

# Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

NEW SERIES.  
Vol. VIII....No. 49.

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1863.

WHOLE SERIES.  
Vol. XXVII....No. 49.

## Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

### "He restoreth my soul."

PSALM XXIII. 3.

When sold under sin to Satan; I lie,  
When bound, in affliction, and iron I cry;  
When in darkness, gross darkness my soul cannot see:  
"He restoreth my soul," my Saviour is He.

My soul—which his wrath had justly deserved—  
Through many a day, he has kindly preserved,  
Nor has only preserved, for though death reigns around,  
He restoreth my soul," His grace doth abound.

Restoring my soul, he gave me new life,  
His spirit seeks peace, where before all was strife;

He saith, "Soul thou art free, my salvation is thine,  
"He restoreth my soul," sweet hope ever mine.

My once sightless soul, he points to his cross,  
There shows my soul's worth; to which worlds are but dross;

Then through faith in his blood, makes my soul most secure,  
"He restoreth my soul;" Sing his praise, evermore.

Cape Canse, Sept. 25th, 1863. H. J. G.

## Miscellaneous.

### The Religious Newspaper.

The influence of a good religious newspaper as a constant visitor in the family, we think is greatly underrated. It is regular food for the mind, and is a constant invigorator of the family thinking.

In a well conducted religious newspaper, there are many points discussed in brief articles, and much information communicated from sources to which few of the readers themselves have access. It may require only ten minutes to read and possess what may have cost the writer half a day to produce. What an amount of labor is thus represented in a single sheet! Can such a collection of valuable matter be read, week after week, without exerting a very decided influence on the reader?

Making all allowance for any indifferent matter which even a religious paper may contain, there is enough of a truly valuable character furnished during the year to render it cheaper, in a pecuniary point of view, than any similar amount of matter contained in books. While the paper should not set aside the use of books, its value ought not to be overlooked, as it ministers to our ever-recurring wants, and refreshes the mind in those hours that lie between business or more systematic study.

It is not a fanciful idea that a difference is discernible between a family in which a religious newspaper is well and regularly read, and one into which such an educational messenger never enters. It may not always be easy to describe the difference, but it is felt in many ways to exist. In regard to the operations of the Church especially, you feel a wideness and a freeness in such a family which you find not where the paper is absent. How can it be otherwise? The very selfishness which excludes a religious paper from the family is already a sad contraction. The absence of the information which such a paper alone can give, makes the narrowness which you feel to exist still more oppressive. All pastors know what this contractedness is, though it may be difficult to describe it.

If any have been tempted by the severity of the times to dismiss their religious newspaper, we beg them to reconsider the matter. However much you may feel the necessity of economy, you cannot afford to suspend your family paper. What you save by it in money, you will certainly lose in that which is much more valuable and precious.

### No Mothers in Novels.

The facts has recently been stated by a writer on modern novels and novelists, that few authors of fiction ever attempt to introduce into their works the character of a

mother. Dickens has very few in the many volumes which he has written. None of Miss Bronte's heroines have a mother; and even Sir Walter Scott and Miss Edgeworth rarely introduce the character. "The heroines of fiction have no mothers."

There are of course exceptions, but they are rare. The simple natural relations of life furnish small scope to the inventive genius of writers who aim not so much to instruct as to startle and amaze the reader. No one can have read novels without having had the conviction forced upon the mind that secrecy and misunderstanding, not to say deception, underlie nearly every work of fiction. By an outspoken word or candid avowal of the truth, the long-drawn torturing array of circumstances would melt into air, and the romance be turned into the reality of daily life. This necessity of deception doubtless has much to do with the expulsion of mothers from the pages of novels. The heroine must remain the victim of attentions and sufferings from which no one has authority or power to set her free.

But a still stronger cause for the omission exists in the fact that a heroine must be suffered to act out *without restraint* those natural impulses and wild passions of her heart which any mother, however worldly, would grieve to behold exemplified in a daughter. Liberty of speech and liberty of action are inseparable from the brilliant heroine of a sensation novel. She could never be subjected for a moment to the gentle check of a mother's presence and loving glance. Thus the mother is dispensed with as an element quite too dull and common-place to be compatible with popular taste.

Nor is this omission limited to novels. The same general charge may be brought with too much truth against the story-books written so profusely for our little ones. Those who write for children find it easier to permit great faults and excesses in their characters of boys and girls who are without the reach of a mother's authority and discipline; and too frequently do such writers follow the lead of fashion, and select from amid the stray waifs of social life the central character around which to cluster their lessons of good and evil.

Is there not danger lest youthful imagination, trained under such influences, should come to associate the thought of home and its needful restraints as an irksome check, that only hinders the play of brilliant and attractive natures?

God has made the mother's place in this world of ours a most important one; and any charmed circle, where her unconscious influence may not enter to dwell and reign is a place of danger for youthful spirits.

No more scathing reflection could be made against a class of books professing to portray life in its varied aspects than this, that they cannot without risk of failure admit within their pages the truthful, restraining influence of a mother.—*Am. Messenger.*

### A Scotch "Index Expurgatorius."

At a meeting of the Free Presbytery of Strathgogie, held within the Free church of Huntly recently the Rev. Mr. M. Gilvray of Keith, moved the transmission of an overture to the General Assembly as follows:—

"Whereas, it is matter of notoriety that a periodical entitled 'Good Words' is extensively circulated, and whereas there is reason to believe that the circulation of this periodical is calculated to do injury, it is humbly overtured by the Presbytery of Strathgogie to the ensuing general assembly to take the subject into consideration, and deal with it as they in their wisdom shall deem fit." Mr. Gilvray supported this overture in a speech of great length, objecting *in toto* to a great number of articles and poetical pieces, amongst others to "Rhoda and the Whistle," a poem inscribed to Lord Ardmillan. The rev. gentleman detailed the plot of this poem, and contended that it was calculated to accomplish no good, but to be productive of much evil. He next referred to another poem entitled, "Soul-Gardening," by "Dora Greenwall," with "an engraving," he said, representing a female lying prostrate on the ground upon the cross—an engraving which would be the right one in the right place had it appeared in the pages of a *Popish* monthly, but surely out of place in a periodical conducted by professing Chris-

tians." An article on "Sisterhood," by J. M. Ludlow, was also condemned, as well as an article by the Rev. Charles Kingsley, on "The Monks and the Heathen"; but the severest castigation was reserved for "Plain Thoughts on the Christian Sabbath," by the Rev. A. W. Thorold, M. A. Mr. M'Gilvray thought that if the editor of "Good Words" could not prevent the admission of such articles into his magazine, he ought to retire from the editorship. Mr. Moffat of Cairnie, condemned the negative theology taught in the magazine (with which he believed Dr. McLeod to be peculiarly chargeable), as well as the leanings towards Popery manifested in its religious articles, with the exception of those by Dr. Guthrie and others. Several other members concurred in condemning the magazine as dangerous in its teaching and loose in its religious opinions; and the presbytery, by a majority of six to four, resolved to transmit the overture, one minister declining to vote.

### Decline of Infant Baptism.

By the report of the General Association of Massachusetts for the year 1863, it appears that there are in the Commonwealth 490 Orthodox Congregational churches, embracing 73,479 members, and divided into 27 Associations. Of these 490 churches, 318 had settled pastors, 111 have stated supplies, and 59 are vacant. The number admitted to full membership during the past year was 2,928. The number baptized was 1,652—660 adults, and 992 infants. Thus it appears that for every 3 infants baptized in the Congregational churches of Massachusetts, there are 2 adults baptized. It did not use to be so. Indeed, this is a much larger proportion of adult baptisms than in the preceding year. Then the respective numbers were 646 adults to 1106 infants, or nearly 2 infants to 1 adult. In 7 out of the 27 Associations there were more adults than infants baptized. In the Andover Association there were 56 adults baptized, and only 30 infants. One church in this Association, containing nearly 400 members, reports 14 adults baptized, but not a single infant! Another church, in the Old Colony Association, containing 172 members, reports adults baptized 12, infants 0. But the Plymouth Association shows the most encouraging record in this respect,—120 adults, or 4 scriptural baptisms, (so far as relates to the subject,) to 1 unscriptural. Out of 19 churches in this Association, only 10 had any infant baptisms during the year, and only one of these more than 3. One had 15 infants baptized and 20 adults; another 11 adults and 1 infant; another 25 adults and no infant; another 42 adults and no infant! One of the last two is a new church, formed the last year; the other is more than a century old.

One of the largest churches in the Worcester South reports 13 adults and no infants baptized. These facts show that Baptist principles have taken deep root among the Congregational churches of Massachusetts, and are spreading and bringing forth practical fruit. We can but rejoice, that a denomination which embraces so much intelligent piety, and is doing so much to promote the kingdom of God in the world, is gradually laying aside an unscriptural and pernicious practice.—*W. & R.*

### Cannot a man be as good a Christian out of the Church as in it?

A man can be a Christian in any place where God's providence fixes him. If you are on the deck of a man-of-war where there are no Christians, and you cannot get off, God will provide for you according to the exigencies of your case. He who took care of the disciples in the fiery furnace, can take care of you on the deck of a man-of-war. But if there is a church accessible to you, you are bound to unite yourself with it. Think of it. Out of the church you are just like a man that says: "They tell me that I ought to plant a garden; but what am I going to plant a garden for? Here is my neighbor's asparagus bed, and the asparagus grows through my fence; and here are my neighbor's peach trees, the branches of which reach over into my yard; and as I can't book all the fruit and vegetables I want, I am not going to take the trouble to plant a garden." You stand in a com-

munity that is held together by the great moral power of the church. Christians gather together and maintain the preaching of God's Word and morality, and fill society with the living presence of Lord Jesus Christ, and you stand and take the benefit of those things, and say, "I can live as well out of church as in it." Yes, by virtue of what the church is doing.

The church is surrounding you with various supports, and you are mean-spirited enough to take everything that it will give you, and then turn about and say, "I am not going to take the responsibility of entering the church and helping along the cause which it was established to maintain." A man that is outside of the church against his wish and will, and that cannot help himself, though he is to be respected, is to be pitied; but no man that has liberty of choice should be willing to receive everything that the church affords, without joining himself to it, and giving something to others.

### Last Hours of Archbishop Whately

The following is an extract from a letter in *The Christian Observer*:—"His (the archbishop's) last illness showed his principles; then he spoke plainly. To one who, observing his sufferings, asks him if he suffered much pain, he said, 'Some time ago I should have thought it great pain, but now I am enabled to bear it.' His intellect was unclouded by illness; he could think and speak. Some one said to him, 'You are dying, as you have lived, great to the last; the reply was, 'I am dying, as I have lived, in the faith of Jesus.' Another said, 'What a blessing that your glorious intellect is unimpaired'; he answered, 'Do not call intellect glorious; there is nothing glorious out of Christ.' Another said, 'The great fortitude of your character now supports you.' 'No, it is not my fortitude that supports me, but my faith in Christ.' With such a witness on his lips and in his acts, Archbishop Whately passed away."

### Catholic Toleration.

If the authorities of the Catholic church could be persuaded to adopt the liberal views of many of their adherents, the world might rejoice in hope that religious persecution would end. Count Montalembert, for a long time the leader of the Ultramontane party in France, gave expression to very noble views, but the organs of his party refused to accept them, and the Pope has virtually censured them, by demanding of the State of South America to prohibit all worship but Catholic. Count Montalembert said:

Without mental reservation and without hesitation, I declare myself, in the interest of Catholicism itself, an upholder of liberty of conscience. I frankly accept all its consequences, all those which public morality does not reprobate and which equity commands. Can any one at the present day demand liberty for truth—that is to say for one's self, (since every one, if he is sincere, believes himself a follower of truth,) and refuse it to error, that is to say to those who do not think as we do? I distinctly reply, "No."

I declare that I feel an invincible horror for all tortures and violence inflicted upon humanity under the pretext of serving or defending religion. The fagots lighted by a Catholic hand inspire me with as much horror as the scaffolds on which the Protestants immolated so many martyrs. The gag forced into the mouth of whosoever lifts up his voice with a pure heart to preach his faith—that gag I feel between my own lips, and I shudder with pain.—*W. & R.*

### "Not too busy."

Let those of our army friends who are too busy to read the Bible regularly, note the following, found in the *American Bible Society Record*:

One Sabbath afternoon, recently, several officers called at the headquarters of Col. in command of a brigade. During the interview, Col.—addressed a Brigadier-General: