

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL & GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Religious.

Revivals of Religion.

How few revivals have been witnessed for several years past! Here and there a church has had a gentle refreshing from the presence of the Lord. The greater portion of our Zion has no mercy drops. General declension prevails. The love of many is waxed cold. Great numbers of professing christians neglect secret and family prayers. The prayer and conference meetings are forgotten. And some, we are grieved to say, by their disregard of God's ordinances, or outbreathing sins, wound the Saviour in the house of his friends, and bring disgrace upon their christian profession. While iniquity cometh in like a flood, the impenitent are growing harder in sin, or passing beyond the reach of mercy. Without the gracious visits of the Saviour this state of things grows more and more alarming. Why such a cloud upon Zion? In view of it perhaps some are led to say with Asaph, "Will the Lord cast off forever? And will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? Doth his promise fail forevermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" But the Lord is gracious. His promise fails not. He will be favorable to Zion. His tender mercies shall yet be manifested in the salvation of men.

Shall we not find, by a careful examination of our hearts and lives, that we are unprepared to hear from our impenitent friends the interrogation, "What shall I do to be saved?" It may be you do not possess that sense of your own sin which leads to deep humility before God. Isaiah says, "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be bowed down; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." Here is a principle which lies at the foundation of all God's works of mercy and judgment. Christians are unwilling to see their own heart sins, and feel their own littleness and vileness in the sight of a holy God. Holy work will not prosper in our hands till we "abhor ourselves, and repent as in dust and ashes."—*Christ. Era.*

The idle Word.

"I remember what you said." It was a trivial thing which had been said and thus remembered—remembered so many years. The remark recoiled upon me with strange and terrible power. What, is all we have said ten, twenty, thirty, forty years remembered? Have all our thoughtless words been indelibly stamped somewhere? Are they for ever speaking? Can they never be recalled? Are they registered for the final account? This gift of speech, how much it is abused. I do not now mean in the way of violent, profane, malicious, reproachful, or bitter language; but in the daily intercourse of life, how much we allow the superficial to take the place of the genuine, the trivial for the earnest, the unmeaning for the true. What a stream of aimless talk flows from the lips whose chief fault is that it is aimless. How many idle words are uttered; blameworthy, because that moment, that occasion, given but once and for ever gone, was not better improved. How much that is real is left unsaid, while we sport with unmeaning pleasure instead; yet they are caught up by deathless memories, show their ignoble harvests, and will one day confront to our shame.

The "idle word" was not beneath the admonition of Christ, because it not only frets away all our seriousness and vigor, but shallows those social intimacies, which are means to quicken, to improve and to bless.

Do something.

Immortal souls are in danger! Souls for whom Christ bled and died; for whom angels gaze in pity, and for whom "God waits to be gracious." They do not or cannot realize their peril, but madly plunge on.

Can nothing be done for sinners? Much can be done—every thing can be done, and by you. You are permitted to approach a fellow-mortal face to face, pray with him, weep over him, and point him to Calvary.

"Ah, but I have no talent for the work," you exclaim.

"No talent!" Do you not have sufficient talent to transact business, provide for your family, buy, sell, labor, in fine, to perform any of the multifarious duties of life?

But you add, "I am naturally timid and retiring."

"Timid and retiring!" Were your neighbor's house in flames, and the lives of his wife and little ones threatened, would you speak of your "timidity?" Rather, would you not rush into the burning structure like a hero, and rescue them if possible? If you would do all this for their bodies, ought you not to do infinitely more for their souls?

"But the majority of people know religion is valuable already," you reply.

So a good name is "valuable," yet thousands forfeit it by the commission of crime. All understand the value of wealth, yet many squander it and become beggars. Nothing is more desirable than health, yet nothing is more recklessly thrown away through neglect and imprudence.

"Bibles and churches are accessible to all," you reply in conclusion.

So are dram-shops, theatres, gambling-houses, race-courses, dens of infamy. In fact they outnumber churches more than twenty to one. Unite this with the fact that "men love darkness rather than light," and the demand for earnest, persevering personal effort will be obvious. Men do not require urging to do wrong; but they do require a vast amount of urging to do right.

God had a work for us to do, else we had never had existence. It is a sublime belief, that nothing is created in vain. From the blade of grass beneath our feet up to the uncounted worlds that roll in space, all exist for a purpose. Nothing stands still, nothing ceases to grow. The acorn which we tossed carelessly aside when a boy has become a giant oak.

"If all nature labors and grows, shall not the christian? If nature performs the Maker's will, why not the child of God?"

Arouse thee, O christian! A few more days of toil and the crown and harp will be thine. For "he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." But ever remember that "he that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

Character.

A man's character is the aggregate of all the dispositions, tastes, purposes, and habits of his soul; whatever helps to constitute his moral identity. This, slowly made up, it may be, changing quite imperceptibly, perhaps, through years, is finally the least yielding of all things. At first it may be almost as shifting as the folds of the morning's mist. You cannot tell, amid the vicissitudes of childish years, what form it will finally assume; and yet at last it looms up before you, outlined as clear and definite as that silver-edged border of the thunder-head, pencilled on the distant sky, which you can carry with you in memory through years to come. You cannot tell, perhaps, how it was formed, what silent, invisible influences moulded it, or from what sources its elements were derived. Just as the morning's sun will drink up by its millions of beams millions of dew-drops, gathering them from lake and cloud from forest leaf and mossy bed, from steaming rottenness and fragrant flower, so from countless sources are drawn the elements of our moral life, from the examples we witness, the opinions we hear, the scenes through which we pass, the principles set before us or adopted by ourselves, the plans we form, the books we read, the pleasures we seek, the very objects of nature, of art, of providence or grace, that pass before our eyes.

But when these have yielded what they have to bestow, the liquid gift crystallizes, like the jewels and diamonds of what we might almost call the bedding granite; diamonds which become so hardened and unyielding that the blow that would make any impression would suffice to crush them to atoms. The character becomes less and less pliable, and ere the ordinary period of life is past, we feel that the age of a Methuselah filled with ad-

verse and counteracting influences, would be powerless to change. If graceless then, it is graceless forever. If not yet moulded, it is thenceforth forever rough and rude, rugged and harsh, stern and forbidding. Mountains may be levelled, ocean cliffs may be worn away by the tides, the pyramids may crumble, but the character is still the same. The tides of passion only plough that channel deeper which is already worn, and habit only entrenches itself more strongly between the cliff-bound barriers that it has formed itself.

The Seven Sabbath Miracles of Jesus.

Prof. Ellicott, in one of the notes to his Fifth Lecture on the Life of Christ, gives the following list of the miracles of our Lord, which are particularly noticed as having been performed on the Sabbath. They are here arranged according to Dr. Robinson's Harmony of the Gospels. They are all miracles of healing:

I. Of the demoniac in the synagogue at Capernaum. (Mark 1: 21-28; Luke 4: 31-37.)

II. Of Peter's wife's mother, of fever. (Matt. 8: 14-17; Mark 1: 29-31; Luke 4: 38-39.)

III. Of the infirm man at the pool of Bethesda. (John 5: 1-16.)

IV. Of the man with the withered hand. (Matt. 12: 9-14; Mark 3: 1-6; Luke 6: 6-11.)

V. Of the man born blind in Jerusalem. (John 9: 1-41.)

VI. Of the woman who had been bowed down for eighteen years. (Luke 13: 10-17.)

VII. Of the man sick with the dropsy. (Luke 14: 1-7.)

Ellicott makes that here numbered as the third to be the first of all. The rest he arranges in the same order as Dr. Robinson.

John Wesley a Calvinist.

Mr. Simeon, about three or four years after he was ordained, had an opportunity of conversing familiarly with the great and venerable leader of the Arminians in England; and wishing to improve the occasion to the uttermost, he addressed Mr. Wesley nearly in the following words:

"Sir, I understand that you are called an Arminian; I have been sometimes called a Calvinist, and therefore I suppose we are to draw daggers; but before I consent to begin the combat, with your permission, I will ask you a few questions—not from impertinent curiosity, but for real instruction."

Permission being very readily and kindly granted, the young minister proceeded to ask: "Pray, sir, do you feel yourself a depraved creature—so depraved that you would never have thought of turning to God, if God had not first put it into your heart?"

"Yes," says the veteran, "I do indeed."

"And do you utterly despair of recommending yourself to God by anything that you can do, and look for salvation solely through the blood and righteousness of Christ?"

"Yes, solely through Christ."

"But, sir, suppose you were at first saved by Christ, are you not, somehow or other, to save yourself afterwards by your own work?"

"No; I must be saved by Christ from first to last."

"Allowing, then, that you were first turned by the grace of God, are you not in some way or other, to help yourself by your own power?"

"No."

"What then are you to be upheld every hour and every moment by God, as much as an infant in its mother's arms?"

"Yes, altogether."

"And is all your hope in the grace and mercy of God, to preserve you unto his heavenly kingdom?"

"Yes, I have no hope but in him."

"Then, sir, with your leave, I will put up my dagger again; for this is all my Calvinism; this is my election, my justification by faith, my final perseverance; it is in substance all that I hold, and as I hold it; and therefore, if you please, instead of searching out terms and phrases to be a ground of contention between us, we will cordially unite in those things wherein we agree."

Days of Life.

"A pleasant day," smiled the infant as it nestled in its mother's lap, and gazed on earth and sky and all things beautiful.

"A bright day," said the laughing child, as she played in the fragrant woods, and built with mosses and flowers little cottages for the fairies, that she thought would visit them that night.

"A beautiful day," whispers the maiden as she watches the glowing sun sink calmly to his rest, while love and hope "live sunnily in the gardens of her memory."

"A happy day," thought the bride as she knelt before the white robed priest; for the breath of orange flowers is sweet to all, and the cares of life, when viewed with clasped hands laid upon a stronger arm, seem light as the clouds that pass before a summer sun, or ripples that break in the brook's wild way.

"A lovely day," mused the mother, as her first-born lay in infant helplessness upon her knee. She watched her husband's smile, she felt his fond caress, and her heart and lips together said, "God has been merciful to me!"

"A weary day," thought the watcher, as she stood by her husband's bed, and ministered to his many wants with a woman's gentle hand, binding up the while his drooping spirit with hopeful words that made her own heart bleed afresh.

"A sorrowful day," wept the widowed one, as she knelt beside the shrouded form of him who never before had been unmindful of her tears. But the fevered head could turn no more, and the tossing arms were still.

"A peaceful day," said the aged woman, for though she remembered her youth's bright home, her departed parents, and the dearly loved one who went from her ere the frost of age came on, she thought on bright hopes bestowed—on blessings given—on the rest she soon should gain.

"A joyous day," smiled earth's way-worn pilgrim, for her hours of earth were almost numbered, and she saw approaching the band of angels that should bear her to her Father—to everlasting joy.

"A glorious day," sang the rejoicing one, for she went to her long, long home, where the weary are at rest.

The Defences of Canada.

HOUSE OF LORDS,
Monday, Feb. 20, 1865.

Lord Lyveden asked what were the intentions of the Government with regard to the defences of Canada. The report of Colonel Jervois showed the colony to be in a very undetended state. No reliance was to be placed upon the peaceful purposes of the United States. They had given notice that the treaty as to the armed force on the Lakes should cease, and they cherished the Monroe doctrine. There were only two lines of policy open: one was to withdraw our troops and say we left Canada to take care of herself. The other was to declare that we would defend her. The sending out of detachments of troops was useless.

Earl DeGrey deprecated the tone of the noble lord in speaking of the United States. As to the report of Colonel Jervois, when it was received a correspondence was opened with Canada stating that the Government looked to the colony to provide funds for the defence of Quebec and Montreal. The Home Government would take a share in the work. The balloting for militia had commenced, and the colonial Government had expressed its willingness to take the larger share of the expense.

The Earl of Derby said the state of our relations with the United States was most critical, yet all that had been done by the Government was to ask for 50,000*l.*, a fourth part of the expense of the defences declared by Colonel Jervois to be necessary. The danger was imminent, and it would be a lasting disgrace if Canada were separated from England, not by her own act, but by the forceful invasion of a hostile country. Our neutrality had been more favourable to the North than to the South.

Earl Granville justified the course which had been taken by the Government. As to the Lakes, it was only in November the Govern-