

# The Christian Messenger.

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WHOLE SERIES.  
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## Poetry.

### AT THE DOOR.

The mistakes of my life are many,  
The sins of my heart are more,  
And I scarce can see for weeping—  
But I still will knock at the door.

I am lowest of those who love him;  
I am weakest of those who pray—  
But I come as he has bidden,  
And he will not say me, Nay.

My mistakes his love shall cover,  
And the feet that shrink and falter  
Shall walk through the gate of day.

If I turn not from his whisper,  
If I let not go his hand,  
I shall see him in his beauty—  
The King in the far-off land!

The mistakes of my life are many,  
And my soul is sick with sin,  
And I scarce can see for weeping—  
But the Lord will let me in.

### CRYING FOR THE MOON.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A WOMAN'S POEMS."  
It is very pretty because it is high;  
All things are pretty when out of reach,  
And the prettiest things are kept in the sky.  
Why? Can I ever tell you why?  
God, I think, knows better than I.  
I must learn what I cannot to do.

But it is yellow sometimes, do you say,  
And sometimes red—and you want it so?  
I wonder how long it would please your play,  
Remember it does not shine by day,  
And at night you'd have to put it away—  
You could take it to sleep with you.

Yes, but you cannot have it, I fear,  
For a reason—a good as we find in books,  
For a people as wise as you, and as queer,  
Will cry for the moon year after year,  
And go to their graves without it, my dear;  
Because it is larger than it looks!

## Religious.

### HONEY FROM THE ROCK.

BY REV. THOMAS A. T. HANNA.

There are certain delights of which most Christians in these times seem to have tasted very little. Every truth of the Gospel has a heavenly comfort and sweetness in it to him who thoroughly believes that truth. As all the bones are moistened with marrow, and overlaid with fatness, so every doctrine of the cross, however repulsive it may be to the pride of men, has a true relish to all whose spiritual senses are exercised to discern it. In my college days, I wondered at a fellow-student, who declared that the doctrine of election gave him heavenly comfort. I have seen times since then, when that same doctrine was a hiding place from the wind, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and when I sat down under its shadow with great delight. One of the worst consequences of the present decay of doctrine, is the shallowing of Christian experience. If we are in the river of salvation at all, it is at that part where the waters are to the ankles. God's servants of other times pressed thousands of furlongs beyond us, and found mighty waters—waters to swim in.

I wish to speak of four cardinal points in the Gospel which are displeasing, not only to the unchanged heart, but to millions of professed believers. I would show that, as God brought oil out of the flinty rock for his people, so his Spirit can bring refreshment and nourishment out of the most adamant and frowning truths of his word. First, as to the

#### SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD.

He does according to his will, among the armies of heaven, and the inhabitants of earth. With him, surely, "stat pro ratione voluntas." His will is ultimate law. He has a right and power over his creatures, like the potter's over the clay. Now, what joy can be found in this thought? It gives us the happiness of submission, than which there is no greater in this world. "It is the Lord; let him do with me what seem-

eth him good." Or, as one in another place testifies: "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it." The Messiah himself drunk of that cup, and found sweetness in its dregs, when he said: "Not my will, but thine." The author of the "Rock of Ages" sings the strain also:

Sweet to lie passive in his hands,  
And know no will but his.

There can be no absolute submission, except to an absolute sovereign. If God had not an absolute right to dispose of us at his pleasure, it would be wrong for us to yield ourselves unreservedly to his will. He who humbles himself under the mighty hand of God, is abiding under the shadow of the Almighty. The thought of God's

#### ETERNAL CHOICE

of his people, is fitted to give great delight to every one who heartily believes it. But this is not in the way in which it is slanderously reported. Those who reject the clear truth of Scripture, often charge those who receive it, with a selfish joy that they themselves alone are the favorites of heaven. Nothing could be more unjust. It is the very consciousness of his own guilt, shame, and helplessness, which shows a man that he deserves from God nothing but wrath, and therefore, if God's love is set upon him, it can only be cause of deeper humiliation. When Spurgeon came to London, and the thousands thronged to hear him, human wisdom would have predicted: "It will make him proud or vain." Instead of that, he was overwhelmed with an agony of self-abasement, by the thought that God had chosen such a person for such a work. But while there is no mean selfishness, there is deep and solid peace in the election of God. It furnishes a ground of safety on which a soul can rest. As the gifts and calling of God are without repentance on his part, we are assured that he who foreknew and predestinated, will also glorify. A clear view of our calling and election gives the last stab to self-righteousness. The mind is thrilled by contemplating God alone, doing the whole work of redemption from eternity to eternity. We feel that he who chose from eternity, will keep through eternity. We see Jesus as the Alpha in the bright constellation of redeeming love, and the Omega too.

#### THE ENTIRE AND HOPELESS SINFULNESS OF MAN

is more clearly shown in the Gospel of Christ than it could be in any other way. And even this, forbidding as it seems, has a precious jewel in it. It shows us that God's plan of salvation makes thorough work of our sins. It is the custom of quacks to call the disease by some light name. So there are many who heal the hurt of the soul slightly, saying, Peace! Peace! when there is no peace. The wise Master-builder of Zion does not daub the wall with untempered mortar. He will thoroughly purge his floor. The first thing, in order to any cure, is to know the extent of the disease. He who has not known how sin abounds in his own soul, can hardly realize the superabounding of grace. He that knows the plague of his own heart, will delight in Him by whose intercession the plague is stayed. The glorious thought of regeneration could have no place, if we were not dead in trespasses and sins. Blessed are they that confess themselves wretched and miserable poor and blind and naked. None but he who has felt the horror of being lost, can feel the joy of salvation.

#### JUSTIFICATION BY IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS.

That we appear before God, not on the ground of our obedience, but in the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, is, indeed, a high thought. It gives boldness even for the day of judgment. It presents us without spot or wrinkle before Jehovah's throne. They that have put on Christ, can stand their ground when the earth and the heavens flee away. The reason for the opposition to this doctrine is not very clear. Why should

not a Christian joy to think that God will find him covered, not with his own righteousness which is of the law, but with that of Jesus, which is by faith? Only thus can we become heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; for, as Levi being in Abraham, paid tithes to the king of Salem; so the believer, being in Christ, and having Christ's merits put to his credit, receives from God the glory which belongs to the Eternal Son.

Yea, all the mighty principles of God's science of salvation have marrow and fatness in them. Rocky as they seem at a distance, to those who approach them they gush forth streams of oil. Long after the senseless tirades against doctrine have sunk into the grave of silence, joy shall blossom to the believer, out of these undecaying truths.—*National Baptist.*

### HARPER THAN A TWO-EDGED SWORD.

A steamboat captain was fond of ridiculing the Scriptures, and making fun of religion and its professors. He was a confirmed infidel. He took special delight in uttering his sentiments in the presence of ministers of the Gospel. On one of his trips there was on board an excellent minister of Christ, who had the courage to sit down and talk with this sceptic.

The special subject of conversation was the impossibility of miracles. The minister after patiently hearing him, said, "Captain did you ever read the New Testament?" "No; I can't say I ever did. I've read parts of it." "Will you promise me you will read it all through, and then I'll discuss any subject on which you have doubts?" This was said in a kind, persuasive tone, and the captain replied, "I will." The minister then went to his trunk and presented a copy of the New Testament to the captain, who again assured him he would read it all through.

Thus they parted. After some weeks the minister had occasion to travel on the same boat, and soon sought out the captain, whose countenance and manner were entirely changed. After the warm greeting and salutation, the minister inquired about his reading the book. "Ah, sir!" said he, "I had not read far before I felt I was a guilty sinner, and that I needed just such a friend as Jesus, the Son of God. I was enabled to cry with the publican, 'God be merciful to me a sinner,' and with the blind beggar of Jericho, 'Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.' And I can now trust in that Jesus, and love Him, whom I once despised."

The joy of this minister of Christ can better be imagined than described. The captain became a devout Christian, and lived long to tell to others what a dear Saviour he had found.—*Sailor's Magazine.*

### "FACE THE SUN."

Alexander the Great once ordered out his favorite horse Bucephalus to exhibit to some friends. The groom led him out, but in such a way as to cause the shadow of the horse to be cast before him, and he became restive. Alexander at once ordered the groom to face the sun, and he became as gentle as a lamb.

We are all troubled sometimes by shadows falling across our pathway. They look black and large, and frighten us out of peace and comfort. "Face the sun" is as good a direction to us as it was to the groom of Bucephalus.

Shadows of past sins often fall upon us in dark deformity. It is a temptation of Satan. If we believe in Christ those sins are all forgiven. God has cast them behind his back. He has sunk them in the depths of the sea. He has removed them as far as the east is from the west. He has blotted them out. The scarlet has become as wool, and the crimson as white as snow. Christian, face the sun! Let your pardoning God shine upon you, and

those dark shadows will flee behind you and you will see them no more.

The only way for sinners to escape from such shadows, deepening evermore, is to face the sun as it shines in Jesus Christ with penitence and faith in Him, and then pardon, peace and joy will come and their sins will be among the things that were.

Shadows of present trials and temptations are often projected across our path. These may be driven away. Face the sun, and each ray from our Heavenly Friend and Helper will be a promise of help and deliverance. We may by faith in Christ extract from every present trial all that makes it burdensome, and which destroys our peace before its deep shadow falls heavily across the soul. From every temptation His light will enable us to see the "way of escape," which always lies just at hand.

Shadows of future earthly ills sometimes throw gloom over the spirit. Losses, bereavements, bodily or mental pain, corroding cares anticipated, are often worse than present troubles. Face the sun, and let it shine fully upon you. Those troubles have no existence now, save in your own mind. All is clear overhead, and the bright shining of your Saviour's face will scatter all dark forebodings like mist before the sun. If anticipated troubles come they cannot bear the bright effulgence, but will be transmuted into golden glory.

Shadows of death, judgment and eternity frequently look dark and threatening to the Christian. Some hold their hope so feebly that they fear death will detach them from it; that the judgment will result in their condemnation, and eternity be one of endless gloom. Turn your face upward to Him whom you trust. Face the sun. Let His light shine into your soul and hope will grow to knowledge. You will no longer say "I hope I have a hope," but, "I know whom I have believed."

It is your privilege to have the light shining on your face and in your heart each hour, and then your last hour will be as bright as any that preceded it, yea, brighter. If Jesus is to you now a dear companion and friend, you will not fear Him on the throne of judgment, for there is "no condemnation" for you.

Eternity with God and Christ in light and glory will be a great attracting force drawing your soul toward it with increasing joy. Fellow Christian! you will "face the sun" forever, for "God is a sun" and Jesus is the "brightness of the Father's glory," and in heaven He is the "light thereof."

### POPULAR PROVERBS.

Somebody has told us that "a proverb is the wisdom of many, and the wit of one." Certainly proverbs in all languages, have been a most useful vehicle of truth condensed into a small compass, and hence having a firmer lodgment in the memory.

A few specimens, some familiar and some not often quoted, will serve to illustrate our meaning. By the way, not a few of the best proverbs in use, are traced to oriental nations—largely the Arabians and Chinese. The Hindus have also made many important additions to the world's collection of proverbs.

"Throw him into the river and he will rise with a fish in his mouth." (Arabic.) Some men are so fortunate that nothing can sink them. Where another man would drown, they find fish or pearls.

"There are no lies so wicked as those that have some foundation." (Chinese.) A saying which is but too true, and which ought to be universally understood in society, as some protection against slander.

"Many preparations before the sour plum sweetens." (Chinese.) Great results do not hastily ripen; great and important changes must undergo a gradual process.

"The walls have ears." (Arabic) This is one of the many instances of our homeliest proverbs in every day use, being derived from the East. No doubt the saying that "Little pitchers have great ears," (in allusion to the sharpness of hearing in children,) is also derived from the domestic utensils of foreign countries in ancient times. The British Museum contains many such little pitchers, as well as the Foundling Hospital.

"A stitch in time saves nine." One of the most sensible and practical of all proverbs, as everybody's experience can avouch. Yet, in defiance of all their own experience, how many people we see who constantly neglect the stitch in time.

"Three united men will ruin a town." (Arabic.) The power of combination was never more excellently expressed. "A fine verse, like a stream, may run through a course of ages." (Chinese.) And it often does so, sweetening the heart, fertilizing the imagination, and purifying the mind.

"What proof of penetration is it to tell the hour when the clock strikes." (Chinese.) In ridicule of those who prophesy after an event.

"It is the last feather that breaks the camel's back." (Arabic.) How often do we see an oppressive conduct continued to the utmost extent, only just short of the last feather, so that when the poor drudge dies, no one can say that he was killed by the last feather. His oppressor simply says he was worn out.—*N. Baptist.*

### DO YOU KNOW IT!

Do you know that the vows of God are upon you?  
Do you know that your life is rapidly passing?  
Do you know that the worth of life is in the good we do?  
Do you know that you are living in a wonderful time?  
Do you know that some one is following your example?  
Do you know that piety may unconsciously decline?  
Do you know that you need the prayer-meeting?  
Do you know that the prayer meeting needs you?  
Do you know that you can slight the Lord's supper?  
Do you know that Christ enjoins secret prayer?  
Do you know that all your property belongs to God?  
Do you know that you forfeit your hope by indolence?  
Do you know that your Sunday vacant seat looks bad?  
Do you know that if backslidden, Jesus will forgive you?—*Baptist Weekly.*

### A CHINESE GOVERNOR ON PRAYER.

In the *Pekin Gazette* of the 24th of November, Yang-chang-sun, Lieutenant Governor of Chekiang, memorialises the Throne requesting permission to rebuild the temple of the God of the Sea. The safety of Chekiang largely depends on the sea wall, and although it is man's province to erect such a wall and keep it in repair, it is none the less true, that we must look to the gods for its protection. The temple in question was situated in the city of Haining, but was so completely destroyed by the rebels, that only four stone pillars and a small pavilion were left standing. It occupied 40 mow of land. The sea is the greatest thing under heaven, and we are compelled to think that it is, with its daily ebb and flow, under the immediate control of the gods. The eastern and central portions of the sea wall are of stone, but the rest is only a narrow strip of earth and wood, and this weak structure is all we have to oppose the strength of the mighty deep; the danger is at times very great. Fortunately the sea was very tranquil last year, and the wind very light, thanks to the gracious protection of the gods. The