

# 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.

### Somebody's Darling.

The following beautiful little poem was written by Miss Marie Lacoste, of Savannah, and refers to one of those sad incidents of the late war—unfortunately but too common in both armies.

Into a ward of the whitewashed walls,  
Where the dead and dying lay—  
Wounded by bayonets, shells, and balls  
Somebody's darling was borne away.  
Somebody's darling, so young and brave,  
Wearing still on his pale sweet face,  
Soon to be hid by the dust of the grave,  
The lingering light of his boyhood's grace.

Matted and damp are the curls of gold,  
Kissing the snows of that fair young brow;  
Pale are the lips of delicate mould,  
Somebody's darling is dying now.  
Back from the beautiful blue-vein'd face  
Brush every wandering silken thread,  
Cross his hands as a sign of grace,  
Somebody's darling is still and dead.

Kiss him once for somebody's sake,  
Murmur a prayer, soft and low,  
One bright curl from the cluster take,  
They were somebody's pride you know.  
Somebody's hand had rested there,  
Was it a mother's soft and white?  
And have the lips of a sister fair  
Been baptized in those waves of light?

God knows best. He has somebody's love:  
Somebody's heart enshrined him there;  
Somebody wafted his name above,  
Night and morn on the wings of prayer.  
Somebody wept when he marched away,  
Looking so handsome, brave, and grand;  
Somebody's kiss on his forehead lay;  
Somebody clung to his parting hand.

Somebody's waiting and watching for him,  
Yearning to hold him again to her heart;  
There he lies—with the blue eyes dim,  
And smiling, child-like lips apart.  
Tenderly bury the fair young dead,  
Pausing to drop on his grave a tear;  
Carve on the wooden slab at his head—  
"Somebody's darling lies buried here."

## Religious.

### Master Henry Smith.

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

The noble army of Smiths may almost be likened to the company of Celestials whom no man can number. Smith is not the name of a person, but of a clan, a nation, a race. Ever since Tubal Cain first smote the anvil, Smiths have swarmed in every quarter; and though many of them have been ashamed of the honest title, and have twisted it into Smythe and Smithers, and other transparent degradations of the fine old name, yet Smiths there are and Smiths there will be till the world's axle-tree breaks down forever—blacksmiths and whitesmiths, silversmiths and goldsmiths, a host able to hold their own against all comers. The Henry Smith of whom we now write was a workman that needed not to be ashamed, a master of assemblies whose hammer fastened many nails, and dashed to pieces many brittle wares. He lived in the golden age of religion in England that is to say, the Puritanic. Scarcely to be numbered with the Puritans in one respect, he was in others not a whit behind the chiefest of them; and, in a peculiar vein of eloquence he was richer than any one of that goodly fellowship. He was not so much a theologian as the preacher of his day. Fuller says of him "He was commonly called the *Silver-tongued preacher*, and that was but one metal below St. Chrysostom himself. His church was so crowded with auditors, that persons of good quality brought their own pews with them, I mean their legs, to stand thereupon in the alleys. Their ears did so attend to his lips, their hearts to their ears, that he held the rudder of their affections in his hands, so that he could steer them whither he was pleased; and he was pleased to steer them only to God's glory and their own good."

His sermons appear to have been surreptitiously issued from the press from notes taken by his hearers; and as these unauthorised pro-

ductions were full of errors, the preacher was compelled to issue his own true copy, a necessity for which thousands have been grateful. Had we been among his hearers, we would certainly have preserved all that we could have taken down, and have published them if the law permitted; for such sermons were never intended by God to be monopolised by any one generation. As well allow the harvest to rot unharvested, as such marvellous discourses to remain unprinted. They were sermons, sermons of the highest order, gems of the first water, rare jewels, fit for kings. When preached, they crowded the churches, and when issued from the press they cheered many a household; in fact, they were so relished, that some, whose manner it was to forsake the assembling of themselves together, pleaded as an excuse—

"Smith's dainty sermons have in plenty stor'd me.  
With better stuff than pulpits can afford me."

Henry Smith, except in his public capacity as a preacher, has no history; the pulpit is his entrance and his exit. Having borne his testimony like another Elijah, he is taken up, but leaves no mantle behind him, or no Elisha to inherit it. No stirring incidents of patient suffering or heroic service are recorded of him: like Thomas Adams, he is a great unknown; his sermons are at once his portrait and his life. "He being dead, yet speaketh;" and speaketh none the less powerfully because his personal self is so little known to us. One or two of the great painters have left the world their own likenesses, and we have thought that we could see Smith and his congregation too, sketched by himself as with Hogarth's pencil, in his second sermon upon the art of hearing: "As the little birds perk up their heads when their dam comes with meat, and prepare their beaks to take it, striving who shall catch most (now this looks to be served and now that looks for a bit, so every mouth is open till it be filled); so you are here like birds, and we the dam, and the word the food; therefore you must prepare a mouth to take it."

He must have been a very diligent student, for no extemporaneous or unstudied effusion could have been so sententious, so accurate, so complete as these peerless discourses. He was a simple preacher even to homeliness, but he was not wanting declaimer trying to make up for emptiness by giving forth all the louder sound. Smith was not like those untrained dogs which give most tongue when there is least game, but when he bayed you might be sure there was good reason for it. His own advice on this point we commend to those who confound the foolishness of preaching, which God honours, with foolish preaching, which is to be abhorred.

He was lecturer for awhile at St. Clement Danes, London but being by repute an unsound churchman as to subscription to the Book of Common Prayer, he was a lecturer rather by sufferance than otherwise; indeed, at one time he was suspended altogether, but the influence of some powerful relative seems to have screened him from the storm. We have sometimes thought that both Henry Smith and Adams have been denied a history because they were not more decided against the abominations of the Anglican Establishment.—They evidently endured much sorrow of heart and found out probably that when the Master calls his servants to go without the camp, it is sorry policy to try to stay within. No doubt they had their reasons, but it might have been better for them if those reasons had made room for more complete avowal by a bolder Nonconformity. Master Henry Smith had one mark said to belong to many of those whom God loves, for he died young, and so entered early into his rest.

Henry Smith was not led away by the whimsies of Fifth Monarchy men as to the millenium and the prophetic beasts, neither did he waste the time of dying men by fiddling the tune of sublapsarian, or supralapsarian controversy, to set men's wits a dancing; but he went straight to the conscience, and dealt with it upon plain matters of duty and important gospel doctrine. Commonly the simplest men busy their heads about the highest matters; so that if they meet with a rough and crabbed question like a knob in the tree, and while they hack and hew at it with their own wits to make it plain their saw sticks fast in the cleft, and cannot get out again; at last in wrath they become

like malcontents with God, as though the Scripture were not perfect, and either fall into despair, or into contempt of all. Therefore it is good to leave off learning where God hath left off teaching; for they have an ear where God hath no tongue, hearken not unto God, but to the tempter, as Eve did to the serpent. This age needs just such a warning; but who shall utter it so that it may be noticed? It is difficult, if not impossible, to reach the heart of men who are besotted with the intoxication of curious questions, for foolish as they are, and plain as their folly is to all the world besides, they are in their own conceit, wiser than seven men that can render a reason. If one of the old Fifth Monarchy fanatics should rise from the dead, he would find himself among brethren in many quarters. In those days, when swords and pikes gave ugly cracks to men's craniums, this nonsense was excusable to old soldiers who had fought the Philistines at Naseby and Edgehill, and had returned from the fray with huge gashes across their foreheads; but nowadays our madmen are born, not made; or if made, are manufactured by idleness rather than by warfare, and deserve less patience than those who came by their madness in honourable battle. Why, in these times, men who care not for positive precepts, are downright zealots for the toes of the image, and the little horn of the beast; we have elaborate charts of the new world as it is to be after the advent of our Lord; and telegrams from futurity as to the fate of Turkey, Russia and every other nationality. The prophetic fever is at its height and Bedlam is expounding the Apocalypse. Oh, for a little love to the souls of men, and a grain of common sense to set professing Christians upon more profitable work than this guessing at religious conundrums, and forecasting of national nativities!

Henry Smith's doctrine was searching and sound; he was very clear in the gospel, and in dealing with the experience of a renewed soul. Especially was he very bold in denouncing all confidence in mere reformation, in which too many often rest, and so fall short of the new birth. "As ye may read, Psalm li. 10, David prayeth the Lord to 'create in him a new heart;' not to correct his old heart, but create in him a new heart; showing that his heart was like an old garment, so rotten and tattered that he could make no good of it by patching or piecing, but even must out it off, and take a new. Therefore Paul saith, 'cast off the old man;' not pick him and wash him till he be clean but cast him off, and begin anew, as David did."

### A simple Christian act.

A young lady once presented me with a book-mark, having the inscription, "God bless you," and exacted the promise that it should be placed in my Bible, but never to remain a day opposite the same chapter. Faithful to my promise, I took it home, and rubbing from the lids of my Bible the dust of a week, I placed it in the first chapter of Matthew, and daily read a chapter, and changed its place. I had not read long before I became interested as I had never been before in this good book; and I saw in its truths that I was a sinner, and must repent if I would be saved. I then promised God that I would seek His face at the earliest opportunity, and if He saw fit to convert my soul, that I would spend my life in His cause. It came; I sought His face, and received the smiles of His love; and now I have a hope within me "big with immortality!" and all I do attribute to that book mark and the grace of God. O, my readers, "despise not the day of small things." A word spoken in season, a simple Christian act, a sincere, simple prayer, may turn a poor wandering sinner from the error of his ways.

### Spiritual Food.

Two friends living in the country met together at the village church, a little way from their dwelling.

"What is the use of going to church so often," said the younger to his companion "since we always hear nearly the same thing?"

"What is the use," replied the other, "of taking your meals so regularly every day, since they are composed of nearly the same dishes?"

"The cases are very different. I must eat to nourish my body, which would otherwise perish."

"Not so different as you suppose; for what food is to the body, the exercises of worship are to the soul; and spiritual life will languish if we cease to support it by the means which God has graciously given us."

"But how happens it," said the younger "that all men have not the same relish for these exercises as they have for their food?"

"You are mistaken again," replied his friend; "all men, it is true, receive their food with pleasure when they are in health; but when they are sick, food becomes not merely tasteless, but disgusting. It is the same with the soul; that is, in health, while it has peace with God through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus our Lord, then it desires the exercises of religion; it enjoys them, and cannot consent to omit them. It is sick when it is hardened in sin, it has then no appetite for spiritual food; it avoids opportunities for receiving it. The sanctification of the Sabbath is unpleasant. The resemblance goes further still; for, as sickness of the body, if not cured by medicine, ends in death, so also the corruption of the soul—that disease with which all men are infected—ends, unless God heals it, in spiritual and eternal death; that is, in the exclusion of the soul from the presence of God."

### Church Music.

There should be choirs in our churches—the very best that can be procured; and there should be congregational singing; and the two should and may be combined. If they are not combined, there is fault and sin somewhere. The praise of God in the sanctuary no more belongs to the choir than the railway track belongs exclusively to the locomotive. The track is for the locomotive, but only that it may draw the train of cars behind it. And the value of a locomotive is solely in its power to do this work. Suppose it to assume exclusive right to the track, and instantly it becomes an unmitigated nuisance. The value of a choir is solely in its power to draw the congregation onward in the praise of God. That is its meaning, place, work, in the house of God. And when it switches the congregation off on a side track, and leaves it there, and takes exclusive possession of the King's highway of praise, it becomes an unmitigated nuisance.—I never was the pastor of a church in which this nuisance was not summarily abated, if it existed; and, by the help of God, I never will be.

### The right kind of Preaching.

Dr. Gilly related the following anecdote, which was told by a well known Irish character, Thaddeus Conolly, who used to spend much of his time in wandering through Ireland, and instructing the lower classes in their native language. "I went," said he, "one Sunday, into a church, to which a new incumbent had been lately appointed. The congregation did not exceed half a dozen, but the preacher delivered himself with as much energy and affection as if he were addressing a crowded audience. After the service, I expressed to the clergyman my wonder that he should preach so fervently to such a small number of people. 'Were there but one,' said the rector, 'my anxiety for his improvement would make me equally energetic.'" The following year Conolly went into the same church, the congregation was multiplied twenty-fold; the third year he found the church full!—*Christian Times*.

### The Lord's Day.

Stations on the line of your journey are not your journey's end, but each one brings you nearer. Such are our Lord's days.

A heaven is not home, but it is a place of quiet and rest, where rough waves are stayed. Such is "the Lord's day."

A garden is a piece of common land, and yet it has ceased to be common land. It is an effort to gain paradise. Such is "the Lord's day."

A bud is not a flower, but it is the promise of a flower. Such is "the Lord's day."