

# The Christian Messenger.

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WHOLE SERIES.  
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## Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

### TO BEREAVED PARENTS.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD HAS CALLED YOUR CHILD.

We dwell by the side of a river  
That flows through a darksome land,  
A land where our heartstrings quiver  
To the touch of the demon's hand.

But beyond this chill-flowing river  
Is a land of brightness and rest;  
Where dwells, in his glory, the Giver  
Of all we received; and has blessed.

He, looking away to this shore,  
Saw a lamb still unspotted and bright,  
And He said, "It must dwell there—no more  
Lest it stray in the still-gath'ring night."

So He called it in love and it hastened  
To the arms of the Shepherd of heaven,  
"He has left us," you murmured, and  
chastened

In heart, you forgot *He had given.*

But as shepherds of Alpine vales  
Bear the lambs in their arms of love  
Over rocks to more fertile dales  
That their sheep may climb above.

So the Good Shepherd beareth your child  
To green pastures in heaven so fair,  
That you over sin's rocky wild  
May eagerly climb to him there.  
Mosquito Cottage. J. H. H.

### "HE KNOWS."

I know not what will befall me! God hangs  
A mist o'er my eyes;  
And o'er each step of my onward path He  
Makes new scenes to arise,  
And every joy He sends me comes as a  
Sweet and glad surprise.

I see not a step before me, as I tread the  
Days of the year,  
But the past is still in God's keeping, the  
Future His mercy shall clear,  
And what looks dark in the distance, may  
Brighten as I draw near.

For perhaps the dreaded future has less  
Bitterness than I think;  
The Lord may sweeten the water before I  
Stoop to drink,  
Or, if Marah must be Marah, He will stand  
Beside its brink.

It may be there is waiting for the coming of  
My feet,  
Some gift of such rare blessedness, some  
Joy so strangely sweet,  
That my lips can only tremble with the  
Thanks I cannot speak.

O restful, blissful ignorance! 'Tis blessed  
Not to know,  
It keeps me quiet in those arms which will  
Not let me go,  
And hushes my soul to rest on the bosom  
Which loves me so.

So I go on not knowing! I would not if I  
Might;  
I would rather walk on in the dark with  
God, than go alone in the light,  
I would rather walk with Him by faith,  
Than walk alone by sight.

My heart shrinks back from trials which  
The future may disclose,  
Yet I never had a sorrow but what the dear  
Lord chose;  
So I send the coming tears back, with the  
Whispered word "He knows."

## Religious.

### PRAYER IN EVERYDAY EXIGENCIES.

Let me here relate an incident which came to my knowledge some years ago, occurring in the life of a minister's wife who now dwells with the angels. She told it to me herself when I was a young housekeeper, and preplexed, as both old and young housekeepers are apt to be, on account of domestics.

"You will have to apply where I did," said she, after learning of my trouble.

"Where was that?" I eagerly asked. Said she, "I had been very seriously tried and annoyed for some time with

poor help, and with the difficulty at last of obtaining any at all; and had been compelled to do without. That was seemingly impossible, for any length of time, with my large family, my frequent company, and the many calls upon my time and strength for parish-work.

"One Friday evening, I walked to the usual weekly prayer-meeting alone for choice, and took the time as I went for making that subject one of special prayer. It was, at the moment, my greatest care; and I felt that I must, and that I could, cast it upon him who careth for us. I was wholly occupied in this way till, as I came in sight of the church, and I asked that my mind might be freed from this anxiety during the hour, and that I might enter into and enjoy its devotions."

She added, that from the moment she took her usual seat, she had not one thought of her home-cares, and felt herself rested and refreshed by the exercises of the meeting. At its close, as she stood near the door waiting for her husband to join her, a young girl hesitatingly approached her, and asked if she was the minister's wife. On being told she was, she said: "Then ma'am, perhaps you would help me about getting a place, as I'm a stranger."

A few questions led to a partial engagement; and the next day she commenced a service in the minister's family, which only ended with the death of my friend—a service singularly faithful, whole-hearted, and satisfactory.

Maggie was a Scotch girl, already a true Christian; and she afterwards told to her mistress her side of that evening's experience. She had come from her country home to find in the city a household where her labor would have a money-value, and had been staying at a friend's house till she feared her welcome was waning, yet day after day disappointed in her search. Coming in at the close of a weary walk again without success, she went to her room, and prayed earnestly that somehow God would tell her what to do, and would help her. Soon she was called to supper, and while at the table heard the church-bell, and was told on inquiry that it was prayer-meeting night in several of the churches.

The thought struck her, that there was the place to look for a good family; and she went at once to the nearest church. Who can doubt that she was directed there?

Even in our lesser daily wants, when we can lovingly cast our burdens on the Lord," the answering event sometimes seems almost a direct reward to our trusting faith.

A lady, the widow of a missionary, often straitened in money-matters, had, by close economy and with careful calculation, purchase a dress which she much needed for her own winter wear. A mistake was made in the cutting, by which one breadth was so injured that it became necessary to buy more of the material; a serious matter, when the first outlay had been all she then thought she could possibly afford.

But she went with this where she had long since learned to carry all her troubles, small as well as great.

Then feeling that, as it was certainly right and best that she should have the dress, the additional expense must be met, and would be provided for, she went and made the purchase; paying for it from a small fund otherwise kept for the use of an invalid daughter. Returning home, she stopped at the post-office, though with no definite expectation of any letter.

One was handed her, however, directed in a strange hand, and containing a five-dollar bill, with only three words: "For the widow of a good man, from an unknown friend." She has never had any clue to the writer; but she laid the lesson to heart, and once more was led to "understand the loving kindness of the Lord."—*Christian Banner.*

If the young would remember that they may be old, and the old would remember that they have been young, the world would be happier.

### JOY OF SAVING THE LOST.

BY REV. THEO. L. CUYLER.

In Mr. George Kennan's fascinating "Tent-Life in Siberia," is a very thrilling account of a search made by the author for a party of his lost countrymen on the Anadyr River. After a journey by dog-sledge for two hundred miles over drifted snow, they reach the spot where they conjecture the missing Americans to be buried away under the snow. Mr. Kennan and his companions are well nigh perishing themselves from a cold which has sunk the mercury to fifty degrees below zero! The feet of their poor dogs spot the white snow with blood at every step. One of the brave explorers has already sunk exhausted on his sledge, and is fast falling into the sleep of death. Suddenly, at midnight, Mr. Kennan hears a faint, long-drawn hallo across the wintry waste. It comes from one of his "Chookchee," who has gone in advance. He hurries to the spot, all the blood in his veins throbbing at his heart. As he comes up, he discovers the Chookchee standing by a small black pipe projecting from a snow-bank. The lost wanderers must be under it. "Thank God! thank God! I repeated to myself softly," says the heroic writer; "and, as I climbed upon the snow-drift, and shouted down the pipe, 'Halloo the house! I heard a startled voice under my feet reply, 'Who's there?' As I entered the snow-cellar, and seized hold of my long-lost friends, my over-strained nerves gave way, and in ten minutes I could hardly raise my hands to my lips."

Reading the above thrilling scene in my friend Kennan's book, I found the tears stealing down my own cheeks in sympathy with the brave fellows, who had periled their lives in order to rescue their lost friends from death by cold and starvation. After concluding the narrative, which had almost the sweet "lineament of a gospel-book," I opened my Bible, and read this parable which Jesus spake:

"What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness and go after that which is lost until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing."

With this vivid scene of the Siberian search fresh in my mind, I read this exquisite parable with a new delight. I seemed to see our Divine Shepherd starting off after the lost sheep. He knows the thickets or the quagmires into which the silly truant must have strayed. He may hear its bleatings afar off. He goes until He finds it. He does not beat it for straggling; but, pulling it out of the mire, or drawing it from the tangled thicket, He layeth it on his shoulders—the clean carrying the unclean, the Holy carrying the unholy. Beautiful picture of Jesus the sin-bearer! Every saved soul has been upon Christ's shoulders. When he "bare our sins," and "carried our sorrows," then was the befoiled yet precious load upon Jesus's shoulder. Yes, and He bids us "cast our cares" upon Him too! The whole load He takes up joyfully.

Say what we may about free agency, or about the activity of the soul in regeneration, it is equally true that not a solitary sheep would ever have entered the fold of God if the Divine Shepherd had not come to seek and to save the lost. He came after each one. For Jesus "tasted death for every man"—for the individual, and not for the vague mass of undistinguishable humanity. That "one sheep" were lost were enough to start the loving Shepherd on his search. What an argument is this to labor for the conversion of one soul!

It has often been made a cavil by students of astronomy that, if this globe of ours is only a mere speck in the starry universe, amid millions of suns and planets, why should the Son of God single out this diminutive globe as the theater of His incarnation and

sufferings? Why did He stoop to such a little world as ours? In reply to this cavil, Dr. Chalmers prepared and preached his magnificent "Astronomical Discourses." But we think that this exquisite parable throws a hint of suggestive light on this problem. For, though we do not know that our Saviour never went on an errand of redemption to any other planet, we do know that He came to this one of ours. We do not know that He went to stupendous Jupiter, or to belted Saturn, or to far away Neptune.

He did not go, perhaps, to the planet that was biggest in size, but to the one that was basest in sin. He came not "to the largest world, but to the lost world." Ah! He may have left the "ninety and nine" glorious and gigantic orbs which never wandered, and sought out the single one in which lay a race of sinners lost in misery and guilt!

There is one stroke in the parable which we must not lose sight of. It is that which depicts the exquisite joy of the Rescuer. When the Shepherd "findeth the sheep, He layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing." He is glad for the sake of the restored sheep, but still for His own. It was "for the joy set before him that He endured the cross and despised the shame." Into that sublime joy how many elements may enter! There must have been in my Saviour's heart a holy ecstasy of love which pleased itself in doing good—in saving me when lost—in enduring suffering and sacrifice for my salvation. This sublime love of the sin-bearer makes even the crown of thorns to flash as a diadem of splendor on the Redeemer's bleeding brow. Here was the divine luxury of doing good.

It is a sweet thought too that Jesus would have missed me if I had never been sought and brought back. As the shepherd in the story left the ninety and nine to hunt for the single straggler, so I may gladly hope that Jesus wanted me in heaven, or else He would not have come so far or endured so much to save me. If I were without Him, there would have been one more soul in hell. But, if He were left without me, there would be one soul the less to sing his praise in heaven. He would have had one the less to present before his Father "with exceeding joy."

For observe that the sweet parable says nothing about the delight of the sheep in being found; it only depicts the exceeding joy of the shepherd in finding the wanderer. He calls his neighbors together to share his gladness. "Likewise there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." The common and inaccurate rendering of this text confines the joy to the angels only; as if it read "among the angels." Just as well say that the "neighbors" felt the thrill of gladness over the recovered sheep, and not the Shepherd himself.

The transcendent joy in heaven over a saved soul is not confined to the angel bands. It is only witnessed by them, and partly shared by them. It is "in their presence" that the celestial rapture breaks forth. But the supreme joy is in the bosom of the enthroned Redeemer! His was the sorrow, when He was "exceeding sorrowful even unto death." His is the joy, when He presents even one repentant sinner "before the presence of His glory." He sees of the travail of His soul and is satisfied.

Oh! beloved Saviour! When we behold Thee on thy throne, the Shepherd amid His ransomed flock: Thy victories complete; the last wandering sheep brought home; the last recovered jewel glittering in Thy crown; then we will confess that the triumph was worthy of the toil, and the ransom of Thy glorified church was worthy of all the bitter agonies of Him who came to seek and to save the lost! "Worthy is the LAMB that was slain, to receive power and riches and strength and honor and glory and blessing for ever and ever!"—*Independent.*

### A GOOD TEST.

A few years ago, as Rev. Professor Finney was holding a series of meetings in the city of Edinburgh, many persons called upon him for personal conversation and prayer.

One day a gentleman appeared in great distress of mind. He had listened to Mr. Finney's sermon on the previous evening, and it had torn away his "refuge of lies." Mr. Finney was plain and faithful with him, pointing out to him the way of life clearly, as his only hope of salvation. The weeping man assured him that he was willing to give up all for Jesus—that he knew of nothing he would reserve—all for Jesus.

"Then let us go upon our knees and tell God of that," said Mr. Finney. So both knelt at the altar, and Mr. Finney prayed, "O Lord, this man declares that he is prepared to take thee as his God, and to cast himself upon thy care, now and forever."

The man responded "Amen" heartily. Mr. Finney continued, "O Lord, this man vows that he is ready to give his wife, family, and all their interests up to thee."

Another hearty "Amen" from the man. He went on, "O Lord, he said that he is willing to give thee his business, whatever it may be, and conduct it for thy glory."

The man was silent—no response. Mr. Finney was surprised at his silence, and asked, "Why do you not say 'Amen' to this?"

"Because the Lord will not take my business, sir; I am in the spirit trade," he answered.

The traffic could not withstand such a test as that. "The Lord will not take" such a business under his care. He demands its destruction, as one of the mightiest obstacles to the progress of his kingdom in the earth.—*Am. Messenger.*

### THE LORD'S DAY

REASONS FOR DRESSING PLAINLY ON THE LORD'S DAY.

1. It would lessen the burdens of many who find it hard to maintain their places in society.

2. It would lessen the force of the temptations which often lead men to barter honor and honesty for display.

3. If there was less strife in dress at church, people in moderate circumstances would be more inclined to attend.

4. Universal moderation in dress at church would improve the worship by the removal of many wandering thoughts.

5. It would enable all classes of people to attend church better in unfavorable weather.

6. It would lessen, on the part of the rich, the temptations to vanity.

7. It would lessen, on the part of the poor, temptations to be envious and malicious.

8. It would save valuable time on the Sabbath.

9. It would relieve our means of a serious pressure, and thus enable us to do more for good enterprises.—*Temperance Vindicator.*

### A NEW PASTOR.

1. Be thoroughly resolved that you will be satisfied with the man and his ministry, even if you should discover some things which you think might be improved. 2. Give him the confidence and affection of your heart. 3. Always welcome him cordially to your dwelling, and bestow upon him those respectful attentions which are pleasant to every man, and have much to do with the comfort of a minister. When you can do so with propriety and without foolish flattery, let him know from your own lips that his ministry is acceptable to you. 5. Never in his presence compare his ministry with that of another man, so as to convey to his mind the impression that you mean to disparage him. 6. Be ready at all times co-operate with him in what he may propose for the good of the church. 7. Never, except for the weightiest reasons, take ground against him.—*Spears.*