

# 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.

### Missionary Lines.

Hark, the distant lands are calling,  
Christian hosts, to you they call  
Hark, the idol Gods are falling,  
Triumph, Christians, in their fall.

Who will onward to the battle?  
Who will give that these may go?  
Bleeding lambs and slaughtered cattle  
God does not require them now.

Self-devotion to the Master,  
Prayerful hearts and willing hands,  
These were offerings richer, vaster,  
Than the cattle of all lands.

Wide the fields and white for harvest,  
Here and there a laborer goes,  
Yet the sheaves are being gathered,  
And the prospect brighter grows.

India with her score of nations  
Bound in superstition's chains,  
Tortured with her vain oblations,  
Cruel rites and endless pains.

Gleams her torch beside her fountains,  
Error shapen phantoms flee,  
Breaks the light upon her mountains,  
India, India shall be free.

"Land of Sinim," the salvation  
Long predicted comes to thee,  
Down, O self-sufficient nation,  
Bow the head and bow the knee.

Lo, her gates already open,  
See the soil by heralds trod,  
China—for the Lord has spoken,  
China too shall know our God.

Kentville.

S. S.

## Religious.

### Bible talks.

#### THE FOUR GOSPELS.

Why do we have four accounts of what our Saviour said and did? Would it not have been just as well to have had all we need to know by one person? Such questions are answered by telling who wrote the different gospels—how they wrote them, and for whom they wrote them. Matthew, though a tax-gatherer under the Roman Government, was a real Jew. His other name was Levi, and he may have been a Levite. He was very familiar with the Old Testament, and with the names and customs of the Jews; hence he was selected to write a gospel to prove to them that Jesus was their promised Messiah. This gospel is so Hebrew-like in its style, that some think it was written first in Hebrew, and afterwards translated into Greek. It was written a few years after our Saviour's crucifixion, while the disciples were preaching the gospel to Jews only, before they had learned that it was intended also for the Gentiles. It was right that God's ancient people should have the gospel story told in the way that would be most likely to interest them, and hence we see why Matthew wrote.

But when the gospel found—in Judea, and everywhere out of Judea—the Romans, they were the controlling nation in that day, and it was right that the apostles should try to interest and save them. But the way of telling things, that suited the Jews, would not suit the Romans. They did not care anything about genealogies—whether Christ was descended from David, and so on. They wanted a short, plain, straightforward story of what Jesus did and said. Such a story Mark or Marcus (it is a real Roman name) wrote for them. When you study Roman history, and the Latin writers, you will see that Mark's Gospel was just the one they needed. Mark was not an apostle; but the apostles used to stop at his mother's house, in Jerusalem, when he was a boy (see Acts xii: 12) and when he grew up he travelled with Paul and also, it is said with Peter. Indeed, the early Christians call this "Peter's Gospel," saying that he dictated it and Mark wrote it, Peter, the fisherman was probably not a very ready writer.

Besides the Romans, there was at that time another people called the Greeks. They were scholars and philosophers; they were always asking why things were so. God would give them a gospel, too; so He brought a young Greek doctor (Luke is a real Greek name) under the influence of the apostles. He became a companion and friend of Paul, and was with him at Rome, both the first and the second time. The Greek wrote the gospel story as he learned it from Paul, and wrote it in such a way that the people of his nation the Greek scholars and philosophers, would be interested in it. Luke's gospel was written later than Matthew's and Mark's—probably twenty-five or thirty years after the Crucifixion.

When the converts from the Jews, the Greeks and the Romans had grown to be a large and strong Church, questions would come up that people had not time to think of when they were hurrying everywhere to tell the story of the Cross; questions about the divinity of Christ, the nature of Christian life, the heavenly home, and so on. To answer these—to feed and strengthen the Church—another gospel would be needed; and John the beloved disciple, in his old age (more than sixty years after Christ ascended) wrote for Christians that gospel which tells about, "The Word in the beginning with God," and which contains such beautiful parables as "I am the true vine," etc., and such discourses as "Let not your heart be troubled," for the three great nations or kinds of people in the world. John wrote for the Church.

I think you can now see, why we have four gospels, and not one only.

UNCLE JESSE.

### Suppose.

Reader, which of these supposes fits you? Suppose every member in the church was precisely as desirous of a revival of religion as yourself, neither more nor less, how intense would be the aggregate desire?

Suppose each member precisely as active as yourself in working for the Master, how much spiritual industry would be the result?

Suppose each to attend the prayer meetings as often as yourself, what would be the average attendance?

Suppose each to be as faithful in attending class as you are, how long would that means of grace remain a center of religious power?

Suppose in every family there shall be the same observance of household religion as in yours, how long before all the families of earth shall call upon the name of the Lord?

Suppose every other member to contribute in proportion with yourself to the various causes of christian benevolence, is there imminent danger that the church will have a large surplus?

Suppose every member is as careful as yourself to call upon the pastor, will he be in danger of excessive attention?

Suppose all christians do precisely as much as yourself in visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, how imposing will be the army of "Pure religion and undefiled before God!"

Suppose all christians have precisely your amount of faith, how soon may we expect the victory that overcometh the world?

Suppose your honest answers to the queries shall bring condemnation to your soul, who is to blame for that? Who is it that condemns?

And suppose that, as the condemnation come, you make no effort to amend, make no forward step, seek no higher life, whose blame will that be?—N. Advocate.

PERSECUTION IN EGYPT.—The Viceroy of Egypt is seeking to gain his independence. He has succeeded in obtaining everything but the name. He has appealed to Europe for sympathy, on the ground of his superior intelligence and liberality. But he has inaugurated his new power by authorizing and aiding the Coptic Patriarch of Egypt to crush out Protestantism by persecution. The missionaries of the United Presbyterian Church of America have had wonderful success in preaching the Gospel and founding schools in Egypt. I gave you, last year, a detailed account of their work, as I saw it myself. They have avoided as far as possible any conflict with the

Coptic Church, but have preached Christ to all who would listen. Until this winter there has been no serious persecution; but some two months ago the Viceroy furnished the Coptic Patriarch with one of his steamers, and with full authority to put down all Protestantism. The Patriarch has been slowly ascending the Nile, making a triumphal entry into all the Christian villages on the shores. Seeking to imitate the entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem, he enters these towns riding upon an ass, while his people throw palm branches before him and cry, "Hosanna! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Lord." At each place his first care has been to find out any who might be suspected of a leaning towards Protestantism. These he has beaten, robbed, driven from their houses, and abused in every conceivable way; in some cases giving positive orders that they be cut in pieces and thrown into the Nile. Protests have been made to the Viceroy in vain. At last accounts the persecution was still progressing, and no effort had been made by the Government to stop it.—Evangelical Christendom.

### The Prayer meeting away from Home.

Many readers in their summer vacation, may heed such admonition as Dr. Todd gives to his church members in the following paragraph. You will find wherever you go, almost without exception, a weekly prayer meeting. There will probably be but few who sustain it. They are the life of the church. And it is a grievous fact that men and women who feel bound to attend and sustain a prayer meeting in their own church at home, feel no responsibility when abroad. I have been at places where there were hundreds, literally, of Christian professors, and yet not a dozen would be found at the prayer meeting. I know of no way in which you can spend a single evening more profitably to yourself, or more to the comfort and strengthening of the few faithful ones, than to go into their meeting for prayer. It may not be your particular denomination. Don't care for that. All the better, for it gives you the opportunity of seeing that you are free in the Lord, and are bound by no cords of bigotry. Go to their little meetings. Sing with them. Pray with them; and if you say a word, let it be a word of cheer and encouragement. Let it be to strengthen their faith. But don't go back to your home feeling conscious that you have not attended a single prayer meeting since you left! It would be a fearful mark against you. It would I feel sure grieve the Divine Redeemer. And yet how many do it! and could tell some painful facts on this subject.

### "That's me."

A poor Hottentot in Southern Africa lived with a good Dutchman who kept up family prayer daily. One day he read: "Two men went up into the temple to pray."

The poor savage, whose heart was already awakened, looked earnestly at the reader, and whispered, "Now I'll learn how to pray."

The Dutchman read on: "God, I thank thee I am not as other men."

"No, I am not, I am worse," whispered the Hottentot.

Again the Dutchman read: "I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess."

"I don't do that. I don't pray in that manner. What shall I do?" said the distressed savage.

The good man read on till he came to the publican, who "would not so much as lift his eyes to heaven."

"That's me," cried his hearer.

"Stood afar off," read the other.

"That's where I am," said the Hottentot.

"But smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner."

"That's me; that's my prayer," cried the poor creature, and, smiting upon his dark breast, he prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner," until, like the poor publican, he went down to his house a saved and happy man.

### Indian Testimony.

Much has been said of the native eloquence of the American Indian. The following show that this gift loses nothing under the inspiration of religion:

On the camp-ground was an Indian named "Mingo," well known and highly esteemed. As the meeting rose in interest Mingo grew more and more excited, and yet preserved the self-command so characteristic of his race. At length he said,—

"Mayn't I give my testimony?"

"Yes," said the presiding elder.

"Brothers, I've been long in this warfare fifty-nine years on my way. I am seventy-six years of age. The winds have blown hard on this carcass, but the good hope is here.

"I see you white people brought up at home, able to read, taught arts and sciences, and yet you live without Jesus. Poor me! I grew up wild; no father; brought up in the woods. Yet I found Him. Some of you have known me many years, and I'm a good boy yet. Poor me! Couldn't read, knew nothing, yet gave Jesus my heart.

"The first Bible I ever had I took home, put under my pillow, and slept with it there.

"This old frame totters, the strong wind shakes it, and it must go down; but I bless Jesus I'm under way to glory."—Mississippi Advocate.

### "Living near to God."

"That is a very mysterious expression to me Aunt Ruth—'living near to God'—I do not understand it."

"You know what it is to live near earthly friends?"

"Yes, that is simple enough; I see their face, hear their voice, clasp their hand, sit or walk by their side, give and receive communications of mutual interest and sympathy."

"Well, that is a good definition of nearness to God, your Father and Saviour. Look at His face, as it shines in His word and works; hear His voice in the Scriptures and in His providence; lay your hand in His for daily guidance; seek His sympathy and help in every pleasure or pain, joy or sorrow; and strive to please Him in all you do. Thus will you walk by His side, sit with Him in heavenly places, and feel your nearness to Him as real and actual."

The quick tears came to the eyes of Alice, as her aunt thus answered her inquiry. Alice was young in the Christian life, and previous to her conversion had been trained to feel that what is called experimental religion was a mystery little understood by its professors, and beyond her comprehension. Her aunt had been the means of leading her young heart to Jesus, and to her kind and patient ear she naturally came with her doubts and perplexities.

Alice's aunt was a living example of the duty and privilege she had so well defined.—Her first waking thoughts were of Him who had watched her slumbers and lightened her eyes, that she slept not the sleep of death.—Thus she gave to her divine Preserver the morning salutation, which renewed her daily intercourse with Heaven. Before entering on her daily duties and cares, she read a portion of God's word, that she might hear His voice speaking to her in the cool of the day.

Then she earnestly and heartily asked his blessing upon the new lease of life thus given her, and entered upon her daily household cares leaning upon his heavenly arm.

Little crosses and trials, too trivial to name but which vex the spirit and ruffle the temper she bore serenely, by lifting her heart a moment to Him who was "in all points tempted like as we are," the assurance of his sympathy robbing each vexation of its sting.—Pain and distress were calmly endured by looking to Jesus, who took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses; and each pleasure and delight was acknowledged to Him who she believed is as ready a listener to our gladness as to our sorrow.

Every kindness which she could do for others—and these were not few—she did in the light of the Divine example and approval: walking thus so closely to Jesus, it was easy and natural to speak a word for him to those who knew him not. When affluence was hers she was a ready and liberal giver, looking upon herself as a steward of the heavenly bounty, and remembering that Christ, though Lord of all, gave even his own life for others.

When adversity overtook her, she drew still closer to Jesus, and felt that he knew poverty pined and would help her, and she had a Friend and Brother in him.