

# Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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## Poetry.

### The Parson going to mill.

The parson sat in his house one day,  
While wintry storm did rage;  
High rapt, he drank in lofty thought  
From Hooker's classic page.  
But as he sat, and holy breath  
Into his breast did steal,  
His sweet wife opened the door and said:  
"My dear, we have no meal."

With a deep groan and saddened brow  
He laid aside his book,  
And in despair upon the hearth  
With troubled air did look.  
"My people think that I must break  
To them the bread of heaven,  
But they'll not give me bread enough  
Three whole days out of seven."

"But hunger is a serious thing,  
And it is sad to hear  
Sweet children's mournful cry for bread  
Loud ringing in your ear."  
So straight he mounted his old horse,  
With meek and humble will,  
And on his meal-bag, patched and coarse,  
He journeyed to the mill.

The miller bowed to him and said:  
"Sir, by your church steeple,  
I vow I give you praise for this,  
But none to your church people."  
The parson mounted his old horse—  
He had no time to lag—  
And rode, like hero, to his home,  
Right on his old meal-bag.

But as he rode, he overlooked  
A proud and rich layman,  
Who, with a close, astonished gaze,  
The parson's bag did scan.  
"My reverend sir, the truth to tell,  
It makes me feel quite wroth,  
To see you compromise, this way,  
The honor of your cloth."

"Why told you not, my reverend friend,  
Your meal was running low?  
What will the neighbors think of us,  
If to the mill you go?"  
"My wealthy friend," the parson said,  
"You must not reason so;  
For be assured, a settled thing,  
My meal is always low."

"If my dear people wish to know  
How to promote my bliss,  
I'll simply say, a bag of meal  
Will never come amiss.  
Just keep the store-room well supplied,  
And I will keep right still;  
But if the meal runs out again,  
I must go to the mill."

### MORAL.

Laymen! it needs no miracle,  
No hard, laborious toil,  
To make the parson's meal-bag like  
The widow's cruise of oil.  
Pour forth into his wife's store-room  
Your gifts right plentiful;  
The miracle is simply this—  
To keep it always full!

## Religious.

For the Christian Messenger.

### Love your Enemies.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, love enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matt. 5; 43-45.

"Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy," probably was, as other quotations made by the Savior in his sermon on the mount, a corrupt sentiment or maxim of the Jews. The law of God said, Lev. 19; 18. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour," &c. They inferred the rest. But Christ says, "I say unto you love your enemies." He does not mean, that we shall love their conduct; it is not the love of complacency to which he refers, it is the love of benevolence: which, while it ignores the conduct, loves the soul, and desires its well-being; "suffers long, and is kind;" makes every possible allowance, forgives, and would do anything to benefit

and save. It is therefore love of the highest order—pure, free, disinterested.

Among the many startling, and soul thrilling truths, which the Savior spoke on this memorable event—such as his instructions on secret prayer, giving of alms, forming a too hasty judgement of others, &c.—truths, which are indeed, as the ax at the root of the trees, perhaps there is none more striking, than the above quotation. It was indeed a new idea to the Jews; and is certainly peculiar to this dispensation. Always before, they had thought it enough to be just. "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," was their moral, as well as their civil law; nor had they yet received the more generous instruction. It is no doubt on this principle, that David so often beseeches the vengeance of God upon his enemies. I once knew a good woman, who used to frequently say, that she thought David certainly must have been an uncharitable man, since he so constantly entreated God's displeasure upon those who injured him. But we must remember, Christ had not yet said, "love your enemies." God first taught his people to be just, and then to be merciful. Certainly, even to our judgement, a very reasonable course.

So uncharitably a principle as this, is certainly, one of the many arguments in favour of the Bible as the book of God. How could it ever have originated in the mind and heart of man, especially when he is naturally so averse to it. Even in the face of scripture, it is often difficult for professed christians to keep from violating it. I once heard a church member say, (and he was a deacon too) that he thought our text was a wrong translation, inasmuch as he thought it could not be carried out in life. As for his part, he hated the very ground his enemy walked on. It is an easy matter to love our friends; those who always meet us with a heart full of love, lips full of blessings, and a hand full of favours. Heartless indeed, is the wretch who could do otherwise. But to love those who really injure us, who take away our property, and our rights, and—what is infinitely worse,—those, who by the cruel tongue of slander, and the venomous fangs of falsehood, imperil our character, and bring us into odium; aye, and embitter our very life itself:—to return these, blessing for cursing, heart-yearning prayers for avowed enmity, and tender love for cruel hate, is a principle, which mere human philosophy, can never cultivate or discover in the heart of man. It is altogether heavenly in its nature, and yet it is a part of that charity, without which, all our religious profession, will be as "sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

It is a most happy principle to be carried out in life. It makes the christian like the pleasant herb, which needs to be crushed, in order to give forth its perfume the more richly. Not only shall we thus commend our religion to the world, and break the hearts of our enemies, but the peace of God will rule in our hearts. Bitter indeed are our tears, when the arrows of our enemies stick fast in our flesh, but their drops are turned into oceans of joy, when we can return them, hearts full of prayers, for mouths full of curses; and good for ill will. Where we can sing,

"Let not despair, nor fell revenge  
Be to my bosom known;  
O give me tears for others woes,  
And patience for my own."

How this truth, this holy principle, purifies the heart. How it strikes the death blow, at the very roots of that demon-like propensity of the head, which ever thirsts and cries out for revenge. How it elevates our mind, and makes us the children of our Father which is in heaven, who makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends his rain on the just and on the unjust. We begin to look upon our fellows, ourselves, and our relation to each other, from a higher position. We see how wave after wave of our common adversity, dashes against the bosom of each of us, as we buffet life's billows; and how can we hate our brother: we see the last great deluge—the cold floods of death—bearing us all away, into earth's vast common tomb, and how can we war with a poor handful of dust.

It engraves deep in our hearts, the most precious lessons of charity. It teaches us to pity, not to hate, the enemy; to save with

winning voice and out-stretched hands, rather than repel and cast off, the wandering. We see that the weakness and sins of our fellows, should not shut up our heart of compassion, but throw it wide open. In short, we learn that our mission to this world, is altogether a generous one, like that of our Savior; to exchange good for evil, blessing for cursing, and it may be life for death.

Our heavenly Teacher did not only give us this grand lesson in precept, but also in the most perfect example. His incarnation, life, and atonement, are one continual and sublime scene, wholly based on this principle. But there are incidents in his life, which do most prominently show forth his example on this point. See him coming over the Mount of Olives on his way to Jerusalem:—as that city rises to view, with its buzz and din of life, he well remembers how they have stoned his prophets, killed his messengers, and dyed their hands in the blood of his most faithful servants—and "precious" indeed "in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints"—he remembers, how he, the Son of God, has, in melting tones, warned them of their terrible destruction; and entreated of them to receive salvation; and yet, they have returned him the most shameful scorn, and abuse. But the future is as clear to him as the past. Already he hears their fiend-like cry, "Crucify him," "Crucify him;" already he sees himself, buffeted, and spit upon; and the crown of thorns, the bloody scourging, with all Golgotha's awful tragedy, are completely in view. The very earth on which this guilty city stands, seems to cry to heaven for vengeance. And he, in a moment, could bring upon it the terrible fate of the cities of the plain, or of rebellious Korah; but, there is no anger in his eye, no curse on his lip; O unspeakable! his bosom heaves; his heart overflows with pity; copious tears gush down his cheeks; while he utters, in heart-rending tones, those never-to-be-forgotten words, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Would we have another example? Behold then another, of indescribable sublimity! Lo, they stretch him upon the cross, and with hellish madness, grasp the spike, and nail him to the wood. O the cruel anguish, and bitter writhing of this dreadful death! But, while with heavy strokes they drive the nails, hear him cry, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." Here we must stop and admire. \* \* \* \*

O my brethren, many of us ought to grow pale with shame, before a scene like this. How have we loved, and prayed for our enemies. Oh, there are many in our churches, whose heads have grown gray in church, and yet they are so void of this principle, that they are forever stumbling over the faults, even, of their brethren; aye more, they can even hate and slander, those in the same communion. Have such the spirit of Christ?

O what contemptibly small views, must we have, of our own black sins; and God's great forgiveness toward us, when we cannot love and forgive, even our vilest enemies! Is there any, who will not forgive his brother? But why be anxious to have resentment? Why take the trouble to hate your enemy? "Vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord." Every tear, and every groan, and every ache, which injustice or oppression, has wrung from you, like the blood of Abel, crieth in the ears of the Lord God of Sabbath. J. H. L.  
Acadia College, April 9th, 1863.

### Responsibilities of property.

God has endowed men with the talents and propensity to accumulate possessions. The right to hold property is inalienable—hence, strictly speaking, no man has a right to sell himself, or to make slaves of others. But property may be alienated at the owner's will in any honorable pursuit and for a fair equivalent in trade.

It is patent to every man that has matured the subject, that property may be properly used in the three following ways: For the

owner's use within proper limits; for the support and education of children and dependents; and for the needs of Christianity and charity. In all these applications, property has justly its principles of disbursement and its responsibilities. The property which its possessor uses for his own personal needs or pleasures, should be expended within proper limits. Because God gives to a man the tact, health and success which shall in a few years amass wealth, it does not follow that he is utterly irresponsible for the use he makes of such accumulations. If the Creator has bestowed talents, he justly requires the judicious employment of them; so in respect to the gains those talents have secured, he likewise requires a frugal and useful disposal. He who by industry and thrift has made property honestly, may be allowed to expend a portion of it to improve his farm, better his buildings, purchase himself a library, or otherwise to enhance his own conveniences and enjoyments. But he may not waste on intemperance or injurious luxuries the wealth that Providence and a well-planned industry have so luxuriantly bestowed on him. For if he shall say, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry"; God shall say unto him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." The rich must give account how they spend that portion of their possessions, which they may expend on themselves.

Property may be alienated for the education and support of children and other family dependents. But even here, the great Master holds all his servants responsible for a right use of riches. Christians may not be lavish on the unreal wants of children, so long as heathen nations and the home charities call so loudly for aid. It is a wicked thing, and it does the world a sad wrong, that so many men of wealth are too miserly to educate their own children properly. We know of instances where men of eight or ten thousand will keep their sons away from the common school of winters, because they can make a dozen dollars a month by teaming or cutting wood. Again, we have known penurious men worth their thousands cast their dependents on the public charities, a meanness that but ill comports with the munificence of the Heavenly Father. Such men ought to remember that all property given brings along with the gift the serious responsibility of a just disbursement, on some such plans as shall be acceptable to God.

Parents to whom God has given success, in some cases are not fully aroused to their duty to educate their children. We have known families worth but two to four thousand dollars, who have thoroughly and fully educated their sons and daughters, now filling posts of great usefulness. And another family, of about equal means, at this moment, taking just the same course, whose children are now just ready to assume the same important stations. On the other hand, there are multitudes of parents, to whom God and their own talents have given abundant means, who are neither benevolent to their own comfort, nor generous to fit their children for enlarged usefulness. These should study the responsibilities of property in those two directions.—*Morning Star.*

### Sunday rain.

"I wish to be informed of the reason why the rain which falls on the first day of the week is so much more injurious to the health of both man and beast, who are exposed to its influence, than that which falls on other days of the week. Perhaps you will say to me, 'Prove the fact, before you ask for a solution of it.' Sir, the fact is undoubted, as I shall presently show to you: I live within the bounds of a congregation of Presbyterians in the country; in our church the fact has long been known. There is Captain A., Squire B., Elder C., Brother D., and a number of others, good and pious men, who assert it strongly. Understand me however, I have never heard them declare their belief in words; but I know that the fact is so, from their constant practice. As I said before, they are pious and good men, and often join the rest of God's people in singing—

My heart and flesh cry out for thee,  
When far from thine abode.