

Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Religious.

BEGIN RIGHT.

A WORD TO THE NEWLY-MARRIED.

Among the thousands who read this number of our paper, there must be some who have just become "no more twain, but one flesh." We congratulate you on having entered this new stage of life. We wish you joy. We also offer you some advice. We would be glad to help you in your religious experience. Your marriage ought to give you a fresh start in Christian life.

"But we are not pious," will be the reply of some; and we answer, "When will you find a better time to begin to be? Come now, and let your united life reach out to God. Yes, we will think that you have made the good choice now. 'Come to Jesus just now,' if you have not before. Then we have to say—

1. Begin at once *family prayer*. Don't wait till you set up house-keeping, or till you get back from the wedding tour, or for any reason whatever. You may not think you are much of a family, because there are only two of you; but you are now, by God's constitution, a distinct family, and your altar must be set up for worship. If you hesitate now, you may never find the convenient time to begin. A beautiful sight for angels to look down upon is it, when two, made one, make their first united-offering of prayer and praise before the throne of grace.

It may be that you are to spend the first year with father and mother, and are to be members of the family prayer-circle. Yet reserve at least once a day for *your own altar*; for has not God said, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife?" A new family has been created, and there must be a new centre of family religion.

We do not hesitate to advise, that if circumstances are favorable, and there is not excessive diffidence on the part of the wife you should *both* let your voices be heard in prayer. Not only will the husband, who is indeed the head in worship as in other things, be helped and edified by the occasional leading of the wife, but the habit thus formed on her part will, in future years prevent the altar from being broken down during the necessary absence of the husband. Many a child, we presume, can recall, with us, sacred seasons of family worship, when a pious mother was the only and most worthy priest before the altar.

Marriage has been defined by a worldling as "a double selfishness." It is your privilege to make it rather a double worship, a double religion. You, the husband, need to have your faith softened and sweetened and drawn to a quiet, unquestioning assurance by close contact with woman's piety. You, the wife, need to have your piety made more robust by contact with a spirit of courageous service for the Master. The place where this communion is felt and promoted is where you kneel in common worship.

2. Guard carefully, at the outset, the practice of *secret prayer*. Close as the marriage union is, it cannot rightfully or safely interfere with *secret* communion with God. There are words, spoken or unspoken, that he alone must hear. Husband and wife cannot be judged, the one for the other, at last; neither can the one grow in grace for the other here. Each must feed upon the bread of life for the soul's nourishment, just as each must eat daily bread for the nourishment of the body. Yet marriage sometimes makes closet retirement more difficult. Therefore, guard this point. Do not be ashamed to arrange with each other, and at once, for the opportunity of *secret prayer*. This is a part of the freedom that belongs to intimate Christian friends; and such certainly you are. Don't be afraid to let each other know that you intend to be as faithful in that great duty as before marriage. We are permitted to remember the piety of "parents passed into the skies;" and prominent among these memories are the daily retirement of the

father after the family worship, and the absence of the mother at evening, to seek communion with God.

Nor is it necessary that you should abandon the custom of kneeling at the bedside morning and evening, though you are not strictly alone. It is a part of your intimacy to allow you to forget each the presence of the other, and pray in silence as if you were alone. There is a shyness that is not essential to secret prayer.

Perhaps, in commencing this article, you thought that we were going to give you a catalogue of duties pertaining to married life. This we had no intention of doing; but, if we have helped you to begin with prayer, many are the other duties that you have been helped to perform.—*Christian Banner*.

A HUNDRED YEARS TO COME.

To-day we are striving, pushing, grasping after wealth, honor, power, and pleasure. The poor claim wealth that they may be above want, the rich seek to add to their countless thousands. So are we rushing forward, reckoning not the final result of our probationary existence. No one ever appears to think how soon we must sink into oblivion—that we are one generation of millions. Yet such is the fact. Time and progress have, through countless ages, come marching hand in hand—the one destroying, the other building up. They seem to create little or no commotion, and the work of destruction is as easily and silently accomplished as a child will pull to pieces a rose. Yet such is the fact. A hundred years hence and much that we now see around us will too have passed away. It is but the repetition of life's story; we are born, we live, we die. Think then of the souls that are above, imperishable. The souls of countless millions still exist, in punishment or in bliss.

We all within our graves shall sleep
A hundred years to come;
No living soul for us will weep
A hundred years to come.
But other men our lands will till
And other men our streets will fill,
And other birds will sing as gay,
As bright the sunshine as to-day,
A hundred years to come.

THE HAPPINESS OF A GLORIFIED SPIRIT.

Would you know where I am? I am at home in my father's house, in the mansion prepared for me there. I am where I would be, where I have long, and often desired to be; no longer on a stormy sea, but in a safe and quiet harbor. My working time is done, I am resting; my sowing time is done, I am reaping; my joy is the joy of harvest. Would you know how it is with me? I am made perfect in holiness; grace is swallowed up in glory; the top stone of the building is brought forth. Would you know what I am doing? I see God; I see Him as He is; not as through a glass darkly, but face to face; and the sight is transforming it makes me like Him. I am in the sweet employment of my blessed Redeemer, my Head and Husband, whom my soul loved and for whose sake I was willing to part with all; I am here bathing myself at the spring head of heavenly pleasures, and joys unutterable; and, therefore, weep not for me. I am here keeping a perpetual Sabbath; what that is, judge by your short Sabbath. I am here singing Hallelujahs incessantly, to Him who sits upon the throne, and rest not day or night from praising Him. Would you know what company I have? Blessed company, better than the best on earth—here are holy angels, and the "spirits of just men made perfect." I am set down "with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob," in that kingdom of God, with blessed Paul, and Peter, and James, and John, and all the saints; and here I meet with many of my old acquaintances that I fasted and prayed with, who got before me hither. Lastly, would you consider how long this is to continue? It is a garland that never withers; a crown of glory that fades not

away; after millions of millions of ages, it will be as fresh as it is now; and, therefore, weep not for me.—*Matthew Henry*.

THE CHRISTIANITY OF THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE.

The Dean of Canterbury has delivered a lecture on the above subject to the Liverpool Young Men's Christian Association. The report shows that the Dean laid stress on the following of Christ as the first essential of true Christianity.

The great object of an ordinary Englishman's faith in our day seemed to be not so much Christ as his own Christianity—i.e., the validity of the historical and outward framework by which his faith in Christ was displayed. He much feared their faith in their Church system, in their creeds and formularies, and in the Written Word, was a more real and stronger thing than their faith in the living person of their Divine Master. The lecturer went on to show that as God had manifested Himself in both his word and works, it was impossible these two should ultimately be at variance, if rightly studied and understood. In this connection he thought there was much wanted an attitude of faithful courage and humble self-distrust towards scientific inquiry. For instance, in the investigation and classification of facts, if not in speculations, they should have the manliness to hail the researches of such men as Darwin and Huxley as so much solid gain in understanding nature, which was in its own degree the exponent of God. His opinion was that some of the greatest eclipses truth ever suffered had been owing to men gathering round it, and nursing it, instead of giving it free play and ventilation. ("Hear hear," and applause.) One matter in which he thought the Christianity of the present was hardly making due preparation to be the Christianity of the future was in its treatment of Holy Scriptures. Excellent as is our present version, scholars were constrained to confess that it does not now, within many degrees, represent what they know of the text and meaning of the Scriptures. The time, he believed, was ripe for an authorized revision. (Applause) The Church of Christ ought to be put in possession of all facts as to the gospel of Christ, and not left, even on the smallest point, to fight her enemies in the dark. In conclusion, he argued that their present Christianity needed more directness, more simplicity, less subjection to the cramping of precedent, or the persistence in honoured abuses. Great practical wants were crowding upon them, and would not bear to be left outside their doors because to admit them would oblige them to disarrange some of their furniture. (Laughter, and hear, hear.) Amongst the important questions which these wants suggested were those of the laity's share in Church affairs, and women's work for the Church, both of which deserved immediate and serious consideration in no narrow spirit. (Applause.)

BAPTIST PRINCIPLES IN ITALY.

About six years ago, Mr. Wall, a Baptist minister, formerly of Calne, in Wiltshire, proceeded to Bologna, in Italy, to preach the simple gospel of Christ to the benighted inhabitants of that especially priest-ridden district. Here, and in the adjoining city of Modena, he had, notwithstanding the opposition of the priests and their allies, very encouraging success. About two years after, in 1866, Mr. Clark previously pastor of the Baptist Church at Tiverton, near Bath, resigned his charge in order to take advantage of the providential openings which, since the Italian war, have been so abundant for spreading the gospel in Italy. He selected Spezia, now the chief government naval port and arsenal of Italy, as the centre and sphere of his labours. In and around the city Mr. Clark has worked with the help of competent Italian evangelists, to convey the simple gospel of the grace of God to the minds of the Italian people—aiming to direct multitudes, who are now pointed to "cold statues, to images of the Virgin, and to

wafers of the mass," to "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world."

The Baptist Tract-Society has not been unmindful of this important sphere of action. Besides France, Germany, and Norway, this society has had its attention directed to Italy, where already some of its tracts are being translated and circulated. One especially—the address of the Hon. Baptist Noel on the occasion of his baptism, which has been translated into Italian, is likely, we trust, to do great good. We have also had the pleasure of reading a letter from Mr. Wall, Bologna, to whom we have already referred; by which it appears that the converts baptized by him are not content to remain silent witnesses for Christ but are anxious to diffuse, and quite able to defend, their principles.

HINDOO LADY TRAVELLERS.

It is said that the proposal to construct special carriages for native females on the East India Railway has been approved of by the Viceroy. The carriages will be reserved for respectable native women, and are to be "first-class," but with lower fares than those of the ordinary first-class vehicles. It has also been recommended that there should be a European female guard and European female ticket-collector for the passengers by these carriages. Also that the railway company should see that every station is supplied with a sufficient number of plankees and bearers to convey these ladies on their arrival to their final destination. An extra quarter of an hour may, it is also said, be allowed to the trains to which the carriages may be attached, both at the starting and halting stations. At the starting stations it would be the duty of the European female guard to see that the passengers are well accommodated, their male relatives (if any) being provided for in an adjoining carriage.—*Asiatic*.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

Rev. Dr. Guthrie never propounded a more important question than the following which he quotes and enforces.—Reader, will you answer it?

Where are you going? said Malan, of Geneva, to an English lady who was introduced to him. 'I am on my way to visit Rome,' was her reply. 'Oh,' he answered, 'that is not what I mean;' startling her with this plain, pointed question:—

Abrupt, indiscreet, perhaps as such a mode of address may be considered, the question is one which every person should put to themselves—proving their own work trying the foundation of their hopes, and giving all diligence, as the apostle says, to make their calling and election sure. For the object, what better, plainer, surer, test than the holiness which the Scriptures invariably associate with true living faith? There sanctification and justification are inseparably connected; and what God hath joined together let no man put asunder. To live in the unrestrained, unrepented indulgence of any sin, and talk of faith in Christ, and indulge in hopes of heaven, is a mockery and a miserable delusion. One of the strongest proofs that 'the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.'

To be holy as God is holy, to be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect, to have the same mind in us that was in Jesus Christ, though not yet the attainment, is the aim and the wish, the object of the prayers and efforts of every child of God. 'No holiness, no heaven,' being an adage as true as the more common saying, 'No cross, no crown.'—*Dr. Guthrie*.

Men who see into their neighbors are apt to be contemptuous; but men who see through them find something lying behind every human soul which it is not for them to sit in judgment on, or to attempt to sneer out of the order of God's manifold universe.

Little local noises deafen to the loudest distant ones; and so it is that this world shuts out from the ears of men, as it does, the voice of Almighty God.