

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS: FERVENT IN SPIRIT."

NEW SERIES.
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HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 1857.

WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XXI. No. 19.

Poetry.

Whispers of the Watching Spirit.

In youth I died, in maiden bloom;
With gentle hand Death touch'd my cheek,
And with his touch there came to me
A spirit calm and meek.

He took from me all wish to stay,
He was so kind, I fear'd him not;
My friends beheld my slow decline,
And mourned my timeless lot.

They saw but sorrow; I described
The bliss that never fades away.
They felt the shadow of the tomb;
I mark'd the heavenly day.

I heard them sob, as through the night
They kept their watch: then on any ear,
And the sobbing, fell a voice
Their anguish could not hear.

"Come, and fear not," it softly cried;
"We wait to lead thee to thy home."
Then leap'd my spirit to reply,
"I come, I long to come."

I heard them whisper o'er my bed—
"Another hour and she must die;"
I was too weak to answer them,
That endless life was nigh.

Another hour, with bitter tears
They mourn'd me as untimely dead,
And heard not how I sang a song
Of triumph o'er their head.

They bore me to the grave, and thought
How narrow was my resting-place;
My soul was roving high and wide
At will through boundless space.

They clothed themselves in robes of black;
Through the sad aisles the requiem rang;
Meanwhile the white-robed choir of heaven
A holy psalm sang.

Off from my paradise I come,
To visit those I love on earth;
I enter, unperceived, the door;
They sit around the hearth.

And talk in saddened tone of me
As one that never may return:
How little think they that I stand
Among them as they mourn!

But time will ease their grief, and death
Will purge the darkness from their eyes;
Then shall they triumph when they learn
Heaven's solemn mysteries.

Religious Miscellany.

For the Christian Messenger.

The path of Life.

AN ALLEGORY.

It was a long way the old man had come. Often had it been toilsome and dark, and but for the one bright guiding star to cheer him on, and whisper of rest in heaven, he would long ceased to have struggled against the snares that on every side beset his path-way. But the journey was nearly ended; and, with a prayer of thankfulness to Him who had been his beacon of hope, he paused to rest near the banks of the river of Jordan, waiting for the summons that would bid him enter the cold stream. As he rested on the summit of the hill he had been so long ascending, and reflected on all the way the Lord had brought him, his heart thrilled with thankfulness, and a new light seemed to break upon his soul. Ah! how different it appeared to scenes of time when viewed from the gates of eternity. He had commenced the journey of life with many others, but the shadow of their graves had darkened many a weary mile of his pilgrimage. Some, he trusted, had entered the Celestial City, where, free from all earthly taint, he hoped soon to greet them, and enjoy with them, the blessings of pure, eternal friendship. Others in whom he had trusted and looked for sympathy, in the hour of trial had turned coldly away; and though it cost his warm heart many a pang, yet it caused him to look more fully to the One of whom alone it can be said, "He changeth not." As he glanced down the path of life, it grieved him to see how few were treading that path, which, though narrow, hath joys for the pilgrim, of which

the world knoweth not. Here and there was a traveller who seemed, as he had done, to be struggling against wind and tide. Ah, how he wished he could make them feel as he then felt, that the weight of sorrow under which they were nearly crushed, and the tide of affliction that often swept across his path-way, leaving them apparently alone and desolate, helped to make up their sum of "all things" that should "work together for good to them that love God." With sorrow and regret he remembered his own want of faith under similar circumstances. Far down at the foot of the hill he spied a gay group who seemed undecided which path to take, for near them lay a broad winding road which led directly from the one the pilgrims were ascending; one-seemed almost inclined to choose the narrow course; but "it is so long and steep," said one, and "tiresome and gloomy," said another, and then the gay voice of the tempter whispered to them of flowers, and dance, and song that they would find in the other, and, with promises of all that was bright and beautiful, he lured them on slowly at first, but at length they seemed to go joyfully in the path that leadeth to destruction. The old man turned away and wept bitterly; soon he was joined by other pilgrims, who, like him, rested near the river; and sweet was the converse they enjoyed in talking of the goodness, power, and love of the Redeemer who had been to them as "a covert from the tempest," and "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," and of the glory that would be revealed when they should mingle with the throng of the redeemed, whose praises are never interrupted, where the brow never grows weary beneath the crown of unfading glory; where hands never tire of bearing the conqueror's palm, or fingers lose their elasticity in tuning their golden harps to the praise of the Redeemer. Ere they were permitted to enter the promised land, they saw many in the bloom and vigor of youth cross the river before them, for the Christian's faith is as frequently tried by *patiently waiting* as by *actively doing* his Master's will. One day his attention was attracted by a group whom he recognized as the same that had so shortly entered on the broad, sunny path-way of destruction, but oh! how changed! The way had proved much shorter than they had imagined, "and so counting on long years of pleasure here, they were quite unfurnished for the world to come;" their faces were haggard, their eyes glared wildly, and each one screeched for help, but in vain. The mandate had gone forth, and as they tremblingly entered the river, the waves rolled high and dark, and seemed to roar out a requiem wild and fierce, for the souls of the lost; and high above the roar, the pilgrim heard the words, as the voice of a trumpet, "ye would not come to me that ye might have life." How differently was the summons received by our pilgrim friend; it was a message of liberty to his captive soul, causing it to thrill with holy rapture. Though the enemy tried hard to disturb the waters, yet the rays of the Sun of Righteousness streamed far across the river, the gates were opened, and, in a flood of light and glory, he entered that region where the eye never grows dim, nor the foot weary, and where the redeemed of the Lord walk in eternal gladness. J. E.

For the Christian Messenger.

Exposition of Scripture.

"For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."—1 Cor. xiii. 12.
"Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."—1 John iii. 2.

Messrs. Editors,

At the request of a correspondent, I am induced to offer a few thoughts on these texts.

They present to believers a theme of delightful contemplation. They shew the state of the pious, even in this life, to be one of high exaltation. "Now are we the sons of God." Compared with this, the most exalted condition of the sons of earth is inglorious. But the present state of

God's children is represented as one of darkness and ignorance, in comparison with that to which they will be raised at the coming of the Saviour. They will then see Him "face to face," "know as they are known," and "be like Him." The language employed by the Apostles clearly shews, that none on earth can comprehend the greatness of felicity, and the extent of knowledge, that shall be conferred on the saints of the Most High. It appears that they will know Deity as fully as He can be known by finite beings, and be so assimilated to, the likeness of Christ as to be exempt from all that is sinful and afflictive.

The inference, however, which might be incautiously drawn from certain expressions used in these texts, that the saints will be infinite in wisdom and knowledge, or equal to JEHOVAH in these respects, is inadmissible. If being "like Him" implied this, it would also imply, that they would be equal to Deity in power; which would obviously be preposterous.

It may be asked, How can we be said to "know as we are known," if our knowledge be inferior? I answer, God knows us by direct vision, while we now "walk by faith, not by sight;" (John i. 18: 2 Cor. v. 6, 7) but when we "shall see Him as He is—face to face"—we shall know as we are known, that is *by sight*. (Compare John xiv. 7, 9, 1. 1 John iii. 9, 7.)

Man is said to have been originally created in the image or likeness of God.—(Gen. i. 26, 27: v. 1.) This plainly denotes that he possessed uprightness, or "righteousness and true holiness." (Eccles. viii. 29: Eph. iv. 24.) It is certain, however, that he was made "lower than the angels;" and they do not know all things, but are immeasurably inferior to Christ in His Divine nature. (Ps. viii. 5: 1 Peter i. 12: Hab. i. 4-6, 10-12.)

By transgression man lost the moral image of his Maker. It has pleased God, however, of his infinite goodness, to "pre-destinate" a multitude of sinners, that would otherwise have perished for ever, "to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the First-born among many brethren."—(Rom. viii. 29.) In pursuance of His gracious purpose, He is pleased, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, to restore them in some measure, while in the present imperfect state, to the Divine image.—(Col. iii. 10.) But much ignorance and many imperfections are attached to believers while on earth; and these cause them much disquietude and grief. They may, however, in anticipation of the glory that awaits them, adopt the cheering language of the Apostles, "We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body;" and, "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly;" and each may exultingly say with the Psalmist, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake, with thy likeness."—(Phil. iii. 20, 21: 1 Cor. xv. 49: Psalm xvii. 15.)

It is not to be imagined that the saints in heaven will desire to possess such incommunicable attributes of JEHOVAH as omnipotence and omniscience. These would not increase their happiness. As the holy angels evidently take pleasure in beholding the development of the mystery of redemption, it is neither unreasonable nor unscriptural to suppose, that the acquisition of an increase of knowledge will be one of the ingredients that will constitute the bliss of the heavenly state, while God will be granting fresh manifestations of His glory, and "in the ages to come, shewing the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."—(Luke ii. 1, 3, 14: xv. 10: Eph. iii. 10: ii. 7.)

Yours in gospel bonds,

C. TUPPER.

Aylesford, April 17, 1857.

Lines written by the Rev. John Berridge, and pasted on his clock:—

"Here my master bids me stand,
And tell the time with either hand;
What is his will is my delight,
To tell the hours by day or night;
Master, be wise, and learn of me
To serve thy God as I serve thee."

For the Christian Messenger.

Encouragement to Pædobaptist writers.

Messrs. Editors,

A short time ago an article appeared in the *Provincial Wesleyan*, entitled "The difficulties of immersion." A person who had been hesitating some time about baptism, read the article, had his difficulties removed, has been immersed, and is now a member of a Baptist Church. Write away, Gentlemen!

JOHN THE DIPPER,

Enon, near to Salim,
May 13, 1857.

For the Christian Messenger.

American Bible Union.

350 BROOME STREET NEW YORK,
April 30, 1857.

Dear Brother,—The following article will appear in our *Bible Union Quarterly* for next month. As it contains information of special interest, we forward to you, in advance of its publication, a copy from proof slips.

Yours affectionately,

WM. H. WYCKOFF, Cor. Sec.

C. A. BUCKNER, Assl. Treasurer.

[Our space will only admit of the article in a very condensed form.]

From the organization of the American Bible Union, no subject has created more solicitude, or called forth more fervent and continued supplications for divine direction, than the composition of the Final Committee. The Board have been fully aware of its importance, as they understood that the future prosperity and usefulness of the Union, in a large measure, depend upon the character and qualifications of the scholars who are to occupy so responsible a position. The Committee to whom the Board entrusted the duty of recommending the proper persons for membership of the Final Committee, after nearly seven months' anxious deliberation, on the 15th of April, 1857, submitted to the Board, at a special meeting, a report of progress, from which we make the following extracts:

We have attended to the duty thus devolved on us, with diligence and assiduity.

The plan adopted at the last anniversary has been constantly kept in view.

Your Committee have sought only those who, in profound erudition, in known regard for revealed truth, and in reputation for sound judgment as well as learning, have not their superiors now living.

At the same time they have kept in view the necessity of having the revision made in a pure and simple Saxon style, which should commend it to the ear of the people, while the intrinsic merit of the work and its high reputation for scholarship, secured the approbation of their judgment.

It would not be proper to entrust a work of this character to any but men who have spent their lives in the critical examination of the original Scriptures, and whose occupations have trained them to habits of patient, laborious research, and calm deliberation, and who especially excel in reputation as philologists. In view of these and similar considerations, your Committee have not yet been able to find five scholars whom they are prepared to recommend to the Board for the Final Committee; but they believe that [Here are inserted the names of four scholars] have the requisite qualifications to act on such a Committee; and they recommend to the Board, to authorize the Committee on Versions to engage their services at as early a date as possible. They also recommend, that the Committee be authorized and instructed to continue their search for a fifth scholar of suitable qualifications, who shall be acceptable as an associate to these scholars.

They further recommend, that the Committee be authorized and instructed to seek out (with the aid and advice of these scholars) four scholars in Great Britain, to cooperate with them according to the Plan of the Union in Article 4th, and to report their names, with the cost of such co-operation.