

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL & GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

NEW SERIES.
Vol. XI, No. 32.

HALIFAX, N. S., WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 8, 1866.

WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XXX, No. 32.

Poetry.

What then?

What then? Why then another pilgrim song;
And then a hush of rest Divinely granted;
And then a thirsty stage, (Ah me, so long!)
And then a brook, just where it most is wanted.

What then? The pitching of the evening tent;
And then, perchance, a pillow rough and thorny;
And then some sweet and tender message, sent
To cheer the faint for to-morrow's journey.

What then? The wailing of the midnight wind;
A feverish sleep; a heart oppress'd and aching;
And then, a little water-cruise to find
Close by my pillow, ready for my waking.

What then? I am not careful to enquire:
I know there will be tears, and fears, and sorrow;
And then, a loving Saviour drawing nigher,
And saying, "I will answer for the morrow."

What then? For all my sins His pardoning grace;
For all my wants and woes His loving kindness;
For darkest shades, the shining of God's face;
And Christ's own hand to lead me in my blindness.

What then? A shadowy valley, lone and dim;
And then a deep and darkly rolling river;
And then a flood of light—a seraph hymn—
And God's own smile, for ever and for ever!

Religious.

The Revival of French Protestantism.

M. Guizot's new volume of "Meditations on the Present State of the Christian Religion" is (says *Christian Work*) a broad and powerfully-drawn picture of our time. While he shows the innumerable forces of the anti-Christian army mustered to the fight, and gives admirably impartial portraits of its various leaders, he says:—"Let not the adversaries of Christianity deceive themselves, they have declared war to the death against it, but they have in nowise to do with a dying man!" Speaking of the awakening of religion among French Protestants thirty or forty years ago, and of the men God then raised up, he says:—"It was from the intrinsic and permanent value of the doctrines which they preached that they drew their strength and credit. They had also another power, born and developed in Christianity alone; they had a holy passion for the salvation of souls . . . which was the very life of our Lord Jesus Christ, which passed from his example and precept into the life of his first disciples, and which, across all the diversity of times, peoples, manners, opinions, has ever remained the characteristic feature and the inspiring breath of the Christian genius. This breath animated the men who, in our days, have attempted and succeeded in reanimating in Protestant France the Christian faith. Their zeal was exercised in a small sphere, their names have been but little known; what spectators, readers, or public know the deeds of Neff, Bost, Pyt, Gonthier, Andezet, Cook, Wilks, Haldane? But also, in the days of Tacitus and Pliny, who knew what was done by Peter, Paul, John, Matthew, Philip—the unknown disciples of a Master himself unknown, who conquered the world? These Christian missionaries of our time cared not for their obscurity, they had no literary pretensions, they sought for the triumph of no political idea, of no special system of ecclesiastical organisation, of no plan of their own work in which self-love could seek its gratification; the salvation of souls was their own passion and their own aim; they looked upon themselves as humble servants, upon whom was incumbent to remind men of the too much forgotten promises of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ." (May the Lord raise us up such!) Of Catholicism he says:—"The present perils of Catholicism are evident. It was developed and constituted in times essentially different from ours. It has trouble in adapting itself to the principles, and to the intellectual, moral, and social requirements of our time. Its adversaries think and say that it will never do so. The greater part of indifferent or uncertain spectators—and they are very numerous—incline to believe that on this point its adversaries are right."

Patriotism is too often the hatred of other countries, disguised as the love of our own.

A Bramho on Christianity.

The *Friend of India* informs us that Baboo Khesub Chunder Sen, the apostle of the Bramhos, lately delivered an extempore lecture to his countrymen in the theatre of the Calcutta Medical College on "Jesus Christ—Europe and Asia." He sketched the state of the world at the birth of Christ, the life and death of the Saviour of the world, and the progress of the Church till the Reformation and of modern missions thereafter. As a Bramho, "avowedly differing from the orthodox opinions of popular Christianity," he used language like that of Channing and the better class of Unitarians. He said—"humanity was groaning under a deadly malady and was on the verge of death; a remedy was urgently needed to save it. Jesus Christ was thus a necessity of the age; he appeared in the fulness of time. It was from no selfish impulse, from no spirit of mistaken fanaticism, that He bravely and cheerfully offered Himself to be crucified on the cross. He laid down His life that God might be glorified. (Hear, hear.) I have always regarded the cross as a beautiful emblem of self-sacrifice unto the glory of God, one which is calculated to quicken the higher feelings and aspirations of the heart and to purify the soul, and I believe there is not a heart, how callous and hard soever it may be, that can look with cold indifference on that grand and significant symbol." (Applause.) Referring to the Martyrs, he said—"It is such examples of martyr devotion which are calculated to dispel from our minds all cowardice, fickleness and inconstancy and to make us feel that truth is dearer than life itself." (Applause.) In vivid terms he praised Luther and condemned Popery. He used such language as this, "Is there a single soul in this large assembly who would scruple to ascribe extraordinary greatness and supernatural moral heroism to Jesus Christ and him crucified? (Applause.) Was not he who by his wisdom illumined, and by his power saved a dark and wicked world—was not he who has left us such a priceless legacy of divine truth and whose blood has wrought such wonders for eighteen hundred years,—was not he above ordinary humanity? (Cheers.) Blessed Jesus, immortal child of God! For the whole world he lived and died. May the world appreciate him and follow his precepts!" (Applause.) If even a hundred of the Bramhists who applauded these sentences are honest men, Brahminism has passed far beyond Theodore Parker and is near to the Kingdom of Heaven. The speaker we believe to be sincere. Of how many of his followers can we say the same?

The State and Religious Liberty.

"Render, therefore, unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things which are God's."

There is then something in man which belongs not to the State, and which is beyond the grasp of any tyranny; there is a region in which God rules alone, and at the threshold of which the civil power is bound to stay its foot. It is not true that faith, like tribute money, is to be imposed by the sovereign, be he who he may; it is a matter for the individual soul alone. The State has no right of inquisition into our relations with God; it can neither form nor break the sacred bond; so soon as it trespasses on this holy ground, it loses its claim to obedience and the meanest slave is then bound to resist Caesar, that he may render to God that which is God's alone. The Gospel does not elevate piety alone into this higher region of the life, but the whole moral being and all the springs and issues of conscience. Thus, at the voice of Christ rises, amidst the overthrow of all dispositions, the everlasting rock against which they shall dash themselves in pieces, and which shall be the holy bulwark of moral freedom. The theocratic and the pagan city will fall together. The time is past when the representative of the civil power was also the representative of God, and when creeds and ceremonies were imposed by decree like the ordinances of public safety. The sword for the State, persuasion for religion; force for the one, free utterance for the other; thus is laid down the first condition of religious liberty. The two spheres are distinct, but there is constant com-

munication between them by means of influence. Thus, the State is to be entirely transformed under the leavening action of the new principles. Its progress will be in exact proportion to its respect for conscience in all which concerns religion. The Christian State, *par excellence*, is that which, most thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the Gospel, intermeddles the least with directly religious interests. Long and severe lessons of experience were needed before these great truths, contained germinally in the maxim of Jesus, triumphed over the prejudices of the ancient world. But they have been, nevertheless, the true inspiration of all the noble battles of conscience and of truth. Martyrdom has ever been a sublime demonstration of the impotence of material force at issue with faith. The martyr's superiority to torture has vindicated the liberty of souls. "How," said Tertullian, "shall I not render to God that which is God's? I, who in so much as I am a Christian, am His image; a medal stamped with His likeness." Assuredly he is a free man who feels himself made in the image of God, and belonging to God alone. His independence toward Caesar assumes a religious character, and his rights are inviolable because they are founded upon his duties.—*Jesus Christ: His Times, Life, and Work, by E. de Pressense.*

Delusive.

Sometimes we are prompted to little acts of kindness, to our friends and neighbors, that are wholly unselfish. Perhaps, when we retire at night, we say: "That poor woman is in trouble, and I must go and see her to-morrow," or, "I must inquire if the B's are not in a suffering condition, and if they are, I will help them."

To-morrow comes with its cares, and our good resolves are forgotten, or put aside for a more convenient time.

I was deeply impressed, a few years ago, in a conversation with an old man, one who had dandled me on his knee in my infancy, who had left this place and not returned till more than twenty years had elapsed. He staid a week with us, and that was one of the best weeks we ever lived. It has done us good ever since. There is scarcely a day passes in which we do not meditate on some of the good things Mr. Gwinn told us. He told me if I was ever prompted to do a kind, unselfish deed, not to put aside the still sweet voice, but rise up and do it; that it was the prompting of the Holy Spirit—that, perhaps in answer to some pleading prayer of the broken hearted, or the sorrowing, he was granting that prayer, and making us the instrument in accomplishing it.

We had never thought of this before. Christ and the blessed angels making even us instrumental in working for them!

It was not long after this until a young man employed on a freight train, by a misstep the gray dawn of the morning, fell between the cars, and was cut to pieces. A telegram was sent to his parents. We were neighbors, though not intimate, and when the sad news reached us, I sat down horror-stricken, leaning my head on my hand. I thought of his lonely old parents—he was his old mother's darling and pride. She was left desolate, crushed, felled to the earth by the dreadful blow.

Instantly there was a tugging at my heart. I was drawn towards her as if by main force. I said, "To-morrow I will go there—it would be intrusive now, to look upon her sorrow—tears will alleviate the keenness of her distress." Stronger and stronger was I drawn towards her! Something said, "To-morrow a crowd will be around her, curiosity will be excited, people will be wondering how they will bear it, and go and stand, and stare, and look on—she needs you now."

I put on my cloak and hood would, saying I go across the woodland and meadow, and reach there about the same time the man who bore the telegram would, and ride round the winding road. I was just crossing the brook, perhaps forty rods below the house, when the blow fell. I heard the shriek—the piercing, heart-rending shriek that almost froze the blood in my veins!

The first words from her pallid lips were—"Oh, I am so thankful that you have come!"

Then, while she clung to my neck and moaned out her sorrow on my bosom, it was mine to weep with her in sympathy. There is no comfort for one so utterly bereft; in the first tumult of their grief, tears are their best solace.

I felt glad that, perhaps, the good angel had put the desire into my heart to go there then.

Another time I had been thinking all the morning of a poor woman who lived beyond the village, and after the work was all done up, I thought, perhaps she was in need, or wanting to see me, so persistently did thoughts of her cling to me. In a neighborly way, just as all people do in country neighborhoods, I filled a little basket with things that are good in all families, and went over to see Eunice. When I rapped there was no response, and I opened the door quietly and looked in. The poor woman was leaning her head on a table, and taking a real good comfortable cry. Her husband was absent on a drunken spree, and they were left in that winter weather without provisions or wood. The two babies were cross and half sick, and Eunice's poor head was bursting with pain, while a worse pain was breaking her heart.

As soon as she saw me, up went both hands—poor, cold, glad hands, ready to clasp me, and the first words were, "Oh, I'm not ashamed before you! I've been praying all this morning to see you!"

I could sit all day and tell of instances like these. I do believe God uses humble means often to aid in bringing about His wishes, and in answering pleading prayers put up in faith. I am glad to believe that it is so. If it is delusion, it does me good to be thus deluded.—*Arthur's Home Magazine.*

Influence of social position on the duration of life.

It is said proverbially that poverty favors longevity, because the poor are not subjected to the bad consequences of luxury and wealth. Dr. Majer shows the folly of the popular dictum. It has been proved by the researches of Benoiton, D. Chatauneuf, De Vilerme, Casper, and others, that the value of life is less among the impoverished than the rich. Thus, of an equal number of infants of the same age double the number will die of the poorer than of the wealthier class. Where there is the greatest misery there is the greatest mortality. According to Casper's the mean duration of life among the better classes of Berlin is fifty years; but among the paupers, thirty-two years only. The same writer compares the death rate of noble houses given in the *Almanach de Gotha* with the indigent of Berlin, and he shows that of 1,000 infants among the former, 57 die in the first five years; but of the same number among the latter, 345. Whilst half of the poor only have attained the thirty-second year of life, half of the noble have attained the fifty-second. During epidemics the poorer classes are in an especial manner decimated. That simple well being prolongs life is demonstrated by the low rate of mortality among persons who "assure" their lives in the assurance offices. A fifth or sixth part of negro slaves die annually. But the mortality among the free negroes who serve in the English colored regiments is only 3 per cent, that of slaves being 17 per cent. The learned professions, followed by persons of easy means, have an incontestable influence upon the duration of life. Thus, the mean age of fifty-two French literary men was sixty-nine years. Physicians, according to Dr. Escherich, cannot hope for a long life. At all periods of age they succumb in larger numbers than other professions. But the greatest mortality is during the early periods. Three-fourths die before fifty years of age, and ten-elevenths before sixty. Old men are rare among them.

PRAYER.—Do not say you cannot pray, because you cannot speak much, or well, or long. Prayer is wrestling with God; the heart is the wrestler; holy faith is the strength of it; if by means of this strength thy heart be a good wrestler, though thou art ever so tongue-tied, thou wilt be a prevailor. Rhetoric goes for little in the heavenly court, but sincere groans have a kind of omnipotency.