

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL & GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

THE INGATHERING.

They are gathering in from the east and west,
The way worn and weary, seeking for rest;
They whom we loved with affection deep,
As the pillow is pressed by many a head,
A sleeping th' untroubled, the dreamless sleep.

From north and south they are coming home,
With a last "good-night" and tired moan
As the pillow is pressed by many a head,
A pillow of clay—or, a coral bed.

Ah, friends, ye weep for your loved and gone,
But weep for those who are living on,
Eagerly seeking the passing smile—
Forgetting the frown which comes ere while.

O'er your skeletons grim, and life's sorrows deep
But no more for those dead in Jesus, weep.
He knows his own, He bends his ear
They die not alone with Christ so near.

When the dark river's cross'd and no more we die,
But know thy doings,—thy reasons why—
The path was so rough, the way so steep,
Thy works mysterious; thy counsels deep,—

O then we'll bless the hand that led
These faltering steps, till "good-night" we said.
Farewell to sorrow, adieu to care
God wipes our tears—and there's no night there!
April 18th, 1864. B.

Religious.

THE SOUL-GATHERER.

THE ENEMY.

(Continued.)

Satan sets a high value on his captives. He hates you for trying to deliver them in the name of Jesus. Let his prey alone, and you may have some rest. While you are tearing it from him, he will give you none. Was your soul never scorched, as if a blast furnace had opened on it? Evil thoughts will that cruel enemy pour into your mind. He will conjure up untold temptations. Refuse to bear the brunt of them. Tell him they are *his own, not yours*. Lift them up, and cast them afar, as you would a piece of burning rocket. That which your soul neither originates nor entertains, it is *not yours*. Do not stop to analyze or mourn over the devil's darts; do not touch them, but receive and "quench" them all on the shield of faith, and pray or sing temptations down on your way to the fight again. Feel how close Jesus draws you to Him now, calls you His own, defends the member of His body, and says, "The Prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." How broad the shield He flings over you! How sweet the accents of His reassuring love, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

Did you never set out, believer, in haste and joy, with perhaps too light a heart, but still looking up with a single eye to the Master, saying, "To-day let me work in Thy garden?" All at once the remembrance of some sin of your childhood came with its sting to wound you; and then another and another issued up out of that past life, till, like a swarm of wasps, they fixed on you. Past sins of nature and of practice condemningly fastened on your soul. Each one of them said, "You are the very last that should profess to work for Him who searcheth the hearts." Desperate and discouraged you fell down at His feet. It did not unseat your pardon, nor take from you even all sense of it, but it was like to drive you from attempting to work in His service. There was no sense of His love to uphold you. There came no perfume of flowers from His garden. 'Twas as if you had stumbled over a dung-hill outside, and you could not rise again. You shook, and wept, and groaned, and loathed the inward sight of your pollution, and said, from the bottom of your heart, "Send any one to work for Thee but me!" The accuser of the brethren raised his voice. Day and night he accuses us before our God, and sometimes the sound reaches us but too nearly. He borrows an accusation from every

sin he ever tempted us to commit. He is the meanest of all foes, as well as the most cruel. But when most viciously he treads us down, he seems but to pave the way for a more triumphant ascent from the horrible pit and from the miry clay. *There is a new sight of the blood of Jesus; every stain is afresh washed away. There is a new inflowing of the Spirit of grace; every bond is broken anew.* The God of peace hath bruised Satan under our feet once more. Eagerly and humbly, with a heart broken and contrite, we press on to work again. "Here am I, send me! None can tell more plainly than I can this day what Thou canst do."

"He breaks the power of cancell'd sin,
He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood availed for me."

Satan raised the storm; Jesus ruled it. Satan would have terrified us back into the horrible pit by a fierce onset; Jesus turned the day into commemoration of His great deliverance. He must keep the memory of it fresh in His true child's heart. Ever and anon He must reproduce, in vivid outline before our eyes, the entrance to the place of woe, if He would send us still onwards as soul-gatherers. He must, at short intervals, be taking us aside to have the very letters of His imperishable written word burnt into our hearts by the fires of His pardoning heart-searching love. He has magnified His word above all His name. He held aloft no other banner in the wilderness, on the mountain-top, on the temple pinnacle fighting in His Father's name and ours, till the devil was foiled. He conquered Satan with the Old Testament Scripture, and having honoured it to the uttermost, He has bound up with it, for us, the New, as the Testament of His living, His dying, and His risen love. Let us steep our souls daily in it before we go forth to meet the adversary. Let us present our hearts like a blank sheet to receive the impress of the *whole word*. Let us not keep by favourite portions, but allow the Divine Spirit to write the ten commandments,—the doctrines,—the precepts,—the promises,—the prophecies upon our memories,—our understandings,—our affections,—our inmost souls.

The minds of some men seem to act like a prism on the truth of God. As the light leaves the throne, it is colourless, broad-spread, God-like. It descends into these narrow, sin-blinded souls of ours, to introduce here a light akin to that in which the company of the saved on high do walk. But how often does the prism of man's mind separate the several colours, and hold up one to the exclusion of the rest? Those different, yet not contradictory, elements give the Word of Truth its solidity, its beauty, its glory.

Satan knows the value of a whole Bible. He gains something if he can make us cast any part of it into the shade. He cheats us somewhat if he can make us give precedence to any part. He is trying this in the church, to subdivide her divisions. He is doing it unhindered in the world, and while it speculates it perishes. Let us keep guard around our tree of life with its everlasting roots,—Jewish stem, its Christian flowers,—and eat of all the refreshing fruits it bears, till our warfare ends. Satan is sending up his hosts in varied garb, and by how many names, to shake the faith of Britain in the written word. He knows that each converted man; be he peasant, philosopher, or peer, finds on the spot where he finds Jesus *such a mass* of internal evidence of the Bible truth as will enable him to convince many others also. And so the enemy will draw attention elsewhere. He will attack the Scripture. He will unbind it, sever book from book in value and authority. The Old and the New Testament must be parted. The geologist must go forth with his hammer, the antiquary with his lore, to see how many stones can be shaken off the rock on which the faith has stood. And will not Rome come up over all the land to offer refuge and sanctuary to those who would escape from the responsibility of judging? Satan stands all but visibly, saying, in the ear of her whose ships have carried the Bible in myriads throughout the world, Yea, hath God said? Will there not be silence in heaven to hear her answer?

The enemy is every where. His time is short. He could not, perhaps, say now to Jesus, "Art thou come to torment us before

the time?" His time is running out. His devices will multiply. Do we not hear them again erecting the cross on which Christianity, like her Head of old, shall yet be publicly dishonoured and slain? The veil is not yet withdrawn for us to see the manner of her martyrdom. Surely the kiss of betrayal is being given. For every error of the most opposite kind is set forth in the name of Christ, spangled over with gold dust stolen from the King's treasury.

(To be continued.)

Preaching out of the Pulpit.

A Christian mother told us, a few days ago, that ministers did not talk so frequently or plainly on personal religion in the family as they were accustomed to do twenty or thirty years ago, and that many mothers were troubled because so little was said to their children. The following incident, which we find in the *Presbyterian*, shows how Dr. Griffin used to work in this way:

I have a distinct remembrance of Dr. Edward Dorr Griffin. His last sermon was preached in my pulpit, on the 10th of September, 1837. His text was Jer. 31: 31—34; the subject, "Salvation taken into God's own Hand." His health was then very imperfect, and failing every day; but he preached with great energy and eloquence, nor would any have inferred from his services that he was not in the full vigor of his best days. He had come to my house Saturday morning, not a little fatigued by the ride from Newark, N. J., although it had been accomplished in less than two hours. Soon after his arrival, a lady from New York, who had been for many years his warm friend and admirer, called to see him. Though she had reached mature life, she was many years younger than Dr. Griffin, who took her affectionately by the hand as she entered the parlor, and addressing her as his "child," requested her to sit down. "I am too much exhausted," he said, "to converse with you now, but I am glad to see you, for I have a present for you." Several persons were in the room, who heard the remark, and we soon took our seats in a semi-circle about the sofa on which he sat, waiting for him to recover breath, and strength for the ceremony of making the present. After waiting in solemn silence some time, while he seemed to be breathing with difficulty, he directed his eyes to the lady, and with tenderness and solemnity of manner which I never witnessed before, he repeated the following words of Paul to the Philippians: "Be careful for nothing, but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

The venerable appearance, majestic person, hoary head, grave, paternal and affectionate utterance, made an impression which no one present will ever forget.

"And now, my dear child," said the Doctor, "on this precious truth I have been living for years, and it has been beyond all price to me. It has been my staff in these late days of physical decay, and on this I leaned as I left home this morning. I may never meet you again on earth, but I hope to find you among the redeemed and sanctified in heaven. Please to accept this wonderful truth as my parting gift."

The whole scene was more affecting and impressive than words can describe. My attention had never before been called so particularly to this passage, and had not discovered half its meaning. It is possible that the incident I have mentioned may serve to recommend it to the special notice of your readers.—*W. & R.*

INTEMPERANCE AND CRIME.

The following facts in regard to the intimate relation between intemperance and crime are vouched for reliable, and in most cases official testimony. Of 1707 persons who were arrested by the police in Albany during three months, 1800, or more than three-fourths, were known to be of intemperate habits. Of 1125 convicts in the penitentiary of the same city, 1013, or 90 per cent, were notoriously intemperate. A gentleman who has visited

most of the prisons in the United States and had much personal conference with the prisoners, says he has not found more than twenty who did not acknowledge that they had been addicted to the use of strong drink. Of 158 convicts in the Connecticut State Prison, 134, or 85 per cent., were in the habit of using ardent spirits. An official visitation of the county jails in New York in 1856 showed that in forty-seven of them at least three-fourths of the prisoners were by their own admission intemperate. In the judgment of the visitors, two-thirds of the remainder were really so, making eleven-twelfths of the whole. The conclusion from an examination of the Providence jail, the Eastern Penitentiary of Pennsylvania, and the Auburn Prison in New York was that in each case more than three-fourths of the inmates were intemperate.

In 1850 one out of every 15 drunkards in the State of New York was convicted of crime, while only one out of every 661 sober men was guilty of a breach of the law. The 60,000 intemperate persons in the State committed more crimes, by above 200, than the 2,540,000 temperate persons.

In the ten counties of New York where crime most abounds there is one grog-shop for every 240 inhabitants; whereas in the ten counties where the fewest crimes are committed there is one for every 396.

The Washingtonian movement for the reform of drunkards began in 1842. For several years before that date the average number of convicts in the State Prison in Maine was 80; for several years after it was 60. The number of convicts diminished one-fourth, while the population of the State increased one-fourth. In Vermont the reduction was greater still. In the Eastern Penitentiary of Pennsylvania the average number of convicts for six years previous was 387, for three years subsequent, 328, while the population increased nearly one-third.

Similar results have been observed in other countries. The closing of public houses on the Sabbath in England in 1849 was followed by a reduction in the average arrests in Bristol, from 4063 for the three years preceding, to 2903 for the three years subsequent; and by a similar reduction in Manchester, from 3609 to 1950, or nearly 50 per cent.

The Maine law went into effect in that State in 1851. At the March term of the police court in Portland for that year 17 indictments were found; at the corresponding term the following year but one indictment was found, and that proved to be a case of malicious prosecution. During the nine months preceding the operation of the law 279 persons were committed to the jail in Portland; during the nine months subsequent to its operation there were but 63 committed, besides liquor dealers.

These are convincing facts; would that they might also have a converting power.—*Id.*

A HINT TO ROYALTY.—An odd trick was, I hear, played the other day at Buckingham Palace. On Thursday morning last the police found on the gate posts large placards containing in bold letters these words, "These commanding premises to be let or sold, in consequence of late occupant declining business." Of course, they were at once torn down, and you may imagine the excitement caused in Scotland-yard at this violation of the sanctity of the royal palace. The police on duty in the neighborhood were doubled, and every precaution was taken to prevent repetition of this outrage. But on Monday morning the obnoxious placard was again posted. I believe there has been no repetition of the affair since; and, indeed, it is almost impossible that there should be, so careful are these sacred gate-posts now guarded.—*Cor. of Manchester Examiner.*

A GODLY LIFE.—Rest not, I entreat you, in a mere rational conviction of the truth of the gospel, but reduce your faith to practice. Embrace the gospel as well as assent to its truth. If Christianity is true, it is the most important concern in the world. Avail yourselves of its precious invitations; obey its salutary precepts, and escape from the dangers of which it gives you warning.