

Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

NEW SERIES. }
Vol. XIV. No. 8. }

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Wednesday, February 24, 1869.

WHOLE SERIES. }
Vol. XXXIII. No. 8. }

Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

PITY THE PERISHING.

Not alone from Afric's fountains,
Greenland's hills and India's strand,
Southern isles and western mountains
Does the cry for help ascend.

Brooding o'er our native desert,
Mid the lingering shades of night,
Fondly sits the Holy Spirit,
Waking groans for gospel light.

While the men of graceless terror,
Drive them farther from the fold;
While the heirs of form and error,
Leave them shelterless and cold.

Let the followers of Jesus,
Pitying the worried flock,
Lead them into living pastures
Shaded by the gushing Rock.

By the Medway.

Religious.

ORIGIN OF THE HYMN "ABIDE WITH ME."

In the autumn of 1847, the Rev. Mr. Lyle was advised to go for a time to the south of France, in the hope that a warmer climate would strengthen his failing health. Before leaving England he wished once more to preach to his people. His family feared what the result of such an effort might be, but he gently insisted, and was able to go through the service. He knew that he was preaching for the last time, and his sermon was full of solemn and tender appeals to those whom he had guided and instructed for many years. At the end of the service he retired exhausted in body but with his soul sweetly resting on that Saviour whom he had preached with his dying breath. As the evening drew on he handed to a member of his family the following beautiful hymn which he had just written:

ABIDE WITH ME.

Abide with me! fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens: Lord with me abide!
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me!

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day,
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away,
Change and decay on all around I see,
Oh, thou who changest not, abide with me!

Not a brief glance I crave, a passing word,
But as thou dwelt with thy disciples, Lord!
Familiar, condescending, patient, free,
Come, not to sojourn, but abide with me!

Come not in terrors, as the King of kings!
But kind and good, with healing in thy wings,
Tears for all woes, a heart for every plea,
Come, Friend of sinners, thus abide with me.

Thou on my head in early youth didst smile,
And though rebellious and perverse meanwhile,
Thou hast not left me oft as I left thee,
On to the close, O Lord, abide with me!

I need thy presence every passing hour,
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power,
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through storm and sunshine, oh, abide with me!

I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless,
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness,
Where is death's sting? where, grave thy victory?
I triumph still, if thou abide with me.

Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes,
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies,
Heaven's morning breaks! and earth's vain shadows flee:
In life, in death, O Lord abide with me!

This was his last hymn on earth. He reached Nice, and shortly after his spirit entered into rest. He pointed upwards as he passed away, and whispered, "Peace! Joy!" Thus he went to abide forever with Him who has declared it to be his divine will that his followers should be with him where he is, that they may behold his glory.—*The Cottager and Artisan.*

TWO KINDS OF POOR.

In the earlier years of my residence in this city, I devoted my whole time to ministering to the poor. In that time I naturally found out a good deal about the poor, and generally through a close and sometimes very painful experience. I understand through this experience, something that is not generally understood, that the class I marked as the devil's poor, those that are too lazy to work, but not too mean to lie, are continually hanging like a dead weight upon public charity that can be gotten up, and I believe that they get every year more meat and money from those charities than all the worthy poor in any city that I know any thing about. They assume exactly the disguise that they think will do for the persons they apply to. If a man is very anxious to get souls converted, and we all bid God speed to every man who has such an anxiety in his heart, and that anxiety is known, he will get, in the course of a year, no end of men and women of this class, who have a concern about their souls, and they will come and talk about that concern, and will grow a little better and a little better until they grab his potatoes, and then they backslide right down.

Brother Tuttle, who is now a chaplain in the army, told me some time ago that he knew a woman who had one child christened twelve times, and every time she had it christened she begged a suit of clothes to have it christened in. This is the sort I call the devil's poor.

Then there are God's poor. Those that some disorder has come to, they know not how, by which they find themselves unable to cope with the world; their strength is not sufficient to their day; widows with little children, soldiers with lost health and no pension, and all the great worthy poor, for which we can give no reason but that they are poor by the providence of God. We have got to band together to help those men and women; to say to the devil's poor, go to the poor-master, he best knows how to deal with your case; and to say to the worthy poor, we will help you all we can, and help you to help yourself; and to give the Lord's worthy poor our deepest and kindest and sweetest sympathies.—*Rev. Robt. Collyer.*

THE BIBLE AGAINST DANCING.

The Rev. Dr. Patton, in an able article on the subject of dancing, thus sums up his conclusions:

Having carefully examined every text in the Old and New Testaments in which the word occurs, we are led to the following conclusions:

1. That dancing was a religious act among idolaters as well as worshippers of the true God.

2. That it was practiced as the demonstration of joy for victories and other mercies.

3. That the dances were in the day-time.

4. That the women danced by themselves; that the dancing was mostly done by them.

5. No instance is recorded in which promiscuous dancing by the two sexes took place.

6. That, when the dance was perverted from a religious service to mere amusement, it was regarded disreputable, and was performed by the "vain fellows."

7. The only instances of dancing for amusement mentioned are of the worldly families described by Job—the daughter of Herodias, and the "vain fellows." Neither of these had any tendency to promote piety.

8. That the Bible furnishes not the slightest sanction for promiscuous dancing as an amusement, as practised at the present time. The dancing professor of religion must not deceive himself with the impression that he is justified by the Word of God. If he still holds on to the practice, let him find his justification from other sources, and say frankly, I love the dance, and am determined to practice it, Bible or no Bible.

For Sunday School Teachers.

BLACKBOARD EXERCISES.

Amongst the educational changes in late years is that of a more general and continued use of the blackboard for the purpose of illustrating simultaneous teaching. This has recently been introduced into Sunday Schools, especially in the United States. The younger classes may doubtless have their attention much more effectually secured by this means. The mode of using it is by a skilful arrangement of some words and sentences from the lesson or lecture and sometimes by giving them greater display, or by placing in large letters some of the leading thoughts and sentences.

We have seen some of these exercises that appear somewhat childish and trifling. That, however, may be a necessary element in teaching a class of quite young children. Others are of a more mature character. The following taken from *Baptist Tidings* will convey instruction at a glance on very important doctrines, in a striking form. The lesson is on John v. 23-30. The writer says:—

The passage is by no means an easy one to understand in its full scope. I am not sure that I understand it. I find that the learned and good have differed in their views of it. But you must consult your commentaries, and think and pray over it, and talk with one another, comparing it with other scripture.

I think the following truths are in it, and it is with a view to them that I have chosen it, viz:

1st. The life of the soul received in regeneration, is so intimately allied to the life of the body of the believer, given to him at the resurrection, that the mention of one, not only suggests the other, but the former involves the latter, and they may both be spoken of in the same terms.

2. Christ is the author of both. His voice alone can call dead sinners from their tombs, and the dead body from the grave.

3. This honor is put upon Christ in his mediatorial work. The human race is, therefore, in his hands. He gives life to those that seek it. He gives part in the resurrection of the just, "to those who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for honor, glory, and immortality."

4. Such prerogatives speak his essential divinity. Hence all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.

BLACK-BOARD SYNOPSIS.

ALL DEAD.

JESUS DIED!

PURCHASED LIFE FOR ALL.

Some reject. "WILL NOT COME unto Him that they might have Life."
Some accept and made NEW CREATURES in CHRIST JESUS.

THESE

THESE

"ABIDE IN DEATH." "Have passed from DEATH to LIFE."

All shall hear His Voice and COME FORTH.

TO THESE

TO THESE

"Shame and Everlasting contempt." "LIFE ETERNAL."

"That all men might HONOR the SON even as they HONOR the FATHER."

HINTS FOR THE CONCERT.

Every intelligent Superintendent knows that in order to maintain the interest which the little ones ought to feel in their monthly meeting, the exercises must never be twice alike. Hence a few suggestions for varying the exercises of the Sunday school Concert may be acceptable. The following plans have been practically tested, and found to work.

I. Where the habit of reciting passages of Scripture is still maintained (and we hope it is maintained very generally) make the recitation topical. Select some topic for the school to illustrate in their recitations; and assign to each class some point under the general topic; if need be, help each scholar to an appropriate verse. For example:

The Mountains of Palestine.

Mt. Tabor—Judges 4: 6; Ps. 89: 12; Jer. 46: 17, 18; Hos. 5: 1; Matt. 5: 1; Matt. 17: 1, 2.

Mt. Zion—1 Chron. 11: 4-6; Ps. 48: 2; Ps. 2: 6; Ps. 125: 1; Rev. 14: 1; Micah 4: 2.

Mt. Carmel—1 Kings 18: 19-24; Amos 9: 3; Mich. 7: 14.

Hermon and Lebanon—Ps. 133: 3; Sol. Song 4: 8; Is. 40: 16; 1 Kings 5: 13, 14; Jer. 18: 14; Ps. 72: 16.

Mt. of Olives—Zech. 14: 1; Mat. 21: 1, 2; Mat. 14: 3; Luke 19: 37; Luke 21: 37; Mat. 26: 30; Acts 1: 12.

Mountains of Judah—Ps. 125: 2; Luke 1: 39; Luke 1: 65; Mark 13: 14; Judges 2: 8-10; Josh. 17: 15; Jer. 31: 6; 2 Kings 5: 22.

Ebal and Gerizim—Deut. 11: 29; Deut. 27: 1-16; John 4: 20, 21.

Interspersed with spirited descriptions of the localities and brief comments on the passages recited, such an exercise may be made in the highest degree interesting and profitable.

II. Let the pastor (or Superintendent) prepare a sermon for the little ones, in which he shall have occasion to refer to a great many passages; and then preach from a brief, calling upon this or that child, or upon a class reciting in concert, to illustrate or prove his points. Of course the preacher's brief, instead of being filled with the catch-words of appropriate passages, must be filled with the names of bright-eyed boys and quick-witted girls to whom the appropriate passages have been given, and who have been told to look sharp for their turn. It is well to let the infant school announce the text in concert, and repeat it whenever it becomes necessary.—We can promise any who try this way of preaching to children, that they will have no trouble in holding their hearers.

III. Let each teacher repeat at the Concert that verse of the Bible which they regard as most precious; and take two minutes, if they please, in telling *Why?* This simple plan secured one of the richest Sabbath school Concerts that we ever attended. "That verse led me to Christ," said one. "Those were the last words of my dear mother," said another. Those were specimens of our reasons *Why*. And such a succession of priceless gems as our verses were, they can only conceive who have set forty Christian men and women, of varying tastes and culture, to pick out of the whole Word of God that one word which each deemed most precious.

IV. Take a stout piece of bleached cotton cloth, at least 4½ feet by six; stretch it upon a frame, and sketch upon it accurately, the coast-line of Palestine. Such points as are necessary for your guidance in filling up this outline may be added in pencil if you like. Then with palette and brush fill up the map in the Sabbath school Concert, letting the little ones help you locate cities, mountains, rivers, etc. Old and young will learn more about the geography of Palestine by spending an hour or two in this way, than they will be at all likely to learn in any other; and, as the result of the exercise, the school ought to have a map of Palestine better adapted to permanent use than any which can be bought.—Certainly all will think it better for all have helped to make it.—*N. Y. Examiner.*