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A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL & GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

To the Graduating Class of '66.

D. W. E.

All things advance; slowly the glad earth nears
Her shining goal adown the ages set—
The fair result of all God's ripened years
Forbid the heart to cherish long regret,
We may not pause while broad creation hears,
The dirge of wrong, the triumphs of the cross,
To moan a useless song of change and loss.

But as ye go the cycle of whose days,
Drawn through the darkness by a hidden hand,
Bears you to seek life's gifts in other ways
We give the thoughts that parting hours demand,
And more,—mid present cares the mind delays
To muse on past conditions pleasing well,
And span the future with a friendly spell.

We breath no idle prayer that stainless bliss
May bless you with an ever-varying joy,
Nor that in life's rough battle ye may miss
The myriad foes that mortal hopes destroy;
But may indulgent Heaven grant you this—
That in the years before you ye may gain
A heritage of danger, toil, and pain.

Danger that waits on life to cause it worth
All this vain seeming effort but to live;
Labor that makes a harvest field of earth,
And those still lonely hours that give
To the strong soul a new celestial birth,
Makin' it mighty in its power to bear,
And godlike in its will to do and dare.

Scorn not the gift of life; a purpose grand
Beneath all seeming evil shall ye find.
The present moment treasures in its hand
The gathered wealth of all the years behind,
And in the eye of hoary time ye stand,
The heirs of manhood, natures noblest fee
Ringed with the glories of the life to be.

But live,—let strong desire ambition rise [coil,
To shun the fate from which your minds re-
Stoop not to be the thing your souls despise
Through craven shrinkings from a noble toil;
But grandly labor for the good ye prize,
Till that shall end the danger and the strife,
Which is not death, but life, eternal life.
Acadia College.

Religious.

"Thy House."

BY REV. T. R. STEVENSON.

Many texts suffer from what may be called theological amputation. Imagine a noble tree from which a bough is broken, time after time, by various mischievous hands, and you have therein a sample of the treatment to which numerous passages of the Bible are subjected. Parts are taken from them which seriously affect their meaning. A verse is wrested from its connection, and quoted in favour of a doctrine which its writer neither believed nor taught. As Archbishop Whately said, "Any man of tolerable good sense in reading any book—except the Bible—which he is anxious to understand thoroughly, does not dip into it at random, reading a scrap here and a scrap there, or taking single sentences or half sentences apart from the context, but considers, while reading, what is the writer's design, who and how circumstanced were those he was writing for, and what comes before and what follows each passage? The way in which many read the Scriptures is just the reverse."

Instances of this will readily occur to every observant person. To wit, how frequently are the following words quoted, "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." But how different is Paul's assertion when given in full. He immediately adds, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." What a wide alteration is thus effected in the meaning of the words; instead of being an acknowledgment of ignorance, they are a recognition of divine communication. Take a second example, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." Such, according to some, is the Saviour's declaration; but the thought at once suggests itself, that to love one another

was not a new commandment. It was old, as old as Sinai; the law enjoined it. What then? Was our Lord in error? Certainly not, but his careless disciples are in error in quoting what He said. Take the whole of the passage, and the meaning is clear. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." Love as deep, pure, self-sacrificing as His was new; hence the injunction to emulate it was new also.

Not to multiply specimens of the unjust treatment which revelation has in this respect to endure, we would, as one other illustration, advert to the well-known language, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." This is what Paul and Silas are made to say to the anxious jailer of Philippi. The conclusion of the admonition is unceremoniously omitted. Three other words form their reply to the question put to them, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts xvi. 31). It is rarely you hear the latter part of the text quoted; eminently suggestive is it. We proceed to point out some of the teachings which it contains.

1. In saving us, God gives us more than we ask. He exceeds our expectations. This He often does in his dealings with us generally. Thus was it with Abraham. When promised a son in his old age, true to his paternal instincts, he could not forget the child he already had, and he cried out, "O that Ishmael might live before Thee." That Ishmael might be spared, and enjoy the providential favour of the Almighty, was all that he asked. But God not only granted that, but replied, "As for Ishmael, I have heard thee; I have blessed him, and I will make of him a great nation." Thus was it with Jacob. When he fled from the presence of Esau, he declared, "If the Lord will be with me, and keep me, and give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, then shall the Lord be my God." The common necessities of life were what he sought. But mark how Jehovah exceeded his expectations. When, years after, he returned, he confessed gratefully, "With this staff (only) I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands." Thus was it with Job. In his dire misery, he entreated the aid of Heaven, and he had more than he sought. "The Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." Thus was it with Solomon. "Wisdom and knowledge," in order that he might rule well, was his praiseworthy request. It was granted, with the addition of "riches, wealth, honor, long life, such as none had before." Thus was it with the two Marys. They went, in the dim light of early morn, to honour the remains of Jesus with sweet spices. They hoped to find a dead Christ, but they had what was better, a living Christ. They went to minister to Him, but He ministered to their comfort and joy. The blind man, too, at "the gate called Beautiful," "expected something" in the way of alms; but he had more. "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk."

Now, as it was in these instances, so it is in reference to man's salvation. "What must I do to be saved?" said the jailer. "I." That was all; he did not ask about others. But the apostles were fuller in their reply than he was in his question. They told him to believe, and he should be saved, and his house; that is, if this household believes, it shall be saved as well as thou. It is always so. In saving us, God gives us more than we ask. He outdoes our largest desires.

Salvation consist in three things—getting good, being good, and doing good. Look briefly at each of these blessings—pardon, holiness, and usefulness, and it will be seen that the statement under consideration as to the divine generosity is correct. In getting good, our expectations are exceeded. We go to God asking Him to forgive us. Knowing our deep guilt, we apply, with fear and trembling, to Him for pardon. He grants our prayer. When the prodigal son thought of going home again, he resolved to say, "Make me as one of thy hired servants." To be a slave was all he aspired to; sonship he dare not seek. But so convincing was the proof given of his father's love when he ran to meet him, that, when the returned wanderer spoke, he did not, as he intended, crave the position of a servant. He saw, from the

manifestations of parental affection, that that would never be allowed: that something far better than servitude awaited him. Moreover, not merely did his father welcome him, but called for robe, ring, and shoes, feasting, and mirth to celebrate the event. Beautiful and accurate parable of our heavenly Father's treatment of his prodigal sons. When we return to Him, He receives us not as slaves; but "behold what manner of love the Father hath showed us, that we should be called the sons of God." He not only pardons, but pardons fully and generously, calling on angels to rejoice over one that repenteth. "Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more against you." Not remembered—*even!* "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." As Wordsworth says—

"I knelt before Thy gracious throne,
And asked for peace with suppliant knee;
And peace was given, not peace alone,
But truth, and joy, and ecstasy."
"Peace" only is asked; it is given, but "truth, and joy, and ecstasy" also.

In being good, God gives more than we ask. Temptation assails us, and we go to Him who alone can aid us, beseeching Him to give us the victory over it. He hears us, and our joyful confession is, "In all these we are more than conquerors." We gain by every temptation which we overcome. New love to Him for whose sake we fight against sin, new confidence in his promises, new sympathy with others who are tried, and new strength with which to triumph over evil in the future, are the blessed fruits of every sin over which we are victorious.

In doing good, how often are our expectations exceeded. Sometimes, we grant, hope is crushed by reason of apparent failure. You try to be spiritually useful to certain of your fellow-creatures, but your efforts seem vain. But while you thus look at the dark remember also the bright side. It on various occasions your prayers and labours wear a discouraging aspect, call to mind other seasons when your success was greater than your most sanguine expectations. If one field has proved unproductive, others have yielded crops which you did not think you should live to see; moreover, the results of Christian work are often of a higher nature than the worker expected. Sunday schools are an apt exemplification of this. When good Robert Raikes collected some of the outcast children of Gloucester, his object at first was mainly a secular one. His aim was to give them the rudiments of education and to keep them, at least once a week, out of harm's way. Little did he think "whereunto this would grow." Could he have been privileged with prophetic vision to glance onward from that time to this, behold the right impressions made, the holy influences communicated, the immortal souls saved by Sabbath schools, he would have been lost in wonder. God has indeed given him more than he asked. When we take all these facts into account, remembering how in respect of pardon, holiness, and usefulness God exceeds our expectations, we need not marvel that the apostle should ascribe glory to "Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we can ask or think?"

2. One man's salvation will lead to that of another.—Some Biblical critics explain the verse before us thus—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and not only shalt thou be saved, but thou wilt be led to make such efforts, to use such means as shall result in the salvation of thy household." The construction commonly put upon the passage and the one already adopted by us in our previous remarks seems more likely to be correct than this. Nevertheless, the interpretation, if not contained in, is suggested by the text, and it affirms a great truth in respect of all who are converted. They are anxious for those around them, and by persuasion and prayer seek to bring them to Christ.

How comes this to pass? What is it that makes the saved wishful to see others saved? One word explains it—Love. Love cannot be inactive. It must express itself. Like murder, it will out. The gospel produces love to God and love to man, and this insures the desire and the attempt to bring the lost to the Saviour. Reader, if you imagine that you are "born again," accepted of God, prepared for heaven, while you feel little or no earnest solicitude for the souls of others, take alarm.

Be sure of it that indifference and indolence are no fruits of the Spirit, "if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his" Repentingly ask his blessing. Implore the influences which come from above, and then "go work to-day in" his "vineyard."

"First seek thy Saviour out, and dwell
Beneath the shadow of his roof,
Till thou have scanned his features well,
And know Him for the Christ by proof.

"Then, potent with the spell of heaven,
Go, and thy erring brother gain;
Entice him home to be forgiven,
Till he, too, see his Saviour plain."

3. A man's salvation must be beneficial to those near him. There is a sense in which it is true that if a man is saved, his household will be likewise. Through his conversion they are saved from bad influences, saved from miseries, saved from annoyances which otherwise would fall to their lot. We cannot become better spiritually without being better socially. Peace with God produces good-will towards men.

4. One man's salvation is illustrative of all men's salvation. If "thy house" is to be "saved" it must, like thee, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." There is but one way. The same means must be adopted by every one.

In itself one man's salvation is a specimen of all men's salvation. Not that there are absolutely no differences. There must needs be this because of diversity in character and temperament. But in the main spiritual history is identical in all. As it is with the physical, so is it with the spiritual. Men's countenances, height, carriage, size, and weight vary. But all have the same members, organs, and functions. Study one human body and you know every other. Even so; though there are minor differences in the development of religious life, it is, on the whole, the same wherever found. This is why God's servants who live in this remote time find their thoughts and feelings so well expressed by David's psalms. For the same reason the allegory of the Bedford prisoner awakes a response in every devout soul. Bunyan's doubts, trials, and triumphs are ours also.

In the means of its attainment one man's is an example of all men's salvation. Faith in Christ is the divinely-appointed and unalterable condition of forgiveness and regeneration. Seek Christ and He will bless thee, "and thy house."

For the Christian Messenger.

Old eyes on young Nova Scotia.

No. 5.

OUR WORTHIES.

Dear Messenger,—

"Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils for wherein is he to be accounted of," is a sentiment which it takes not many years experience of life to verify as a sad but most true principle of conduct. It is needful, in order to save from earthly idolatry in the hurtful form of Hero Worship. But with this truth as our shield, it is still our duty, our privilege and joy, to esteem and thank God for all He gives us in the way of noble example, of spiritual guides, and especially of those men who full of faith, and prayer, and labor stamp their impress on a community, or an age. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptists have had such men; and it is well and profitable to remember and to honor them.

They were men who bore the burthen and heat of the day—they laboured, and we are entered into their labors. It is easy to do the work assigned us, when compared with what they encountered and performed. The world was all against them. "Bonds and imprisonment" sometimes, and often open opposition and hate threatened their loving advance on ignorance and wickedness with the message of peace and good will on their lips and in their hearts—they endured, and prayed, and conquered. Theirs must have been that sure faith that hopes against hope. It was of a true Missionary character—often it must to those aged and faithful pioneers have seemed as unlikely—in a human point of view,—that the men of their generation should receive their message as that the disciples of