

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL & GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

NEW SERIES,
Vol. IX, No. 14.

HALIFAX, N. S., WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 1864.

WHOLE SERIES,
Vol. XXVIII, No. 14.

Poetry.

SATURDAY NIGHT.

Away contending cares, so wont to crowd
Into the sacred chambers of the soul;
And with a jarring babbling, harsh and loud,
Each better thought and feeling to control!

Another week has led thee by the hand
Through its long arid to a closed door;
Now at the threshold for a moment stand,
To lay aside the robes which the soul wore

Through weary days of petty gain and loss,
Which in perplexing mazes thou hast trod;
Perchance a recreant soldier of the cross,
Perchance forgetful of thy debt to God.

For soon the door shall open; there, outspread,
Waits a rich feast, which God for thee has given;
And they who drink that wine and eat that bread
Tread with a firmer step the road to heaven.

Thou, as another Sabbath greets thy sight,
Thy soul a chamber for God's presence make;
Leave worldly cares to dwell in the past night,
And better vesture for the spirit take.

Faith in thy Saviour; trust in God's great love;
Ardent aspiring to the things on high;
A close communion with the blest above;
A longing for the home above the sky.

So to the spirit shall each Sabbath bring
New strength to speed it on the heavenly way;
So through the week within the soul shall ring
The heavenly music of the holy day.
—Church Monthly.

Miscellaneous.

GERMAN UNIVERSITY LIFE.

The following statements are copied from President Fairfield's letters to the *Morning Star*. They indicate a laxity of discipline, not calculated to make the students scholars, except such as have in themselves a large amount of enthusiasm and determination:—

"No student is required to be present at an exercise of the university; and the facts are that many men are here who pay their bills and scarcely for a whole term enter the lecture-room. Recitations are unknown. The professor lectures uninterruptedly from the beginning to the end of his forty-five minutes (for in all those institutions they have long since found that 'is long enough for profit'). No question is asked by the professor, none by any student. If those who have paid for the lectures are present, very well; but if not, no inquiry is made, no discipline is administered. So if a young man is disposed to waste his time, and spend his months in dissipation, that is his own concern, and neither the professor nor the president interferes. Accordingly I am informed that the loosest morals prevail, and drinking, gambling and duelling.

The buildings are solely for lecture-rooms, library and cabinets. In some of them, as at Göttingen, the rooms occupied for lectures in the different departments are scattered over the town. In others, as at Halle, Leipzig, and I believe also at Berlin and Bonn, they are all in the same building, or in buildings closely connected.

A clock in the centre hall announces each hour, and lectures commence at fifteen minutes past. The halls present a stirring scene during this interval. I have heard no hallooing, or anything approaching to it; but in an institution embracing, as the one at Leipzig, a thousand students, or as that at Berlin, two thousand, you may easily conceive that the halls are pretty well thronged during a considerable part of the fifteen minutes.

The lectures begin at Berlin—and I speak of this more particularly because I was there longer than anywhere else—at 8 o'clock in the morning, and continue uninterruptedly until 8 o'clock in the evening. This is necessary in order to accommodate as fully as possible all who wish to attend them. The whole thing being optional, the student attends one or more lectures, as he may elect; the expense being in the ratio of the number—each student paying each lecturer two *Louis d'or* for the term. A *Louis d'or* is about \$4 in gold of our money. If a student attends five lectures a day, his tuition is over \$20 a year. If he comes without any thought of study, he may matriculate, and save all expense of lectures. Ordinarily, however, these reckless fellows pay for two or three lectures, and this

stands as so much to their credit when they come to apply for their degree.

I have said that students are held to no responsibility for attending lectures; and you will naturally inquire how the honors of the university are conferred? The answer is this: When a student presents himself for a degree the question is not where, or when, he secured the necessary qualifications for such a degree? but does he possess them? and this the Senate proceed to ascertain by some sort of examination. This is the theory; and I have heard it often said or hinted in America by the special admirers of the German system, that the examinations are very rigid, and degrees are conferred only upon clear proof of merit. That is the theory; facts will scarcely sustain it, I fear. And I am informed that students who dissipate full half the time find no difficulty in getting their degree. Examinations never amount to as much as the testimony of daily observation in the lecture room. And they are as superficial in Germany as anywhere else, to say the least."

The Strength of a Kingdom.

Solomon says, "There was found in a besieged city a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man!" There is an equal forgetfulness on the part of statesmen and worldly men, of the little companies of praying Christians who have power with God, and who preserve the nation from the Divine judgments. Rev. Newman Hall, of London, gives a pleasant sketch of a little praying circle he dropped into in a recent excursion:—

When I was in Yorkshire, the other week, I was returning home from a walk among the hills, when, as I was passing through the village, I saw a little glimmering light proceeding from a place that some persons would call a conventicle. I went toward it, and heard the voice of singing and prayer; so I opened the door and listened, and then it was so good that I thought I would go in. There were only two candles lighted in the little chapel, and I saw just six people, and they were all in the table pew, on their knees. There was a woman, a lad, and four men. As they prayed I went down on my knees in the little stone passage, because I did not want to disturb them; and very much was my soul lifted up with their prayers. They all prayed, one after another, and when they had done, one of them said: "Will our brother that stole in say a word?" They took it for granted that one "stealing" in there had a right to be called upon to pray; and so I felt great delight in adding my petition to theirs, and I felt, indeed, that the promise had been fulfilled, "Where two or three are met together in My name there am I in the midst of them." What I saw there is only a specimen of what is going on in the villages and hamlets of Yorkshire, and more or less throughout the country. And is not that a fulfillment of the Word that we were made kings and priests? Were not these poor men and women priests unto God, beseeching Him as intercessors for others?"

COUGHING IN CHURCH.

Coughing in church seems often contagious, like so many diseases; and sensitive ministers are tortured by its frequency, and fail to preach with their customaryunction when the congregation is disturbed by long spells of coughing. It is singular that this tendency to cough is greatly under the control of the will, and may sometimes be suppressed by wit or wisdom in the speaker. Hugh Miller gives a curious illustration, in an account of a visit to the chapel of one of the shrewdest preachers in Scotland:—

There had been a sudden change of weather a few days before, and there was a great deal of coughing in the chapel. We were annoyed by finding some of the pithiest remarks in the discourse broken in upon by some remorseless cougher, and mutilated, so far as the listeners were concerned; and the doctor seemed somewhat annoyed too. He knew better, however, than we did, in what degree even coughing lies under the restraint of the will; he knew, too, what we did not, that when people are very much surprised

they cease to cough. Suddenly the doctor stopped short in the middle of his argument; every face in the chapel was turned to the pulpit, and for a full minute so dead was the stillness that even a pin might have been heard to drop. "I see, my friends," he said, with a suppressed smile, "You can all be quiet enough when I am quiet." It would be difficult to imagine a better humored rebuke, but certainly never was there a more effectual one. A suppressed cough might occasionally be heard through the rest of the service, but not even a tittle of what had disturbed it before.

WINNING SOULS.

Two weeks ago a man and his wife, being tenderly admonished by a christian friend, were persuaded to visit the long-neglected house of prayer. The Spirit of Christ opened their eyes, and they were led to see their need of mercy, and sought and found a God ready to forgive. With thankfulness and love, in conjunction with the friend before alluded to, these new converts sought to bring other careless ones to the sanctuary; and the Lord has been pleased graciously to own and bless these efforts, and two other couples have united themselves with the people of God.

That was a blessed Sabbath when this Christian friend, with these six souls, sat at the table of the Lord to commemorate his dying love. Oh, who can tell the far-reaching results of this simple Christian effort? This friend did no more than every disciple can do. Who cannot say to his brother, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel?"

"Would you win a soul to God?
Tell him of the Saviour's blood,
Once for dying sinners spilt,
To atone for all their guilt."

These converts are heads of families, all of them having little children to train up in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord." There are now three more family altars in the world. The world is richer, brighter and purer for those; and when we can estimate the usefulness of a Doddridge, we may learn to value pious parental example and instruction.

Dear reader! follow-Christ! follower of Jesus! where is thy brother? Are you earnestly, and prayerfully, and wisely seeking to win his soul? or are you sleeping over his immortal interests?

THE PULPIT WINDOW.

Rev. Zabdiel Adams at one time exchanged with a neighboring minister—a mild, inoffensive man—who, knowing the peculiar bluntness of his character, said to him, "You will find some panes of glass broken in the pulpit window, and possibly you may suffer from the cold. The cushion, too, is in a bad condition, but I beg of you not to say anything to my people on the subject; they are poor," &c. "Oh, no! oh, no!" says Mr. Adams. But ere he left home, he filled a bag with rags, and took it with him. When he had been in the pulpit a short time, feeling somewhat incommoded by the too free circulation of the air, he deliberately took from the bag a handful of the rags, and stuffed them into the window. Towards the close of his discourse, which was more or less upon the duties of a people towards their clergyman, he became very animated, and purposely brought down both fists upon the pulpit cushion with a tremendous force. The feathers flew in all directions, and the cushion was pretty much used up. He instantly checked the current of his thoughts, and simply exclaiming: "Why, how these feathers fly!" proceeded. He had kept his promise of not addressing the society on the subject, but had taught them a lesson not to be misunderstood. On the next Sabbath, the window and cushion were found in excellent repair.—*Hartford Religious Herald.*

Religious Matters in California.

The following particulars in relation to the different religious bodies alluded to, are taken from the *San Francisco Evangelist*.

Baptist.—We find that in the two Baptist

Associations there are 51 churches, besides which there are some half a dozen unassociated churches. The membership somewhat exceeds 2,000. Total addition of members by baptism, 160. Ordained ministers, 57. Only a part of the churches report to the Associations their Sabbath-school statistics, therefore a complete summary of this department of labor is not given. It is confidently believed that the Baptists are making, however, commendable advancement on behalf of the youth of the State.

Congregationalists.—From the minutes of the last annual session of the Congregational body, the following statistics are gleaned: There are 19 churches and 5 preaching stations. Membership 985. Of the churches, six have pastors, eleven have a stated ministerial supply, and two are without preaching. There are reported 17 adult baptisms and 85 infant baptisms. Sunday-schools, 24, with a total enrolled attendance of 3,201.

Methodists.—The last annual meeting of the Methodist Episcopal Church Conference was held in Napa. Bishop James presided. Churches 77; members, 3,944, including 166 in Nevada territory, being an increase of 166 over last year's number. The minutes record the baptism of 160 adults and 431 infants. Sunday-schools, 101; officers and teachers 897; scholars, 5,528. Total number of "travelling preachers" in the conference, 85.

THE ART OF GROWING POOR.—Some professors of religion spend more money for oysters each year than for the missionary cause; others give more for tickets to lectures, concerts, new bonnets, etc., than for the preacher. They are always of the kind who complain the most about the church, the quality of the sermons, and the coldness of the membership. Giving nothing or next to nothing for the Lord, they find life an awkward thing to them—seldom paying with promptness their debts or accumulating anything in the way of property. As with individuals so with churches. In refusing to give, they bring barrenness and deadness on themselves.

Said one of the most eminent of laymen once, making a platform missionary address: "I have heard of churches starving out from a saving spirit, but I have never heard of one dying of benevolence. And if I could hear of one such, I would make a pilgrimage to it by night, and in that quiet solitude, with the moon shining and the aged elm waving, I would put my hands on the moss-clad ruins, and gazing on the venerable scene, would say, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.'"—*Scripture Cabinet.*

THE WATER-CARRIER'S CRY.—Perhaps no cry is more striking, after all, than the short and simple cry of the water-carrier. "The gift of God!" he says, as he goes along with his water-skin on his shoulder. It is impossible to hear this cry without thinking of the Lord's words to the woman of Samaria: "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." It is very likely that water, so invaluable and so often scarce in hot countries, was in those days spoken of as now, as the "gift of God," to denote its preciousness; if so, the expression would be exceedingly forcible to the woman, and full of meaning.

The water-carrier's cry in Egypt must always arouse a thoughtful mind to a recollection of the deep necessities of the people, of the thirst which they as yet know not of, and of the living water which few if any have yet offered the poor Moslems in that great city; and make him wish and pray for the time when the sonorous cry "Ya aateo Allah!" shall be a type of the cry of one bringing the living water of the gospel, and saying "Behold the gift of God!"—*Ragged Life in Egypt.*

The Spaniards have a proverb:—"The stone fit for a wall will not lie on the road." Prepare yourself for something better; and something better will come. The great art of success is to be able to seize the opportunity offered. Cheerful, patient, persevering in your lawful calling will best help you to do this.