

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS : FERVENT IN SPIRIT."

NEW SERIES.
Vol. IV. No. 45.

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1859.

WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XXIII. No. 45.

Poetry.

Trust in God.

Am I weak? Thine arm will lead me
Safe through every danger, Lord:
Am I hungry? Thou wilt feed me
With the manna of thy word.

Am I thirsty? Thou wilt guide me
Where refreshing waters flow;
Faint or feeble, thou'lt provide me
Grace for every want, I know.

Am I fearful? Thou wilt take me
Underneath thy wings, my God:
Am I faithless? Thou wilt make me
Bow beneath thy chastening rod.

Am I drooping? Thou art near me,
Near to bear me on my way:
Am I pleading? Thou wilt hear me,
Hear and answer when I pray.

Then, my soul, since God doth love thee,
Faint not, droop not, do not fear,
For though heaven is high above thee,
He himself is ever near:

Near to watch thy wayward spirit,
Sometimes cold and careless grown;
But he's near with grace and merit,
All thy Saviour's, thence thine own.

Religious.

My Cross.

I am a poor, lonely, forsaken old woman now; the shadow of what I was. Looking back to my youth, I see, trooping past me, the friends who loved me then, but who all have other ties to bind them to life. I alone have none. Mothers, whom I know as bright, brilliant, happy girls, now show me their grandchildren with a pride and pleasure to which I can never attain. I feel as if I had never had any bonds, save the one that is now severed, and which kept me from all others.

My father and mother died when I was yet young. One child, many years younger than myself, was left solely in my care. On her dying bed, my mother said to me, then a girl of fifteen, "Mary, as you value my dying blessing, always take care of Alice." She died with the words on her lips. How scrupulously I have obeyed her command, my wasted frame, my vanished health, my broken heart, attest.

I devoted myself to Alice from that hour. Nightly my arms enfolded her tiny form, and by day, I was mother, sister, teacher and slave! Yes, petted and worshipped as she was, her will unsubdued, her temper unbroken, I was her slave.

Alice loved me—after her fashion. It was a selfish love, induced by the actual good that reached her from its prolific source. I bought it all—and, paying for it too dearly, I became bankrupt.

I wrought and worried, I watched and prayed for this child of my adoption. All that affection could suggest, or intense selfishness ask, I bestowed on her. When she grew older, I adapted myself wholly to her taste in our style of living. We travelled, or made a little palace of our own at home, as her caprice or fancy dictated. No one could make her dresses so well as I—and, therefore, I, though rich and independent, felt obliged to work at sewing through long days, because she had expressed delight at my beautiful needlework. This was folly on my part, I own, but it was like all the rest of my foolish indulgence towards her.

There came a time, too, when my riches took wings. Every one knows the terrible cloud which was cast upon the community a few years ago by the sudden depreciation of certain railroad property. Mine was unhappily invested there—and I suffered accordingly. Alice and I retired one night believing ourselves beyond the reach of want. We woke to find ourselves almost beggars. My beautiful needlework was now put in requisition to get our daily bread. Still Alice was exempted from all care—all anxiety. I asked her, one day, when my head ached violently, to carry home the sewing I had finished. Her color rose indignantly, and she refused.

"It is to a woman's shop," I urged.
"No matter! I will not go!" was her cool reply.

I would have remonstrated—but the image of my dead mother was before me, her voice was in my ears. I bathed my forehead, put on my shawl, and went out with the bundle myself.

We sold our comfortable home, and took three rooms. Our furniture ought to have been sold also—but Alice insisted on keeping the best; and the contrast between our small apartments and the cumbrous articles that filled them, was at once ludicrous and distressing.

One hope still lived within my heart. When Alice was a mere child, I had been beloved by a young man who was brought up by my father, and had long served him as confidential clerk. His name was Edgar Williams. Visions of great riches from the land of gold drew him away from us, when my father no longer lived to exact his services; but we had regularly corresponded, and I had hoped to be happy on his return, which was now near at hand.

He came—unaltered in heart, and with competence sufficient to make us happy and content, although not enough to turn our heads. We were to be married in two months. Alice liked the thought of removing from our scanty apartments, but she did not like that Edgar should monopolize me; so I bent to the storm which I foresaw she would raise, and devoted myself, as usual, to her real or fancied wants. Sooth to say, my sister Alice was most ungentle in her nature, and did not scruple to give some unequivocal tokens of dislike, if but a shadow crossed her pathway. Thanks to my mother's dying commands, it happened seldom.

I had scores of anxious hours respecting the way in which she was to be settled in our household. Poor, as we were, she would be dependent wholly on Edgar for support, and, somehow, my own pride revolted from it. Why would she not feel this herself? Not that I grudged her support, but it would have been so pleasant to me to be independent, that I wished her to feel thus also.

But Alice never dreamed of making herself unhappy at any such circumstance. She had not liked Edgar much, though her selfishness endured him because he could serve her.

I wished them to be friends. I dreaded to bring two so nearly together, unless there were some bond of sympathy; and it was with a real joy that I came home one night, and found them conversing together. I encouraged this new friendship, for I felt that it augured well.

Alas! when we take the reins of our destiny into our own hands, we sometimes dash upon destruction itself!

Alice was not beautiful—but she was at times winning, fascinating. She began to like Edgar's attention, and soon succeeded in winning them to herself. I could not blind myself to the fact. I strove to do so. O, what bitter hours were mine, during this brief, but terrible struggle. At last the word was spoken, by the lips of him I had loved, and the tie that bound us was severed forever. I had sacrificed my youth, my health, my life almost, for Alice, and she repaid me by stealing from me my only hope—my one earthly treasure. In silence I bore the cruel ingratitude. My mother's dying voice seemed to say, "Even this sacrifice, even this sacrifice, my daughter!"

So I wrought the wedding robe, and stood with a breaking heart, but tearless eye, while the words were pronounced that severed me from human love.

I did not accept the invitation to make my home with the newly married pair, but kept my small rooms and plied my busy needle.

When sickness came to Edgar's household, I laid down my work and went to them until it had passed; and then I returned to my home, thankful that I was not required to look upon his face daily.

Two years passed. I grew neither richer nor poorer; neither happier nor more sorrowful. One thing comforted me. I had made Alice happy. But there came a time

when the helpless wail of a child sounded in that home, and the ear of the young mother heard it not. Alice was dead.

Edgar put the babe into my arms, and entreated me to spare him the sight of it, until he could better bear its presence. I took it to my own home, cared for it tenderly for a year, and then resigned it to the arms of death. I wrote to Edgar, for he had gone far away. To my letter he never returned answer, nor do I know to this day whether he received it or not. Months afterwards, I saw the announcement of his death in a Southern paper. Human ties, therefore, to me were sundered. I said that I was alone. Can that life be lonely, over which God hath shed His peace!

Long indeed was it before I came fully to know it. Human nature was too strong—too mighty to resist; and my troubled heart cried out from its inmost depths, against the terrible isolation to which it had seemed condemned. As I stood above the ruins of my affections, and counted the pangs I had borne, the griefs, the losses that I had encountered, nothing seemed harder to me, through my whole life, than the depths of ingratitude that had been shown me by those whom I had loved.

If, then, human love had such power to wound, where could the stricken spirit seek its balm?

And a voice, soft and sweet, yet thrilling to the inmost recesses of my crushed heart, answered, "Seek it in Love Divine!"

And for that mortal suffering that comes to human hearts, I know that mine has left only the healed scars of those deep wounds whereby the Father hath called back my wandering affections to Himself.

"That by the passion of its deep distress,
And by the overflow of its mighty prayer,
And by the yearning of its tenderness,
Too full for words upon their stream to bear,
I have been drawn still closer to thy shrine,
Well spring of love, the unfathomed, the divine;
I bless Thee, O my God!"

Lonely and forsaken by the world, my youth withered by grief, and my later years uncheered by natural ties, I turn to him, and He comforts and consoles. He bids me remember with tenderness, instead of harshness, those by whom I have suffered—to draw a veil over human frailty, and to forgive even as He forgives.

God help me to grow deeper and deeper into this feeling of forgiveness!—W. & R.

The Revival in Wales.

The great revival in Ireland has quite overshadowed in interest a work of equal power going on in Wales. This is not surprising, as Ireland has rarely been the scene of spiritual visitations, while Wales has been noted for the glorious revivals which have marked its history. We find in a letter to the *British Standard*, from Thomas Rees, an interesting account of this work. After stating that in the single County of Cardiganshire, about fifteen thousand new members have been added to evangelical churches within nine months he adds:

This revival is distinguished from all former awakenings with which the Welsh churches have been blessed from time to time by the prominence which is given to prayer and prayer-meetings, and the hearty union of Christians of all evangelical denominations in these blessed exercises. The services are but very seldom interrupted by any audible manifestations of feeling; but floods of tears are generally shed, and sometimes the congregations remain after the close of the regular services for two or three hours to listen to some warm-hearted Christians repeating striking passages of Scripture, hymns and personal experiences in the most affecting tones.

A number of most striking conversions might be recorded. Two or three shall be specified:—The drunkards of Merthyr Tydvil have been for some time accustomed to meet early on Sunday mornings on a secluded spot about a mile out of the town, to drink and revel. One Sabbath morning this summer, as early as five o'clock, a number of young and ardent professors, accord-

ing to previous arrangements, met to hold a prayer-meeting on that very spot. Soon after, the drunkards began to gather to the place, and to their terror and astonishment they found a prayer-meeting there. Amongst these abandoned characters was a young man, the undutiful son of a pious widow. When he had only remained a few moments on the spot, the arrows of conviction stuck fast in his conscience. He ran home writhing with mental agony, and, with tears and groans, asked his mother to pray for him. From that day he became a changed character. Some months ago a young man went from Aberdare to Cardiff; while the train was stopping at one of the stations, the sound of the singing from a chapel in the immediate neighborhood where a revival meeting was held at the time, reached him. This led him to think of his awful state as a sinner, and before the train had proceeded eight miles he fell down from his seat crying most earnestly for mercy.

At the close of an interesting revival meeting recently held in Glamorganshire, a modest young person fell on her knees in the presence of a large congregation to pray for the conversion of her parents. Having uttered a few sentences, she fainted; then her sister, kneeling beside her, continued the prayer most effectively. The effect on the congregation was quite overpowering. The following evening their parents came weeping, to seek a place among the people of God. A vast number of similar instances might be specified.

This blessed movement, which we hope is only beginning to be felt amongst us, has already produced the most beneficial effects. The churches have been revived—thousands have been converted—weak interests have become self-supporting. A large number of young ministers, whose ministrations were anything but effective, have undergone a most happy change, and neglect of religion, with its consequent evils, has given way in many districts to that all-absorbing topic—the salvation of the soul.

Social Worship.

It is a remarkable fact that revivals of religion have in every age been carried forward mainly by what may be termed the social means of grace. In Ezra's time we find the people assembled by thousands and tens of thousands to hear the Scriptures read and expounded, not by a few favorite preachers, but by a multitude—almost all who could read and explain were engaged in making known the word to their companions—and the result was deep conviction, repentance, reformation, and consecration to God.

So also in the days of the apostles. From the season of Pentecost, when three thousand were converted in a day, all through the planting and growth of the primitive churches, we find all Christians uniting actively and heartily in the work. True, the apostles labored and preached mightily, but private Christians labored conjointly with them, and all together shared in the service and reward. It was the same in the great revivals under Luther, Wesley, Edwards; and, as is well known, signally so under the labors of Randall and Colby.

The great revivals in Sweden a year or two since commenced and progressed very simply, chiefly in social meetings for reading the Bible. In the present gracious refreshing enjoyed in Ireland, social exercises are the great instrumentality—forty or fifty thousand assembled in one prayer-meeting. The revivals in our own country, the last two years, especially in the cities, have been almost wholly in connection with social means.

Shall we not profit by such experience and observation? Able ministers, great sermons can never accomplish the work; the church must arise. Not that preachers should do less, but private Christians more. Now, as ever, it is true that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; the base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen,