

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL & GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

NEW SERIES. }
Vol. XII. No. 20. }

HALIFAX, N. S., WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 1867.

} WHOLE SERIES.
} Vol. XXXI. No. 20.

Poetry.

The May-Flower.

There is a darling little flower
That blossoms in the Northern woods;
It smiles not in the florist's bower,
But loves its sylvan solitudes;

And there, with tints as pure and bright
As those to Eden's spring-flowers given,
Hid from the heartless gazer's sight,
It blooms for solitude and Heaven.

Yet 'tis not when the morn's cup
Is sparkling with the crystal dew;
Nor when a thousand flowers send up
Their perfumes to a Heaven of blue;

'Tis not when June, delicious June,
With warm breath woos the glowing rose;
Nor in the year's high, garish noon
This little flower in beauty blows;

But while the lingering winter yet
Throws fitfully its leathery snow;
The russet turf is cold and wet,
And keen the early spring winds blow;

'Tis then the little May-Flower blooms,
And in its lonely, leafless bower,
Opens such treasures of perfume
As 'twere earth's only incense flower.

Who owns, who loves, a kindred lot?
Blest in her native sphere to move,
And home, her own sweet hallowed spot,
Cheer with her purest heart of love?

O, here is bliss! the purest, best,
By woman crav'd—to woman given;
Here is her heart's sole, sacred rest,
Beneath the smiles of home and heaven.
MRS. ELIZA B. THORNTON.

Religious.

Mr. Spurgeon and his work.

We have a mortal hatred of man-worship, and have sometimes refrained from notices of Mr. Spurgeon, lest the frequent mention of him should be misconstrued and regarded as bordering on this characteristic of human frailty. All denominations of Christians, however, join in thanking God for the great good which he is doing in the British metropolis. Spurgeon has become an institution of London, and we should be subject to a charge of remissness if we neglected to place before our readers occasionally the heart-stirring accounts we have of the glorious work that is being done there, by his preaching and the labours of his coadjutors. The *Sword and Trowel* for April contains the following:—

OUR FEBRUARY MEETINGS.

In our last number we promised to give an account of the remarkable Meetings which were held at the Tabernacle during the month of February. The Lord God of Israel be praised that we have such a record to present to our readers. The meetings commenced on the 8th of that month, when the pastor, deacons, and elders, spent the evening together in prayer and conference, and many earnest supplications were offered for the bestowment of the Divine blessing upon the special services that were about to be held. An interesting feature of this gathering was the presentation by Mr. Olney, senr., to the pastor, of a handsome time-piece, which had been subscribed for by the deacons and elders. The pastor, who had no idea that such a presentation was intended, was deeply affected by this generous token of the affection of his fellow-labourers, of whom he said, "No man had a better staff of helpers or a firmer band of friends." May other churches be blessed with officers as affectionate and devoted as these brethren!

On the 11th, the church officers met the pastor for supplication to God, preparatory to the special prayer-meeting. Two deacons from the church at Waterbeach were also with the brethren, and the presence and power of the Holy Ghost were felt in the little assembly. As we announced last month, the Tabernacle was well attended at the

prayer-meeting, and the prayers offered by Mr. Spurgeon and the various brethren, were most fervent and solemn. Many were savingly impressed on that solemn occasion.

On the following day (Tuesday), the deacons and elders, having previously met for one hour's prayer, assembled with the undecided of the congregation. Many persons were moved to tears during this solemn service, and the deacons devoted one hour to personal conversation with those who remained behind. Mrs. Bartlett, with her usual holy zeal, was occupied with a room full of trembling seekers. Much fruit was seen on this occasion. On Wednesday, the young people of the congregation met Mr. Spurgeon and the officers for tea, after which, the lecture-hall was filled with a most attentive audience of young people, who were deeply impressed with the remarks made; some have since come forward and offered themselves to the church. It is pleasing to record that the deacons and elders have had a blessing upon their own families. On Sunday the 17th, deputations from the church officers visited the classes presided over by Mrs. Bartlett, Mr. McGregor, and Mr. Croker. The addresses at these prosperous classes, were marked by earnestness and pointedness, and it is hoped that the good done on this occasion will be recorded in heaven.

Monday, the 18th, was set apart for fasting and prayer. From seven in the morning till nine at night, the flame of devotion burned steadily and vehemently. There was no pause no breaking up for meals, no idle talk, but a whole day of prayer; a blessed day indeed! Those who shared its deep convulsions of sorrow, and bursts of joy, will never forget it while memory holds her place. There were of course comers and goers all day long, but this created no disturbance; and those who came in but for one hour were so in tune with the rest, that it was evident that all the members, whether in the meeting or at their several callings, were in a spirit of prayer. The evening meeting in the Tabernacle was a most remarkable one. The prayers for the conversion of souls were unusually fervent, and the Lord was pleased to grant the request of his servants, even as he always does listen to the desires of believing hearts, in the salvation of precious souls. Of this there were happy proofs on the succeeding night, when the unconverted were invited to meet the officers for exhortation. The marked, devout and eager attention of those present was very gratifying, and the tears that were visible told the tale of soul-sorrow and soul-joy. Broken-hearted ones were led to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world, and Mr. Spurgeon has seen several who are anxious to find peace, and others who wish to join the church.

There was an interesting gathering of the parents of Sabbath-school children on the 20th, when the pastor and deacons, with the teachers, gave special addresses in the lecture-hall, which were well calculated to arrest the attention and impress the hearts of those present. The tutors and students had tea with the pastor on the 22nd, when addresses were given by a number of friends, the object being to excite in the college the same zeal which glows in all the other branches of the church. On the following Sabbath, two deacons visited Mr. Hanks's classes, and also the senior classes of the Sabbath-school, with the view of arousing souls and urging an immediate decision for Christ. On the 25th, the ordinary prayer-meeting assumed a very solemn character, all the addresses being directed to the unconverted, and being delivered by our elders, were more novel and interesting than if they had come from ministers.

On the 26th, the Evangelists, Loan Tract Distributors, Missionaries, and Bible-women, connected with the church, took tea together. After tea, about 250 assembled in the lecture-room. The pastor presided, and expressed the pleasure he felt in seeing so many of the members of his church voluntarily engaged in evangelistic work. He hoped that wherever they pushed the gospel-plough, they would make deep furrows in the hard soil; and that they would sow nothing else but the seed of divine truth. He was delighted to find that many of the present members of the church had been converted through the instrumentality of the evangelists. He believed the Metropolitan Tabernacle owed much of its prosper-

ity to the self-denying efforts of its members who were engaged in carrying the gospel to the poor in the streets and byways of this great metropolis. He hoped that those who were not in earnest in their work would follow Mr. Orsman's example, in his noble mission which his friend Mr. Leach had aptly denominated, "A Golden Work in Golden Lane." Addresses of an encouraging and stimulating character were then delivered by Mr. W. J. Orsman, Hon. Sec. of the Evangelists' Association; Mr. Stringer, Mr. Carpenter, City Missionary, Mr. Cooper, elder, Mr. W. Olney, Mr. Aldbury, who related some rough encounters he had had with the bargemen at his open air services by the river's-side, and a gentleman from New York.

On the 1st of March, the Sunday-school and lagged-school teachers assembled together at tea, when most encouraging addresses were delivered by the pastor and others. The meetings were concluded on Monday, the 4th, by breaking of bread and thanksgiving, and those who were present found the opportunity one of great spiritual enjoyment. The King himself was there, and we said in our hearts "He brought me into the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love."

We feel thankful at the remembrance of the various joyful and refreshing influences which clustered around the above gatherings. The blessing which has already attended these special efforts is but a foretaste of what we may expect. We know and are persuaded that a mighty blessing is in reserve for a praying people.

MR. SPURGEON AMONG THE COSTERMONGERS.

On Tuesday, the 12th of March, Mr. Spurgeon preached a sermon to the street vendors of Golden-lane and its vicinity, in the Evangelists' Tabernacle, where Mr. Orsman conducts his mission. On the previous Sunday morning, tickets of admission were distributed among the street dealers of Whitecross-street, and the result was, that by far the majority of those who attended were of this class. A goodly number of the regular attendants at the Mission-hall were absent, as they denied themselves for the sake of others. Some of the dealers came with unwashed faces and uncombed hair, but the majority were dressed in their best clothes; and those who could not recognise them, would hardly think that some were costermongers' wives. There were several "the fried fish line," two or three "pickled whelks' merchants," a number of cabbage and vegetable dealers, coke sellers, wood-choppers, picture dealers, &c., and some representatives of street-sweepers. The bell was rung as usual to let the neighbors know that the time for service was come; for Golden-lane Tabernacle had its bell, with a fine clear throat, and rivals the parish church in this respect; this seemed to amuse Mr. Spurgeon, who said in the vestry that he had no idea he was among such aristocratic people who made so much noise in the world. At seven o'clock, Mr. Spurgeon ascended the platform and opened with prayer. Then a hymn was heartily sung, and a chapter read and expounded. The preacher's prayer was frequently responded to; and when reference was made to the bodily aches and pains which so many suffered, and the poverty experienced by others, there were many deep sighs. Of course, Mr. Spurgeon arrested their attention, nor did he find any difficulty in making his audience understand what he had to tell them. Street vendors are very much like other people, only they are more acute than most persons will give them credit for. Our honoured friend's easy delivery, rapid flow of words, masculine thought, earnestness and directness were thoroughly appreciated; and the little anecdotes, homely illustrations, and forcible "hits," were much enjoyed. The text was St. John's Gospel, iv. 15; and having briefly and plainly stated what the gospel was, the preacher showed how it might be compared to water. Water satisfied the thirst of man; often saved his life; took away filth; put out fire—the fire of temper, lust, &c.; it softened things, &c. He then encouraged them to believe that if they desired this grace they would have it, and lastly, concluded by showing how he himself had found this "living water." One or two illustrations were evidently much liked. Referring to the satisfaction which the soul felt when convinced that all its sins were atoned for, Mr. Spurgeon remarked that

he saw a long file of bills at home the other day, but when he was told they were all paid ones, he did not care how many they were. Again, there was a certain fire that was felt early in the morning in the throats of some persons, who had to go to a neighboring fire-shop to get it quenched, and that fire seemed to burn most furiously on Saturday nights when the wages were just received—an allusion to their social habits which made many laugh. Sacramental efficacy had a blow.—Water could go up as high as the source from which it came, and so could God's grace; but any grace they fancied they might get from priest or minister, could only go up as high as its source—which was the height of the priest. These and a number of other illustrations were so much admired as to make many give a friendly nod of approbation to those sitting by their side. The appeal to their consciences made a deep impression. After Mr. Spurgeon had concluded, over two hundred remained for the purpose of prayer. For an hour and a quarter earnest supplications were offered.—Some begged that the brethren would pray especially for them, others who had never made supplication in their lives before, expressed their wants in deep sighs, or in gentle solemn responses. It is believed that several were convinced of sin during the services, and certainly Mr. Spurgeon's appeals will never be forgotten by many who had been unaccustomed to sympathetic, earnest entreaty.

One curious bit of criticism we heard from several costermongers. A coster's living depends largely upon his "voice." He, therefore knows the value of good lungs and is a connoisseur in voices. The preacher's voice was eulogised as "wonderful," "stunning," "I never," and other equally significant phrases. One coster had lost his voice, and probably he envied the preacher's gift. Another poor fellow—a follower of Joanna Southcott—retired from the hall expressing great disappointment because no reference had been made to his own people—the Jews; and nothing had been said about the millenium, the teaching of which, he declared with much earnestness, always led the way to conversion!

On another page is contained the following statistical information of

HOME AFFAIRS.

In answer to several correspondents, we append a list of the Baptisms at the Tabernacle, from January 1st to March 7th, which is as follows:—January 8, six; January 31, twenty; February 14, eighteen; February 21, eight; February 28, seventeen; March 5, seventeen.

The annual statistical account of our membership has also been asked for, and we gratefully publish it for the honor of the Lord our God. The net increase is small, and we trust it always will be, for our object is to induce our friends to swarm off into new hives as they have done this year. We have greatly contributed to the membership of the new churches at Drummond Road, Claremont Room, and Stockwell, and hope in years to come to send out successive bands of converts to till the waste places, and, by God's grace to make them blossom as the rose.

Received:—	Left:—
By Baptism..... 359	By Deaths..... 37
"Restoration..... 18	Names removed on account of Emigration, Removal to a distance, or continued Absence..... 68
From other churches.. 100	Joined other Churches (principally being groups organised to form new Churches) 188
	Excommunicated..... 19
	447
	312

Net increase, 165, for year 1866.

We are now worshipping in the enormous area of the Agricultural Hall, Islington, which much reminds us of the great Amphitheatre at Milan. Paul was in such a place we suppose, when he fought with beasts; it is our prayer that in these happier days those who have fallen almost as low as beasts, may yield to the gospel and be turned into men.

The Object of Missions.

"Point us," said Wayland, forty-four years ago, in his celebrated missionary sermon on the text, "The field is the world," "point us to the loveliest village that smiles upon a Scot-