

Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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WHOLE SERIES
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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

WORDS OF CHEER.

There was sorrow, pain, and anguish,
In a heart that once was glad;
For the smiles of Hope had vanished—
Leaving it so lone and sad,
That the very joy of others
Seem'd a mocking to its pain;
As it knew no tones of gladness,
E'er could come to it again.
Ah, the days were long and dreary;
And the nights were filled with fear;
But, a bright ray pierced the darkness,
And a voice spoke words of cheer.

All the dark clouds then were rifted;
All the heart-pain swept away;
While the sun shone just as brightly,
Though there was a rainy day.
And the dove of peace then nestled
Closely in the hand that saves;
For her wing had swept the ocean,
She had scann'd the angry waves.
E'en above the roar of billows,
In this life, we often hear
Whispers from the land beyond us,
Gentle whispers—words of cheer.

Drop not then, though dark thy pathway,
Though the shadows seem to lie
Thickly, one across the other—
God's true Word can never die.
He who spake the world to being,
Rear'd the lofty dome above,
Gave the grand, eternal ransom,
He it is, whose name is Love!
He may give thee days of sorrow,
And may fill thy heart with fear,
But despond not; if thou listen
Thou wilt hear His words of cheer.

Cornwallis.

VIOLET.

Religious.

THE TABLE OF THE LORD.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM CROWELL, D. D.

First Article.

What can be more unseemly than a dispute concerning the table spread with the symbols of our Redeemer's dying love?—than to hear one complaining that his right to come is not admitted; or that he is wronged because he is not invited?—or to hear a Church, or a class of Churches censured, or held up to contempt for observing the supper of the Church according to their own convictions of duty?

Is it possible that a mind imbued with a true sense of the sacredness of that table, and of the unworthiness of the greatest saint that ever lived, to partake, can give utterance to flippant accusations of "close communion," instead of penitential confessions of personal unworthiness? Who of us is not filled with wonder that we are deemed fit to partake of those sacred emblems? What love was that,—what prophetic love,—looking forward to a scene to which we cannot look back through the long vista of almost nineteen hundred years, without the deepest emotions,—which moved the Holy One to give his own heart's blood for our salvation!

How little did those disciples who surrounded that table,—alas! how little do we,—comprehend that wonder of love! The act, how simple! The meaning, how exhaustless! They came to an Israelitish Paschal Table,—to a table hedged about by national and ancestral bounds; they arose from a table hemmed in by no such boundaries; they sat down under the shadow of the law; they arose to walk in that shadow no longer.

At that table, the Redeemer, who knew all that was to come upon him, though his disciples knew it not, took bread, gave thanks, then blessing it, said, "This is my body which is broken for you: this do, in remembrance of me!" Then taking the cup of wine, and giving thanks, he said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is shed for you,—for many,—for the remission of sins: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."

The persons present at this scene were

the Saviour and his eleven faithful apostles. In the night which followed the evening on which this supper was appointed, he was betrayed to his enemies, arrested, hurried through a mock trial, in the morning, and early in the day led off to the place of execution, where he suffered the most cruel, shameful death that Roman laws could inflict.

The table of the Lord comes down to us through these many centuries, as a memorial of all this. It was not appointed to be the commemorative festival of nations,—after the event to be commemorated; but in anticipation of it, in prophetic foresight, rather in divine appointment of it. A proof, if proof were needed, that the Saviour in whom we trust is truly God.

From the record of this transaction, we derive our most essential, vital knowledge of everything concerning the Lord's Supper. We have, however, more subsequent, brief records of the manner in which the apostles applied these instructions, thus briefly given. And we have historic proof, as credible as any of the matters narrated in history, that the Lord's Supper has been observed in all the ages and centuries following, to the present day.

We learn from the record, that the Lord's Supper is a social observance, in its very nature,—that is, it cannot be observed by one person alone. "Drink ye all of it." "As oft ye do it." The acts of eating and drinking are among the simplest and most common among mankind. The Lord's Supper is eating and drinking specified substances, by specified persons, for a specified and quite peculiar purpose.

And therefore, we are not surprised to find our warnings of the most fearfully solemn character against misunderstanding and perversion of the Lord's Supper.—"Wherefore," says the apostle to the Church in Corinth,—that is because of the peculiarly sacred character of the supper, "whosoever shall eat this bread or drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." Who can remove that guilt? Further, he says, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation [judgment] to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." And he even accounts for the "many weak and sickly, and many asleep," in that Church, by their erring conduct at the Lord's Supper.

Now, for us, looking back to the primary transactions in Jerusalem, through these eighteen centuries and more, the most momentous inquiry is, How we may avoid the guilt of a wrong observance, and enjoy the benefit of the right observance of the Lord's Supper? And surely this inquiry is one of the deepest interest to all who love the Lord Jesus. It need not, it ought not, to be conducted in any party sense, or spirit. We hear much about "close communion," and about "open communion," about "full communion," but is anything gained by the use of any of these objectionable epithets? All these kinds of communion at the Lord's table are wrong, unless they conform to the will of the Spirit of the one Master.

But it is a remarkable fact, that among all the newspaper articles, reviews, pamphlets, sermons, treatises, and volumes that have been issued on the communion question,—and their name is legion,—not one of them to our knowledge, has attempted to investigate the principle which underlies all legitimate inquiries as to what class of persons the right pertains, to participate at the Lord's table. This may appear to be a startling assertion. If true, a vast number of literary edifices, some with spacious superstructures, are without foundation.

The point at which all writers on terms of communion commence, is, Who has the right to come to the Lord's table? And, Who ought to be allowed, or invited to come? This is assuming, or taking for granted, the very thing that, most of all, needs to be proved. There is a previous question, that, if clearly started, the true principle involved in it satisfactorily proved, would go far to settle, if not definitively settle, all questioning about "close," "open," "restricted," or "full" communion.

But, this article is long enough; and now let us look more earnestly to find out what we have overlooked, on this most deeply interesting subject. It is on the face of the record.

DIVERSITIES IN CONVERSION.

BY J. N. THOMAS.

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit."—1 Cor. xii. 4.

The work of the Spirit often leads to different manifestation with persons of different dispositions and temperaments. Some are disposed to shout, in the exuberance of their joy; while others, in quiet yet decided terms, meekly acknowledge their Saviour's love. The former are like the impulsive, ardent Peter, who boldly declares to the Lord, "I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death;" the latter are like John, who leans upon his Master's breast, and whispers his love in the gentlest of tones.

During the progress of a recent revival in a Western town, two young men, intimate friends, were each led to feel their need of Christ. A. T.—was a very quiet person, little given to conversation, and could rarely ever be drawn into an argument. C. F.—was his antipode in this respect. He would chatter away by the hour together, and was always ready to discuss any question that might arise.

The two young men were converted, while in the house of God, about the same time. A. T.—went to his boarding-place, a Christian household, and, in the fulness of his joy, exclaimed:

"Why don't you shout? I feel like it; for I've found the Saviour. Glory to God!"

But, aside from this, there were other evidences of a change in him, and no one doubted his conversion.

But how great was the surprise of the friends of C. F.—, on the following evening, to hear him declare, in a few quiet sentences, that he believed the Lord, for Christ's sake had forgiven his sins, and accepted him for his child. There was no disposition to shout,—no manifestation of volubility; but the decided manner in which he went forward in the discharge of Christian duties, convinced all that the work in his heart had been as thorough as had been that in the heart of his companion.

Both these young men,—now husbands and fathers,—are still exemplary Christians. But the change wrought at their conversion is still manifest in their lives. T.—continues to be the talker, at times prepared with arguments and evidence to support his religion, while F.—, although he is ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in him, prefers to preach Christ by an upright life, rather than by studied disputations. Truly there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

THE "SIMON MAGUS" FAMILY.

It is remarked by a conservative journal that sales of advowsons and presentations of livings in the Church of England are on the increase. Can this be traceable to an apprehension that the end is at hand, and that persons having property in souls had better realize as quickly as they can? Recently the *Times* contained advertisements of five livings to be disposed of. One vacancy at the West End is open for a clergyman of "fair pulpit ability," who may have a "good income with prospects of a considerable increase." In addition to this, he may have an "important social position, if desired;" but the cost of these advantages is 7,000*l.* or 8,000*l.* Then the vicarage of Stowmarket, recommended by the picturesqueness of the district, the goodness of the society, and its accessibility by rail, is to be sold. However, as the gross tithes and glebe yield but 440*l.* per annum, and the present incumbent is only forty-six, it will

probably hang on hand. The rectory of Solihull, which is to be put up to auction in July, will insure many more spirited biddings, for this is said to be worth 1,523*l.* a year. The money-changers in the temple are driving a thriving trade.

One day last week one of these capital investments was offered for sale at the auction mart. The advowson and next presentation of the vicarage of Westborough with that of Dry Doddington, in the county of Lincoln, were pressed upon the notice of a discerning public. The trustees had done everything to make the investment a desirable one, for they had put in a very old gentleman of seventy-three, who, in the nature of things, could not keep the purchaser waiting for possession long. It was a splendid chance for any body who had sons in the Church, for the living was worth 708*l.*, and the duties were very light. Population only 500, country pleasant, plenty of good society, and, the auctioneer thought he might say, of good hunting also—would any gentleman say 5,000*l.* for this most desirable living? Duties a mere nothing, and good hunting! Care of souls—pleasant, respectable, gentlemanly employment, or, for the matter of that, a curate might be kept and the souls might be turned over to him. Would no one say 5,000*l.*? Remember the present incumbent was seventy-three! No; 4,800*l.* was the highest bid, and the lot remained unsold. Mr. Gladstone has much to answer for.—See how he depreciates the value of souls. The priests used to sell indulgences and planters used to sell slaves. Jugurtha bitterly said that all things were sold in Rome, but we doubt if religious offices have ever been put up for public sale except in England.—*English Independent May, 27.*

NOT ASHAMED.

"Didn't you feel ashamed to say, that, to-night!" said a young man to his friend, as they came together from the prayer-meeting.

"Say what?" he asked.

"Why, that you were such a wretched sinner, as you called yourself. One would think you'd committed all the sins in the decalogue."

"No, Frank; my heavenly Father has all his life been doing me naught but good; and all this while I have have not given him one return of true love and obedience. I am a wretched sinner, saved from God's wrath only through Jesus' precious blood. No, no, I wouldn't be honorable to keep still. I'd be ashamed not to say what I did to-night, and to praise God forever for his mercy to me."

Ashamed of Jesus that dear friend,
On whom my hopes of heaven depend?
No! when I blush be this by-shame,
That I no more revere his name.

"THE FORM OF A SERVANT."

Some years ago two German theological students, on a journey, lodged at night in the same room. One of them heard the other talking in his sleep, and using the following language, quoting from Phil. 2: 7, "And took upon Him the form of a servant." All created beings are the servants of God, necessarily, and by the fact of creation. But here is a personage of whom it is said, "He took upon Him the form of a servant." And if He was not a servant from what condition could He have come to that position, but that of the true and proper Godhead; and here is testimony for the Divinity of Christ." On being reminded the next day of the language he had used in his sleep, he affirmed he was totally unconscious of it, saying his mind had been previously exercised respecting that doctrine, but that he would joyfully accept his own unconscious reasoning, and felt confirmed by it in his belief in the supreme Divinity of his Redeemer.

It is very dangerous for any man to find any spot on this broad globe that is sweeter to him than home.—*H. W. Beecher.*