

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL & GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

NEW SERIES.
Vol. IX, No. 9.

HALIFAX, N. S., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 1864.

WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XXVIII, No. 9.

Poetry.

THE THREE WEEPERS.

Sorrow weeps!
And drowns its bitterness in tears:
My child of sorrow,
Weep out the fulness of thy passionate grief,
And drown in tears
The bitterness of lonely years.
God gives the rain and sunshine mild,
And both are best, my child!

Joy weeps!
And overflows its banks with tears:
My child of joy,
Weep out the gladness of thy pent-up heart,
And let thy glistering eyes
Run over in their ecstasies;
Life needeth joy; but from on high
Descends what cannot die!

Love weeps!
And feeds its silent life with tears:
My child of love,
Pour out the riches of thy yearning heart,
And, like the air of even,
Give and take back the dew of heaven;
And let that longing heart of thine
Feed upon love Divine.

H. BONAR.

Religious.

A SHORT SERMON.

"Let us lay aside every weight."—HEBREWS 12: 1.

Let us briefly notice a few of the many weights the Christian must leave. Every act of positive wickedness must, of course, be laid aside. But there are many habits and propensities that are not usually recognized as sins, that are weights that retard the progress of a disciple of Jesus. We will indicate a few:—

1. Worldly-mindedness. We are not accustomed to think this is a sin. But when we let the world and the things of the world occupy our whole thought, it soon eats our religious interest. When it develops itself in eagerness to accumulate, it checks every generous feeling of the heart, and binds the soul to earthly good. "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in perdition." 1 Tim. 6: 9. It manifests itself in an unwillingness to bear a just share of the pecuniary burdens necessary to sustain the cause of God. The liberal soul shall be made fat, while the miser is continually saying, "O my leanness." The love of the world is a great hindrance to Christian progress.

2. Foolish talking is another weight. The apostle says, "Let it not be named among you, as becometh saints."

3. Backbiting is an enormous weight, yet many are carrying it along with their profession of religion. I do not say that this is not a sin, but many do not so consider it. "To backbite is to censure, reproach, to speak evil of the absent."—Webster. A good minister now in heaven, once told me, that as he was visiting from house to house, one woman gave him a long account of her difficulties with her neighbors, to which he replied, "I have always noticed that those who have most to say against their neighbors are generally the most difficult persons in the neighborhood."

4. Novel reading, in its common acceptation, hinders divine progress. It gives the mind a false view of life and unfits it for the solid truths of Christianity. It is a weight which many carry. They will "consume the midnight oil" to read and weep over fictitious suffering, which they know never occurred; but have not a tear for the sufferings caused by the rebellion in our land, or the intense agony of the dear Redeemer.

Finally, whatever breaks the spirit of prayer, and draws the soul down to earth, is a weight that must be laid aside, if we would run the Christian race.

Envy, malice, evil-surmising, jealousy, pride, and kindred emotions, are weights to the Christian. Let us lay aside every weight, and prepare ourselves to run with patience the Christian race.—*Morning Star.*

A PASTOR'S REPUTATION.

A minister's character is the look of his strength, and if once this is sacrificed, he is, like Samson, shorn of his hair—a poor, feeble, faltering creature, the pity of his friends, and the derision of his enemies. I would not have had ministers screened, nor would I have good ones maligned. When a preacher of righteousness has stood in the way of sinners and walked in the counsel of the ungodly, he should never again open his lips in the great congregation until his repentance is as notorious as his sin. But while his character is unsullied, his friends should preserve it with as much care against the tongue of the slanderer, as they would his life against the hand of the assassin. When I consider the restless malignity of the great enemy of God and holiness, and add to this his subtlety and craft—when I consider how much his malice would be gratified, and his schemes promoted by blackening the character of the ministers of the gospel—when I consider what multitudes of creatures there are who are his vassals, and under his influence—creatures so destitute of moral principle, and so filled with venomous spite against religion, as to be prepared to go any lengths in maligning the righteous, and especially their ministers, I can account for it on no other ground than that of a special interposition of Providence, that the reputation of Christian pastors is not more frequently attacked by slander and destroyed by calumny. But probably we see in this, as in other cases, that wise arrangement of Providence by which things of delicacy and consequence are preserved, by calling forth greater solicitude for their safety. Church-members should, therefore, be tremblingly alive to the importance of defending their minister's character. They should neither expect to see him perfect, nor hunt after his imperfections. When they cannot but see his imperfections—imperfections which, after all, may be consistent with not only real, but eminent piety—they should not take pleasure in either magnifying or looking at them, but make all reasonable excuse for them, and endeavor to lose sight of his infirmities in his virtues, as they do the spots of the sun amid the blaze of radiance with which they are surrounded.—*John Angel James.*

JEW IN CHINA.

The *Jewish Chronicle* gives the following account of a community of Jews in the interior of China, said to be from an officer of Jewish extraction in the British service.

"At the breaking out of the English war with China he received his commission as lieutenant, and went to the seat of war, and served under command of Hollins. Our friend was assigned the command of a small vessel carrying three guns, for the purpose of penetrating the rivers and streams of the interior, and preventing any hostile assemblages. He seldom advanced further than five or six miles from the principal rendezvous; but on one occasion, tired of cruising about in the same place so often and meeting no opposition, he proceeded ten miles up the river, and still found no hindrance. He sailed until he had advanced about thirty miles into the interior of the country, passing several cities and villages, but seeing no fortifications; and not being molested in any way, he was about to retrace his steps, when, looking ahead, he thought that there appeared something in the distance resembling a fortification. He determined to ascertain the nature of the place, and headed the ship to it. When he approached he was surprised by seeing multitudes of Chinese junks and other small boats approaching the vessel. The deck was then cleared for action in the case of a fight. As the enemy approached nearer to the ship they let fly a cloud of weapons and stones, which, did no injury. The lieutenant, thinking to scatter them, had one of his guns loaded with grape-shot, and poured it into them where the crowd appeared thickest. It must have done considerable execution, for now they raised a yell. They attempted to climb up the sides, but were met on every side by the sailors. Now the fight began in real earnest. With all their guns employed, it was as much as the Britisher could do to keep the natives

from gaining a footing on board of the vessel. The Chinese fought desperately; their leader—a tall, majestic-looking man, wielding a long straight sword—by his presence seemed to inspire them with increased bravery. Seeing this, an attempt was made to capture him. He had effected a footing on-board for himself and a few followers—more were swarming up. A shot through his canoe cut off his retreat; there was no hope for them but fighting till more came to their relief. After a brief struggle, the capture of the chief is effected, and all the belligerents cease fighting. The British vessel then attempted to make its way out of the river; but the natives, as soon as they perceived this, raised such a yell as we never heard before, and the chief extending his hands, addressed his captors in a language which did not resemble the Chinese in any respect. The lieutenant was astounded to recognise the familiar tone of the Hebrew language. Thanks to his parents, in his youth he had received a good Hebrew education, and was able to carry on a conversation in the Hebrew language with the chief, who told him if he would give him up he would promise that they would not be molested, but permitted a free egress, and also, if he desired, he would show him the city. The officer accepted the proposition, and accompanied by him as a safeguard, and also a body of men from the ship, they visited the town. It was an immense city, surrounded on all sides by walls and fortifications, and contained over one million of inhabitants, all Jews. In no other part of the Chinese empire are there any Jews. Here they are allowed every privilege. They can carry their produce to other cities, and trade with them, but are not allowed to emigrate. They have their own laws; and their chief officer is the Jewish Rabbi, who, with twenty others, enact laws, decide disputes, and deal out justice to the inhabitants of the city. In this tribunal is vested the power of life or death, and from their decision there is no appeal. They keep a standing army of the young men of the place in order to protect their city. Their laws command the observance of the Jewish religion; but their rites and ceremonies differ from ours in many respects. They observe the Sabbath on what is to us Thursday, but still they call it the seventh day. Their synagogues are the most beautiful buildings that are to be seen in the empire. They are all built on one style, which resembles a mixture of the Gothic and Corinthian, and are ornamented by beautiful pagodas. Each synagogue is capable of holding over 2,000 worshippers, and generally consists of a large hall, with an arched roof, all of stained glass, which presents a beautiful appearance. The roof is supported by pillars of variegated marble, ornamented by fine porcelain cornices. The holy ark is a beautiful structure in itself, and is approached by nine steps of the whitest marble. On opening the doors and drawing the curtain the whole building is flooded by the light which issues forth. In every available spot inside the ark candles are placed, which are kept burning continually, but still are not seen. The effect, as may be imagined, is beautiful. In each house of worship are three 'saphorim,' which are written on pure white vellum. These are handled with the greatest care, and only by the priest himself. Women are not allowed to enter the synagogues, except on holidays and days of festivity. In the aggregate, their rules are in strict accordance with our religion, and are sensible in themselves. The military leader who had been taken prisoner, together with the priests, spared no pains to make themselves understood, explaining everything which they thought would prove interesting.

"The party spent about six hours examining the place, and then returned to the ship laden with presents, that to them were curiosities. The officer has still in his possession several cabinets, not over four feet square, which contain over 300 drawers and secret places. The most interesting curiosity which he received was a Prayer-book written in Chaldæic, on vellum, which he presented to the British Museum. Several little articles yet remain in his possession, which are highly treasured by him.

Thus a community of Israelites exists in Oriental China never heard of before, yet consisting of over 1,000,000 souls, speaking the original sacred tongue, keeping their own

laws, and possessing documents which record their history thousands of years ago."

CONVERSION OF LORD LYNDEHURST.

It is quite remarkable how many eminent statesmen turn to religion for support and comfort in the closing hours of life. It is not easy to decide whether they are true Christians but they confess their need of something better than high position, or the favor and love of men. The following sketch of Lord Lyndhurst's supposed change of heart is from the *Watchman & Reflector*:

After many years of public life and toil, he descended to retirement and to rest; and there God found him and spoke to him, and he listened, and learned, and believed, and was saved. "A wind has come out of the wilderness, which went sweeping through the Valley of Vision, and made many a dead man live. It was truly known as the 'revival.' And among other places it was heard wailing at Tunbridge Wells. Two years ago Lady Lyndhurst, by some meek, womanly stratagem, induced the ex-chancellor to attend one of the revival meetings. He was never the same man afterward. This is not a subject to be slightly dealt with; suffice it that his after life was distinguished by a deep and overshadowing solemnity, a period of painful conviction followed by intense peace, and a disposition to give the rest of his time to the great subjects of God's revelation as separated from man's device. He had rested on opinion hitherto. He came to conviction at last. Too calm for enthusiasm, he yet became the man in earnest." So writes one conversant with his change. The change in him was most perfect and beautiful, and his friends affirmed that it became "angelic" near the close. His last moments were those of the simple, and humble, and rejoicing Christian.

LITERARY.

AUTHORSHIP.—The *Figaro-Programme* publishes the following curious detail: "Alexandre Dumas, the novelist, is no longer paid by the line, but by the letter. Yes; the *San Felice*, which is now being published, is paid for at the rate of a centime a letter. We can guarantee the exactitude of this fact."

SENSATION NOVELS.—Punch's *Almanac* for 1864 has a picture of a couple of young ladies, one of whom looks up from a new book, and says: "Yes, dear, I've got the last one out, and it's perfectly delicious. A man marries his grandmother—fourteen persons are poisoned by a young and beautiful girl—forges by the dozen—robberies, hangings; in fact, full of delightful horrors."

The school books lately published by the Austrian government are printed on paper made of "corn shucks," or the leaves which protect the ear of maize. This material gives the paper a yellowish color, which medical men hold to be less fatiguing to the eye than our snowy pages.

A rich farmer's son, who had been bred at the University, came home to visit his father and mother. They having one night a couple of fowls for supper, he told them that by logic and arithmetic he could prove these two fowls to be three. "Well, let us hear," said the old man. "Why, this is one," said the scholar, "and this," he continued, "is two; two and one, you know, make three." "Since you have made it out so well," answered the old gentleman, "your mother shall have the first fowl, I will have second, and the third you may keep yourself for your great learning."

An Irishman being asked whether he did not frequently converse with a friend in Irish, replied, "No, indeed; Jerry often speaks to me in Irish, but I always answer him in English." "Why so?" "Because, you see, 'I don't want Johnny to know that I understand Irish.'"

Nothing so adorns the face as cheerfulness. When the heart is in flower, its bloom and beauty pass to the features.

The mind, like the sea, is generally most phosphorescent when most agitated.