

# Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 1862.

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## Poetry.

### Losing and living.

Forever the sun is pouring his gold,  
On a hundred worlds that beg and borrow;  
His warmth he squanders on summits cold,  
His wealth on the homes of want and sorrow.  
To withhold his largess of precious light  
Is to bury himself in eternal night:

To give  
Is to live.

The flower shines not for itself at all,  
Its joy is the joy it freely diffuses;  
Of beauty and balm it is prodigal,  
And it lives in the life it sweetly loses.  
No choice for the rose but glory or doom—  
To exhale or smother, to wither or bloom:

To deny  
Is to die.

The seas lend silvery rain to the land,  
The land its sapphire streams to the ocean;  
The heart sends blood to the brain of command,  
The brain to the heart its lightning motion;  
And ever and ever we yield our breath—  
Till the mirror is dry and images death:

To live  
Is to give.

He is dead whose hand is not opened wide  
To help the need of a human brother;  
He doubles the life of his life-long ride  
Who gives his fortunate place to another;  
And a thousand million lives are his  
Who carries the world in his sympathies:

To deny  
Is to die.

Throw gold to the far dispersing wave,  
And your ships sail home with tons of treasure;  
Care not for comfort, all hardships brave,  
And evening and age shall sup with pleasure;  
Fling health to the sunshine, wind and rain,  
And roses shall come to the cheek again;

To give  
Is to live.

What is our life? Is it wealth and strength?  
If we, for the Master's sake, will lose it,  
We shall find it a hundred-fold, at length,  
While they shall forever lose who refuse it;  
And nations that save their union and peace  
At the cost of right, their woe shall increase:  
They save  
A grave.

## Religious.

### The Baptists of England and the United States.

Our brethren in England and the United States have recently sent to each other Addresses, expressive of the fraternal feeling existing between them, and the interest taken in the commotions which are disturbing the latter, and which lately threatened to interfere with the friendly relations existing between the two countries.

The bonds of fellowship which unite true Christians together in religious communities, doubtless have much to do with the maintenance of peace between different nations, and now, as of old, the righteous men of two nationalities are the conservators of good and the occasion of averting threatened evil and deserved retribution from both.

The following letter written by Dr. Stow of Boston, in reply to an Address from the English Baptists to the Baptist Churches of the United States, has been published in the organs of the denomination. It exhibits a somewhat better state of mind than many of the communications on the subject which have appeared in the professedly Christian publications of the United States.

Boston, Feb. 1, 1862.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Yours of Dec. 26, covering an address from the Committee of the Baptist Union, was duly received, and I send you herewith a printed copy of the address.

"On the 30th ult. I received from the London Board of Baptist Ministers a similar address, which will appear in print next week.

"Both were received after the decision of

our Government to comply with the just and courteous demand of yours; but they were not the less valuable as expressions of that feeling on the part of our English brethren, which you may be sure is cordially reciprocated in this country. As we have been grieved by the warlike tone of many of your newspapers, so we have been offended by the provoking, abusive spirit of some of ours. The London Times and the New York Herald will never be able to atone for the mischief they have done in kindling the war spirit and inflaming the minds of so many with hatred. If there be two nations on earth that ought to live in amity and concord, they are Great Britain and the United States. The Christian people in both countries, I am sure, understand and feel this, and will be careful to discountenance everything that may tend to exasperate, or even to alienate.

"You doubtless look with astonishment at the terrible strife in which we are involved. We feel it to be humiliating; we mourn over it with shame and mortification. But we see not how our Government could have done otherwise than arm itself for its own protection. The life of our free institutions was threatened; the rebellion struck at the foundations of our republic. We must fight, or fall into anarchy and ruin. We are not fighting for the supremacy of a political party, but for the maintenance of law and order. The slavery question is involved in the controversy, and while we cannot constitutionally make the war directly one for emancipation, it is very certain that the success of Unionists will be the death of the slave system. Very few at the North would favour a restoration of the Union upon the old basis of compromise upon that point. This the insurgents understand, and hence their fierceness and desperation.

"Will England, anti-slavery England, favour a recognition by the European Powers of a Confederacy whose openly avowed corner-stone is slavery? Will England interpose in a way to save slavery from the destruction with which it is threatened? We ask of your Government no formal expression of sympathy; all we ask is a faithful neutrality till we shall have had a reasonable time for the accomplishment of our object. We had at the time of the outbreak no army, and only a skeleton of a navy. Now we have 500,000 men in the field, and an immense increase of vessels of war; and instead of acting on the defensive, we are just beginning demonstrations that must soon decide whether we can or cannot repress the rebellion. If the European powers will hold off a few months longer, the probability of our ultimate success or failure will be made plainer than it now is, and the fitness of intervention or non-intervention will be more obvious. The hope that England and France would interpose has kept the rebels in heart; the fear of such interposition has disturbed the equanimity of the North. Rumours thicken upon us from abroad as danger from this source, and we are distressed because we cannot know what to expect. God forbid that the ill-feeling engendered in both countries by that wretched Trent affair should be aggravated by any offensive movement on either side.

"With kindest assurances to your associate Secretary, and to your Committee, I am, as ever,

"Most fraternally,  
"BARON STOW.

"Rev. J. H. Hinton, London."

The coupling of the New York Herald with the London Times in the above, is a small insult which we may perhaps just now overlook. It is not surprising that those who are smarting under the troubles which now beset the American Republic, should fail to appreciate the wide difference between these two organs of public opinion in the two countries. Our brethren in the United States need not fear that England will break the neutrality she has all along so faithfully maintained. It is well that there has of late been a Great Britain in Europe, or the imperfections of the blockade of Southern ports would long since have been a sufficient pretext for its destruction by the other European nations.

If the Republic is preserved, its friends will

owe England a lasting debt of gratitude for the influence she has used in restraining other powers from meddling with her intestine war.

### Crooked things in our Churches.

I have just received a letter from a friend who is hundreds of miles away, in which she says, "Though I am not a minister's wife, I am a very crooked stick." That may be true, for there are many crooked folks in our churches besides ministers and their wives. Yes, indeed, there are. They are far from being the only trouble-makers of Israel. In many cases the crooks which they have are not natural crooks, but artificial, made by the crooked things they have had to deal with.

Without much experience in the matter, I think that I have observed, occasionally, a deacon who was not exactly straight in his views, or meek and agreeable in his temper and deportment.

Now, I am not going to join in any general outcry or tirade against deacons. As a whole they are a class of most excellent men, elected from their brethren on account of their real or supposed fitness for that responsible office. But being a somewhat numerous class, it is not perhaps to be expected that all of them would get to themselves honor by their fidelity, or exhibit the traits especially needed in the discharge of their duties. Sometimes the material chosen for this office is very poor, though it may be the best which the church contains. At other times persons are selected not so much on account of their qualifications, as on account of their influence and relative position. Policy prevails over Christian principle and sound discretion. And occasionally men are elected whose character and disposition are not well understood, and after their election they develop traits which had not been seen before. These and other causes may serve to account for the fact which I have stated. Some deacons are very, very crooked, and are a hindrance to the prosperity of our churches. And they are the worst kind of a hindrance, because one that cannot easily be removed.

They are ordinarily chosen for life, and their position gives them an influence for good or evil which they would not otherwise have. If a minister is crooked, a church can get rid of him and his wife. But if a deacon is crooked, there is not the same remedy. It is true, that if his conduct is immoral, or if he becomes heterodox in opinion, the church may make him a subject of discipline, and exclude him from its fellowship. But still he is there among them, and will raise a party in his favor, and prevent the prosperity of the church. As a general thing, however, those to whom I refer, are careful to do nothing that will subject them to the discipline or censure of the church. They know how far it will do for them to go and yet maintain their position. And they keep within these limits. I have heard of some very strange things in connection with these crooked deacons. Of course they do not all have the same crook, for that would be an anomaly in nature. But still they are awfully crooked, and woe to the poor ministers who undertake to go straight among all these crooked things. Yes, and woe to them if they themselves undertake to be crooked, for then crook will hit against crook, and there will be a terrible state of confusion.

Some deacons are crooked in their dispositions, some in their religious views, and some in their deportment. And sometimes the disposition and deportment are at fault in the same person, the one giving direction to the other. Of those crooked in temper or disposition there are various kinds. Some are self-willed and obstinate. They will work if they can have their own way, and work well; but if they are opposed, or if any one suggests that another way would be better, they are as stubborn as mules. They are, as the prophet has it, like "bullocks unaccustomed to the yoke." Sometimes they pull the whole load, however heavy it may be, and then they will stop and not pull at all, or perhaps pull back. I think I have heard of some such in my day. It seems to me that I have heard ministers speak of some very obstinate deacons.

Then, there are some who are very artful and wily. They appear well to those who do not read their characters; always courteous,

kind, obliging; always seeming to be your friends, attending regularly to their external duties; but, after all, they are treacherous, artful, false. Underneath this fair exterior, this show of friendship, there is secret maneuvering; some scheming design, some putting up of others to do what they would not do themselves. Perhaps no one class have caused pastors and churches more trouble than this; and certainly they have unsettled more pastors than any other class, by their scheming, underhanded movements. They are crooked, though one may be puzzled to see their crooks, just as he is to see the crooks of a snake moving in the grass.

There are others who are sulky, who will do nothing, but give no reason why they do nothing. Some are impulsive, some are passionate, some are so pliable that they crook in all directions; some are indolent, and find it a great effort to move; some are desponding, always looking on the dark side, and instead of encouraging the pastor and the church, they spend their time in predicting the speedy overthrow of all that is good, and the triumph of evil. But my letter is too long already. Perhaps I may hereafter give some sketches taken from notes of the lives of crooked deacons. But still I do not promise certainly.

BUNYAN, in Zion's Advocate.

### Undoing Evil.

THE EVIL THAT MEN DO LIVES AFTER THEM.

There are some things such that, when a man has once done them, mischiefs will follow in spite of anything that he can do. I tell you it is a solemn thing for a man to set in motion causes, the results of which he cannot control.

Suppose I should preach the gospel in some gambling saloon of New York, and suppose a man should come out convicted of his wickedness, and confess it before God, and pray that he might be forgiven? Forgiveness might be granted to him, so far as he individually was concerned. But suppose he should say, "O God, not only restore to me the joys of salvation, but give me back the mischief that I have done that I may rule it out."

Why, there was one man that shot himself: what are you going to do for him? A young man came to Indianapolis, when I was pastor there, on his way to settle in the West. He was young, callow, and very self-confident. While there he was robbed in a gambling saloon of fifteen hundred dollars—all he had. He begged to be allowed to keep enough to take him home to his father's house, and he was kicked out into the street. It led to his suicide. I know the man that committed the foul deed. He used to walk up and down the street. Oh, how my spirit felt thunder when I met him! If anything lifts me up to the top of Mount Sinai it is to see one man wrong another. Now suppose this man should repent? Can he ever call back that suicide? Can he ever carry balm to the hearts of the father and mother and brothers and sisters of his unfortunate victim? Can he ever wipe off the taint and disgrace that he has brought on the escutcheon of that family? No repentance can spread over that. And yet how many men there are heaping up such transgressions. There are in our boarding-houses, there are in our "best" places, men that in their secreted rooms, and in the enjoyment of their own rights, as they call them, are gathering in the young, and firing them with the almost fatal passion of gaming. Fermented hope—for gambling is hope gone to fermentation—is one of the most unconquerable of the human passions.

There are thousands of men that are said to be well-meaning men, who gain their livelihood by retailing spirituous liquors. I do not wish to say anything disrespectful of them; but I must say that the business in which they are engaged is very wicked and mischievous. It seems to me that if a man would allow himself one moment's thought, if the incus of money could be taken off from him, if that whispering devil could get away long enough to let him say to himself, "I have power to inoculate men with intemperance, but I have no medicine that can cure them after they are once inoculated," he would never consent to become a dealer in intoxicants.