

Original Sketch.

For the Christian Messenger.

Excelsior, or higher, still higher.

CHAPTER I.

"How swift is a glance of the mind; Compared with the speed of its flight The tempest itself lags behind, And the swift winged arrow of light."

The sun was still shining, taking his last lingering look at the busy world, before sinking behind the western hills. The golden rays came in through the open casement of a room and past the snowy muslin curtain, falling upon the head of a young girl, like a diadem of glory.

There is something so grand and beautiful to a lover of nature, when the great ruler of the day is retiring in majesty from the world, arrayed in reflected purple and gold; that we can almost think we gaze "through the golden vistas into heaven." Whilst Minnie Weston, unmindful of ought beside, sits gazing upon the sublime and beautiful, which speaks so forcibly of Nature's God, and which has enraptured many a lover of the truly grand and beautiful before, she is sending memory far back into the past and hope forward into the future, building castles in the air, dreams of happiness which may never be realized.

The sun slowly sinks behind the west and night is covering the earth with as able pall. Thus it often is through life. Our sun goes down making our pathway seem a hard and thorny one, but, with the morning again cometh light. Weeping may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning.

Our trials and troubles are amongst those all things "that work together for good to them that love him," designed to lead our hearts up from the creature to the Creator, from earth to heaven, from time to eternity.

Minnie Weston sat there while calmly the evening fell, and o'er her soul its holy influences came. The summer wind was scarcely audible, as its whispers stole at intervals through the half-opened blind and kissed her cheek. Silently she sat there until the silver light of the moon stole into the room, slidding its mild silvery rays in a quiver of arrows at her feet.

And of what? Perchance her spirit yearns, And reaches toward yon bright, Celestial sky, whose starry watchfire burns, Where there is no more night.

Perchance her vision wildly strains, To pierce that azure veil; To lead her soul through heavenly lanes, Beyond this cloudy vale.

Alas it is in vain to ask! No earthly eye hath ever seen those gates unclose.

Minnie Weston was not a christian, but, as she sat there the shadows of night falling all around, her thoughts would stray away from the beauties of nature to their Maker. She almost longed to be a christian, to possess an inheritance in that heavenly land which is uncorrupted, undefiled and fadeth not away.

"'Tis religion that can give, Sweetest pleasure while we live."

She cared not to suffer for Jesus that she might reign with him, but, rather to endure the pleasure of the world for a season, and looking through the long vista of years, that seemed to intervene between her and the grave, she beheld her life one continual flow of happiness.

She knew not

That our dreams are bright while they last, But we must awake e'er the vision's past, For life has no pleasure without its alloy, And all have alike their sorrow and joy.

Minnie Weston's dearest companion was a cousin. They had always attended the same school, had played together in infancy and childhood. Hand in hand they had wandered in the borders of the shadowy forest, had listened to the music of the birds, together they would stand on the sea shore watching the crystal waves coming nearer and nearer.

Provincial Parliament.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THE CHURCH SYNOD BILL.

This measure has excited considerable interest in all the different religious bodies, as we have in previous numbers only given our own impressions with regard to the action taken upon it, we have thought it but fair to place before our readers the discussion of the bill in the Council.

Hon. Mr. Patterson asked if the members of the committee were unanimous in that report.

Hon. Mr. Almon was happy to state that they were.

Hon. Mr. Dickey moved that the Report be received and adopted, and that the further consideration of the bill be deferred to this day three months. The hon. gentleman stated if he were to consult his own feelings, it dependent of the merits of the bill, he should not oppose it.

He was not a little surprised to hear it stated in this Chamber that the ecclesiastical laws passed previous to the Reformation were binding here, and that those enacted since were not.

they had no force whatever either in England or the colonies. Lord Coke and Sir William Blackstone had held that they were not binding on the people of England in any sense.

What was the Constitution of the Church of England in Nova Scotia? There was a Bishop, and he had certain powers—powers of an overseer—of visitation, consecration, ordination and confirmation—which according to the constitution of the Church he alone should have, and no one else.

The question was narrowed down to this—What powers have the Legislature given to other denominations? The Bishop had said that he only asked for the power given to other denominations; but yet there was this strange inconsistency in his conduct, that although he made this statement, yet in another part of his argument he tells us he cannot agree to leave the Synod to the people to be adopted or not as they choose, because he says these Synods are not voluntary associations, but the inherent right of the church.

The House had been referred to two or three Acts. As regards the Wesleyan Methodist Act, it rested on a contract originally entered into by the members of that body.

(The hon. member here read from the Private and Local Acts, pages 47 and 48, the 3rd and 4th sections of the Wesleyan Methodist Act, to show that powers were only conferred to deal with property.)

All these Acts, to which reference had been made, were merely acts for the regulation of temporalities, and did not touch doctrine or discipline.

It was said that the Church of England was under disabilities, and chap. 51 of the Revised Statutes "Of Religious Congregations and Societies" was referred to in proof of this.

(The hon. member then referred to the act to incorporate the Roman Catholic Bishop, Halifax, and showed from the 6th section that it conferred no spiritual jurisdiction or ecclesiastical rights whatever on him, his successors, or any ecclesiastical person of his church.)

It was said that the Bill was precisely the same as the Canadian Act. It was not, and the title of it had been changed since it came from the Synod. The act was then entitled an act to enable the members of the Church of England to meet in Synod, a mere enacting act—now it is a bill to remove doubts concerning the Synod, etc.

There was another peculiarity in the advocacy of the bill, which showed its dangerous scope. The Bishop was at last willing to take it in any shape. It was the duty of the house to deal with the bill as they found it.

Church asked for it. Under these circumstances, he might well ask the house to postpone the bill.

His objection, however, went much further.—It was wrong to ask the sanction of the Legislature to laws made by any denomination of Christians. For these reasons he would ask the house not to assent to the second reading of the bill.

Hon Mr. Almon stated that although the bill had been already so fully and ably discussed, he felt that it was a duty he owed to himself not to give a silent vote. He feared that hon. gentlemen of other denominations would not give the bill grave consideration, because they would say it affected the Church of England alone.

(The hon. member then went on to refer to these acts in detail, to show that every purpose for which laws were needed by the Church were embraced in them.)

It was said that the bill was asked for, because certain doubts existed. As a member of the Church of England he confessed that he had never heard any doubts expressed as to the freedom of worship at her Churches.

He asked himself what discipline meant; and on further examination he found that the object was to establish ecclesiastical courts. Those, therefore, who did not comport in opinion with the Bishop and the members of the Synod, were to be called to account for any doctrines which they might entertain.

By the bill the Church here would be at once withdrawn from the authority of the Queen. He would ask if, after it was passed, the Church here could be called the Church of England.

This act of the Bishop's was a piece of rash legislation; it was also bad legislation; because it had an ex post facto operation,—because it affected those who had been members of the Synod already existing.

It was said that the laity was represented in this Synod. He considered that the laity would under the operation of the bill soon be a mere nullity.

He (Mr. A.) had been and still was a member of this Synod, having represented, from the commencement, one of the country parishes, and he therefore knew something of its operations.

His great fear with respect to the bill was expressed in the report of the select committee,