

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

Finish thy work.

FINISH thy work, the time is short;
The sun is in the west;
The night is coming down—till then
Think not of rest.

Yes, finish all thy work, then rest;
Till then, rest never;
The rest prepared for thee by God
Is rest forever.

Finish thy work, then wipe thy brow;
Ungird thee from thy toil;
Take breath, and from each weary limb
Shake off the soil.

Finish thy work, then sit thee down
On some celestial hill,
And of its strength-reviving air
Take thou thy fill.

Finish thy work, then go in peace;
Life's battle fought and won,
Hear from the throne the Master's voice,
"Well done! well done!"

Finish thy work, then take thy harp,
Give praise to God above;
Sing a new song of mighty joy
And endless love.

Give thanks to him who held thee up
In all thy path below,
Who made thee faithful unto death,
And crowns thee now!
—British Friend.

Persevere.

Keep pushing—'tis wiser
Than sitting aside,
And dreaming and sighing
And waking the tide.
In life's earnest battle
They only prevail—
Who daily march onward
And never say fail.

In life's early morning,
In manhood's firm pride,
Let this be the motto
Our footsteps to guide;
In storm and in sunshine
Whatever assail,
We'll onward and conquer
And never say fail.

Religious.

"I am thy God."

BY REV. JOHN GRAY.

Here is a flower, in the paradise of Holy Writ, that knows no winter. It is a tree of life, yielding to the heaven-bound pilgrim new life, strength and courage, under all the difficulties that lie in his path. It is the Bible's sun, that knows no going down, but shines eternally around, and from which emanate all those blessed rays of light which give joy and peace to the Christian's heart. It is the spring, whence flow all the "exceeding great and precious promises; and the foundation on which rest all his hopes. It contains all the other promises; gives value and virtue to them all, for without the "I am thy God," every promise of the Word would be worthless. Take from the Bible "I am thy God," and what would all its other promises be to the mind of the tried and down-trodden Christian? for it is supposed in the promise, that there are those risen up against him, to work, if possible his ruin; and that his heart has begun to fail him, but the Jehovah steps in between them and him, saying to him, "Be not dismayed, I am thy God." Ah! if God be for him, who can do him real or enduring harm? Let the "heathen rage," let "hand join in hand" to work his overthrow, but what in the issue has he to fear, while the Jehovah of Hosts says unto him, "I am thy God, be not dismayed."

Ah! it was "I am thy God," that protected Daniel in the lion's den, that saved the three children in the furnace of fire, that brought Joseph from out his prison-house to reign second in power and glory in Egypt. It was this, also, that made a way in the Red Sea, that brought drink from the rock, and bread from heaven; and it is "I am thy God" that is the safeguard and shield of the Christian, in midst of all dangers, he being "kept by the power of God."

What an exalted being is the Christian! Jehovah his keeper! The most HIGH GOD his refuge! The Son of God the vine, and he the branch; the Head, and he a member of the body; the Eye, and he the apple of it! What honor, what security is his!

"I am thy God, be not dismayed." Herein is contained a promise to the Christian, and a threatening to his enemies. Saying and doing are two different things with men, but with God but one and the same. Then let those who make "lies their refuge" think of this, as they confederate to take counsel together against the Christian, who fears not to maintain and speak the truth—let them meet, all of them meet, oft-times meet, to scheme, contrive, and consult to cast him down, but let them know, they have the Jehovah of Hosts to overcome before they can effect their wicked purpose.

The God who reigns on high
And thunders when he please,
That rides upon the stormy sky,
And manages the seas,

that "awful God" is the Christian's protector, his shield, and defence, and his eye sees his enemies, his ear hears all their counselling against him, and his "arm is lared," and his "arrow set upon his bow," and "saying and doing" is one thing with him.

Thrust, then, ye powers of darkness—sons of falsehood and malice—thrust at the man of truth, that he may fall to save you; but ye cannot effect his ruin, cannot take his name from out the "Book of life"—cannot separate him from the love of God and of Christ; while Jehovah of Hosts says to him, "I AM THY GOD, be not dismayed; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee; by the right hand of my righteousness."—*Examiner.*

Quotable Christians.

"If all your church members were as industrious as Mr. Hale, the church would be in better credit than it is," said Mr. Hine, a man who was not a lover of religion. Mr. Hale was a very industrious man. He had a large family dependent upon his labor. He worked diligently with his hands, and prayed fervently for his daily bread. He was often referred to as an example of industry. He was a quotable Christian laborer. He was not avaricious, but was industrious from a sense of duty. He was a credit to the church on account of his persevering industry.

Mr. Jones was often quoted as an example of patience. He had a great deal of sickness in his family, and a great many difficulties in his business. Yet he was never out of patience. When complaints were made by some whose trials were far less than his, his example was often referred to. Mr. Jones was a credit to the church on account of his Christian patience.

Mr. Sayre was often quoted as an example of benevolence. He was especially kind to the poor. Mr. Hine, when called upon to admit that he was a good man, would admit that he was good to the poor. He was watchful in opportunities of doing good. It was said if all men tried to do good as he does, the world would be much better off. He is a credit to the church on account of his benevolence.

For what trait of Christian excellence has the reader ever been quoted? Are all his Christian virtues of that moderate character that they escape notice? While no one should live with a mere view to being a quotable Christian, yet each one should make such progress in the divine life as to draw (however unostentatiously) the notice of men, and cause them to take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus.

"There is another man."

As a British frigate was sailing in a heavy gale along the coast of Spain, a dismasted merchantman was discovered in the distance, drifting before the tempest. Immediately every eye and glass was on her; and as promptly were the orders issued to bring the ship about, so as to bear down upon the ill-fated vessel. As they neared her, a boat was manned with a gallant crew, and sent out after the wreck. Coming up to it, the sailors shouted, but no response was heard; they shouted again; but no answer came. At last an object moved across the deck. The boat was immediately alongside; and then a sad spectacle presented itself, a man on the very point of death from starvation and exposure. He was immediately brought on board the frigate, and laid upon the deck for dead. The sailors stood round, filled with horror and pity; and their feelings soon gave way to surprise, as they saw the body move again, and give signs of life. The man was raised up, and with a desperate effort he whispered, "There is another man—there is another man!" Saved himself, he thinks only of his companion in suffering, and his very first breath is spent in one effort to save him.

So it is with the saved sinner, fettered long in Satan's chains, alarmed by the apprehension of Divine wrath ready to descend upon his head, adrift upon the sea of life, forsaken by man, seeming cast off by God; while the shadows of death appear to close around him, and despair begins to struggle for the mastery. But an in-

initely benignant eye penetrates all this gloom, and the only ark of safety draws near. A voice is heard, "To you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men!" Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.—*Guthrie.*

Waiting to be spoken to.

A young lady of refinement and high mental and moral worth became convicted of her own sinfulness, and yielding her heart to her God, came out from among her young friends by publicly professing Christ.

She had one brother to whom she was most tenderly attached, but he was not a Christian. He had recently returned from college; and now that the sister had found Jesus, she felt the strongest desire for his salvation. She made his case a subject of earnest prayer, and deeply felt that she must speak to him personally on the matter; yet how could she gain courage to do so?

At twilight one day they were left together in the sitting-room, and she tenderly told him of her interest in his behalf, and then spoke of the love of Jesus, begging him to accept Him as his Saviour and Redeemer.

She was not prepared for the response that followed her trembling words. Her brother replied that he had for some weeks felt the burden of his sins; that the part she had chosen had deepened his feelings, and he had been wishing and waiting for some one to speak to him, that he might unburden his mind.

He felt he was now ready to be on the Lord's side, and soon took an open stand by publicly professing the name of Christ.

What joyful news to the sister; what a reward for the cross she had taken! He was waiting to be spoken to, yet, had she neglected known duty, he might have longer concealed his true feelings till by waiting he had lost the desire to become a Christian.

Oh what a privilege, to speak to the unconverted of Christ? How frequently may the word fall on the softened heart, and bring it to a decision for time and for eternity!

When we hear the voice of God saying, "Speak to that young man," that friend, or relative, let us obey; for we know not how instrumental of good God would make us to others, or the good we may secure to ourselves by taking our cross for Christ's sake.—*Am. Messenger.*

The Seed and the Fruit.

A colporteur who has labored twelve years, says, I have visited consecutively one of the counties of my field three times, and the other nearly twice. I have organized a number of Sabbath-schools each year, and have labored in eleven revivals of religion, several of which commenced in connection with colportage. I have addressed several hundred converts, and met many who profess a hope in Christ through the simple instrumentality of colportage. Almost every year I have known of some who have come to Christ, having been first awakened by the visit or books of the colporteur.

In one place that I canvassed sometime ago, I found the church disbanded and the meeting-house unoccupied. It cost quite an effort to get a hearing in the church on the Sabbath. I spent two Sabbaths and lectured twice, visited all the families, and conversed and prayed with them, and finally succeeded in organizing a Sabbath-school, which increased until it numbered 100; they have reorganized the church, engaged a minister, enjoyed a precious outpouring of the Spirit, and when I recently visited them, had about forty members of the church, and a Bible-class of forty or fifty. They received me gratefully, purchased about two hundred volumes, and said their prosperity commenced with my labors.

This colporteur since the commencement of his labors has sold over 25,900 volumes, and made grants to the destitute of over 2,800 volumes. The fact that of the 37,581 families whom he has visited, 16,523 habitually neglected the house of God, and 13,644 had no religious books but the Bible, shows that such an agency for searching out the destitute is still needed even in a highly favored state.—*Id.*

Beware of bad books.

The old scruples about indiscriminate reading seem to have almost lost their force, and parents exercise little care about the kind of books that fall into the hands of their children, and young people have a morbid craving for books they ought to put away with loathing. One of our exchanges says:—

About thirty-five years ago, the writer formed an acquaintance with a young man of fine education and commanding talents, and we soon became bosom friends. One morning, after

school, at a street corner, he handed me a book, which he said he could loan me for only one quarter of an hour. We stood for a few moments, while I looked at the obscene pictures and read a few pages in that polluting volume. I handed it back to him, and never saw it again; but the poison took effect; "sin left its mark." I cannot erase the effect of the impure thoughts which, in that quarter of an hour, that vile book lodged in my heart, and which, may God forgive me, I harbored there. I can and do pray against the sin, and trust, by God's grace, yet to conquer it; but it is a thorn in my flesh, and still causes me great bitterness and anguish.

Young men, as the lover of your souls. I tell you in all sincerity, there is nothing I would not willingly give to have the veil of oblivion cast over the scenes and the sentiments of that corrupt volume, which still haunt me like foul spectres during my hours of private devotion, in the sanctuary, and at the communion table.

O what sad work did that quarter of an hour make upon a soul which nothing but the blood of Christ can wash away. Young men beware of bad books, and beware, also, of evil companions.

Hedley Vicars says:—"I speak from heart-felt experience; I would give worlds if I had them, to undo what I have done. O that I had the last two years allotted to me to live over again; O that my past actions could be obliterated from my recollection!"

And J. B. Gough most affectingly remarks—"What you learn from bad habits and in bad society, you can never forget; and it will be a lasting pang to you. I would give my right hand to-night if I could forget that which I have learned in evil society—if I could tear from my mind the things which I have seen and heard. You cannot, I believe, take away the effect of a single impure thought that has been lodged or harbored in your heart. You may pray against it, and by God's grace you may conquer it, but it will through life cause you bitterness and anguish."

My early friend, after well-nigh accomplishing my ruin, became a dissolute man, imbibed infidel sentiments, and, at last, as I greatly fear, died by his own hand. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."—*Canadian Baptist.*

"Pray and pump."

In a seaman's prayer-meeting lately in New York, one of the speakers thanked God that he had been a sailor. He had been in some tight places at sea, but he never hid his religion, or lost his confidence in God. He had learned to call on God in trouble, and had not been disappointed. But then, faith must be joined with practice. Praying only, without using effort, is not enough.

"We were once," said he, "driven to great straits in a gale. The wind blew a perfect hurricane, and our ship sprung a leak. It seemed as if we must go to the bottom in a few minutes. Our men worked hard at the pumps. The water gained on us. Death stared us in the face. I ran down below, and on my knees asked Jesus to save us, and give me a token. I opened my Bible, lying before me, and Isaiah xli: 10, met my eyes. The words are these, and the first I saw; 'Fear not thou, for I am with thee. Be not thou dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.'

"That was enough. I ran on deck and told the men. I said, 'Men we are going somewhere, but we are not going down.' I reported to them what I had asked of the Lord, and how he had answered them.

"Now," said I, 'men, pump and pray, and pray and pump.' And they did it with a will. And we pumped and prayed our vessel into Cork as, I believe, in answer to prayer and promise. But what is the use of praying with a leak in the ship without pumping! It must ever be work and pray, and pray and work."

Small things.

A young lady once presented me with a book-mark, having the inscription, "God bless you," and exacted the promise that it should be placed in my Bible, but never to remain a day opposite the same chapter. Faithful to my promise, I took it home, and rubbing from the lips of my Bible the dust of a week, I placed it in the first chapter of Matthew, and daily read a chapter and changed its place. I had not read long before I became interested as I had never been before in this good book; and I saw in its truths that I was a sinner, and must repent if I would be saved. I then promised God that I would seek his face at the earliest opportunity, and, if he saw fit to convert my soul, that I would spend my life in his cause. It came; I sought his face, and received the smiles of his love; and now I have a hope within me, "big with immortality!"