise shall *also* the Son of Man suffer of them." Better, "Likewise shall the Son of Man *also* suffer of them."

Mat. xxiii. 26: "That the outside of them may be clean *also*." Better, "That the outside of them *also* may be clean."

Mat. xxv. 41: "Then shall He say *also* to them on the left hand." Better, "Then shall He say to them *also* on the left hand."

Mark xi. 25: "That your Father *also* which is in Heaven may forgive you your trespasses." This is correct as it now stands.

Luke vi. 13: "And of them He chose twelve, whom *also* He named apostles." Better, "And of them he chose twelve, whom he named *also* apostles."

Acts xi. 18: "Then hath God *also* to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." Better, "Then hath God to the Gentiles *also* granted repentance unto life."

Acts xiii. 9: "Then Saul, who *also* is called Paul." Better, "Then Saul who is called *also* Paul."

Changes of this kind do not come within the scope of Dr. Webster's revision, nor of the American Bible Society revision! yet they are important.—N. Y. Chron.

## The Dream.

I once heard of a minister who stated that he preached a number of years without any visible benefit to any one. Finally he concluded it was not right for him to preach, and in consequence thought he would give it up. But while musing on the subject, he fell asleep and dreamed.

"I dreamed," said he, "that I was to work for a certain man for so much, and my business was, splitting open a very large rock with a very small hammer, pounding upon the middle of it in order to split it open. I worked a long time to no effect, and at length I became discouraged, and began to complain, when my employer came; said he:

'Why do you complain? Have you not fared well while in my employ?'

'O, yes.'

'Have you not had enough to eat?'

'Yes.'

'Have you been neglected in any way?'

'No Sir.'

'Then, said he, 'keep to work; cease your complaints, and I will take care of the results.' He then left me."