

The Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

NEW SERIES.
Vol. XVII., No. 44.

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Wednesday, October 29, 1873.

WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XXXVII., No. 44.

Poetry.

WHAT CAN I DO FOR JESUS?

What can I do for Jesus,
For Christ, the Hope of Glory,
To spread abroad His gospel,
To tell the 'old, old story?'
My hand is faint, my thought is weak,
My voice is impotent to speak
Of Him in whom I glory.

What can I do for Jesus?
Some thing at home; I may
Within the centre of myself
A useful work essay.

My heart, against the ills of night
With help divine I'll fight, I'll fight,
And Christ shall have the glory.

What shall I do for Jesus:
I have not far to roam;
Around the narrow circle
Of my family at home,
From day to day, from week to week,
Here may my walk and converse speak
Of Christ, to whom be glory!

What shall I do for Jesus?
Upon my closet floor
I'll kneel, I'll pray, I'll wrestle
For souls outside the door;
For friends, for foes, for all mankind,
That in God's bosom they may find
Jesus, the Hope of Glory.

What shall I do for Jesus?
Of silver have I any—
O may I spare it not, but give
To aid the starving many;
Nor wait till I have made it gold;
God's bank augments by forty-fold;
Of Him is grace and glory.

What shall I do for Jesus?
I'll meet my shortened day,
And gather up time's fragments,
That might beside me lay;
Minutes and moments yet will yield
Some sheaves upon the gospel field,
It used to Jesus' glory.

Religious.

PRAYER-MEETINGS.

The following editorial article from the *Baptist Union* contains precious thoughts and valuable hints touching the utility and proper management of prayer-meetings:

A good prayer-meeting is nurture and gladness. But few real good ones are attained. Most of them are mixed; wheat and chaff, life and dullness, inspiration and depression, joy and weariness, freshness and staleness in the same meeting. Skill is required to work up a fresh, joyous meeting where materials are abundant, and still more where they are scarce. They are often scarce, or unmanageable. The leader must have good judgment, be wide awake, study his forces, throw his soul into the work, if he would organize success. A dull leader will always make a dull prayer-meeting; a cross, scolding, arbitrary one, will make it sour and wearisome; a conceited, long-winded, preaching, generalising one, will send the people away, 'empty, swept and garnished.' There are not a few of this latter class. They suppress devotion, chill emotions, stifle thought, discourage faith and love, and restrain free utterance of heart-life and experience. This spoils a meeting.

A leader who merely presides at a meeting is simply inertia, a dead weight. Some imagine that meetings need no leading, that they should 'lead themselves,' be left to their own course. This is so, and not so. Every meeting needs to be managed and yet be left perfectly free; to be held under rein, and yet not feel the restraint; the tedious ones cut short, the dull inspired, the timid encouraged, the silent led to speak, and the hearts of all drawn out and made to participate, feeling that the service is theirs, made by them. It is work thus to lead, to control and impart a sense of freedom; it requires study, experience, and a warm heart to do it, and when it is done and the service over, we shall feel that virtue, nerve, strength, has gone out of us.

A good prayer-meeting is free, ro-

cial, home-like. It is a mistake to confine the praying and speaking to a few or allow it to be thus confined. Meetings get into ruts, run into grooves, fall into routine, the same ones praying, and the same ones speaking, the same prayers repeated and the same speeches hammered over and over in the same dull, seesaw order, without life or variation. Short prayers and many of them, short testimonies from all, joyous singing, and a few words of cheer from the leader should be the aim. Experience, personal hopes, conflicts, encouragements, aspirations are the richest and fittest contributions to such a service. In these, Scripture and heart come together, gospel and want, grace and necessity, strength and weakness, bread and hunger, reveal their relations, and the lessons taught are sweeter than all the wise and new and eloquent sayings that the few cultured talkers can possibly present.

REMEMBER that the character of a Christian is easily blemished; that they who wear white robes need to take care where they walk; that the smallest stain is visible in snow; that polished steel takes rust from the slightest touch of damp. Keep your garments clean. Keep your conscience tender—tender as the eye that closes its lids against an atom of dust, or as that sensitive plant, which I have seen shrink and shut its leaves, not merely at the rude touch of a finger, but at the breath of the mouth. Walk holly, humbly, lest your good be evil spoken of, and you should give occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. Mould your life on Christ's, and in the noble words of his Apostle, "Whatever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things."

PENNIES ON THE PLATE.—The practice of putting pennies on the plate has been handled in a very gingerly manner by most preachers. Not such is the style of Father Hennessy, and we believe that he is right. Father Hennessy, of St. Patrick's Bergen City, N. J., speaking to his congregation recently, said: "Let me tell you that many of you are in the habit of putting a penny upon the plate of our Lord. I shall not have that. It is an insult to God. Leave that to the children. You men and women who have been labouring all summer ought at least to put a ten cent bill on the plate. Many of you foolish women spend hundreds of dollars in silks and satins, and when you come to the house of the Lord put a penny on the plate!"—*Ex.*

A Christian nation, jealous of its laws, but careless of its people—conservative of its institutions, but contemptuous of the weak and poor whom those institutions oppress—are baptized infidels. Christ never died for laws nor for governments but for men; and they who crush men to build up nations may expect God to meet them with the blast of his lightning and the terror of his thunder. The masses against the classes, the world over—I am willing to go to judgment upon that.—*H. W. Beecher.*

Convey thy love to thy friend, as an arrow to the mark, to stick there, not as a ball against the wall, to rebound back to thee; that friendship will not continue to the end that is begun for an end.—*Quarles.*

Never were any of the saints so sufficiently armed that the devil hath not found some part or other unguarded, even in the best.—*William Gouge.*

There is, back of all this alluring, perishing sight-world, a realm of beauty and harmony, infinite and eternal, in which our invisible powers of love and thought, of memory and faith, are to live forever.

For the Christian Messenger.

THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL SECTION.

My dear Sir,—
The proceedings in the *Philosophical Section* of the Alliance on Monday the 6th inst., were of a very interesting character.

Dr. McCosh read a paper on "The religious aspects of the Doctrine of Development," after which a discussion took place. The Rev. Mr. Weldon, of London, expressed his concurrence with Dr. McCosh's views on the subject, and remarked that "the Bible was not intended to instruct us in science or the details of history"; it was written to teach man the way of access to God through Jesus Christ, wholly ignoring anything regarding the technicalities of scientific discoveries." The Rev. Dr. Brown observed that all he knew in regard to the vegetable and the animal kingdom was in harmony with the doctrine of development, as it is generally understood, and that, considered as an hypothesis it was useful in the prosecution of scientific inquiries, and might "ultimately exert a beneficial influence on religion."

Dr. Hodge wished Dr. Brown to say what development is. The great question which divides theists from atheists, Christians from unbelievers, is this:—Is development an intellectual process, guided by God, or is it a blind process of unintelligent, unconscious force, which knows no ends and adopts no means? In other words, is God the author of all we see, the Creator of all the beauty and grandeur of this world, or is it unintelligent force, gravity, electricity, and such like?"

Dr. Brown said in reply:—
"What I understand by the development hypothesis—many call a theory; I call it and maintain that it is as yet generally, and certainly with me, a hypothesis—is, confining myself to the vegetable kingdom, that the whole of the species of roses with which we are acquainted are not so many separate, special creations, but are all modified developments of one kind of rose, and all the information I possess in regard to the vegetable kingdom indicates that not only what we call species, but what many call genera and orders—calling them genera and orders in our ignorance—are also modified developments of the same formation. With regard to who is the author of creation, have I not answered it? I refer to the doctrine in the shorter catechism. [Applause.] Is a minister and a missionary of 40 years standing to be required to tell whether he believes that this world is made by God? [Great applause.]

But the question has been put, and it deserves an answer. My belief is that everything in heaven and earth and hell was created by the Lord and Father of our Saviour, Jesus-Christ. [Applause.] We are taught in that Catechism to which I referred to make a holy, reverent use of all God's attributes, ordinances, words, and works, and all wherebysoever He makes Himself known. I hold that as an expositor of God's Word, I am as truly a prophet of the Lord as I am when I stand in the pulpit as an expositor of God's Word. [Applause.] The inquiry is not as to the fact but as to the how? How has God produced this wondrous world, a world full of beauty? Never, through endless ages of existence shall I cease to think with gratitude of this, that the infancy of my being was spent in this glorious world, and as God gives me opportunities I shall continue to study the wondrous works of His hand.

My grandsire was a man not unknown in Scotland and America—John Brown of Haddington. [Applause.] One of his dying sayings was this: "I have hunted after all the lawful knowledge of the sons of men, but all would I give to know more of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus." These sentiments have been my sentiments, according to my weaker powers,

throughout a ministry of 40 years, and I hope to prosecute to the end of my life the researches for which an opportunity is afforded us below, and hope in the better world to join those who proclaim "the whole earth is full of Thy glory." [Applause.]

The next paper, on "Recent discoveries with reference to Primitive Man, as compared with Revelation," was read by Dr. Dawson, Principal of McGill College. Professor C. P. Kranth, of Philadelphia, read a paper on "Ideal Philosophy."

GEOLOGY AND THE BIBLE.

In the afternoon, Professor Guyot discoursed on "Geology and the Bible."

His address was an endeavor to reconcile the theories of geologists with the truths of creation. It called out at its conclusion, from the Rev. Mr. Barnett of Aberdeenshire, Scotland, the remark that he did not understand whether the reader of the paper held the view that the days of creation were periods of time or regular days. He had always stumbled over the passage that "the evening and the morning were the first day," and also the words of the verse, "for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth and rested the seventh day." He could not understand from the Professor's paper whether he meant that these were actual days.

The reply of Prof. Guyot gives the pith of his paper on that point. He said the days of creation are works. In the true history of anything from the great beginning epochs to development—in the plant it is the root, stem, leaf, flower, seed, these are the days of the plant—time is given according to the need. These are the successive days which were simply indicated in the steps of the organization. In regard to the question of the sabbath, in order to retain the idea of 24 hours, we must leave Moses and be very unjust to him when he tells us that the day of 24 hours began at the fourth day of creation and not at the first, for before it was simply confusion and chaos. There was then no succession. Therefore we have nothing to do with time. It is a succession which makes the history."

Dr. J. Williamson Nevin, of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, read a paper on "Christianity and Humanity," which was followed by an address by Professor Speiss, of the University of Jena, on "Theology and Philosophy." Dr. Dawson being loudly called for and the question being asked whether there is any necessary antagonism between Darwinism and the Christian Religion, Dr. D. said:—

"MR. CHAIRMAN: The question asked me is whether there is any necessary antagonism between the Darwinian system and the Christian religion. That is a question that would require a treatise to answer, I take it, and I scarcely know where to begin in attempting a reply. Darwinism is not the whole of what is understood by the doctrine of evolution. The doctrine of evolution holds apparently that all things have evolved themselves, produced themselves, so to speak. In holding such a doctrine, Mr. Herbert Spencer assumes matter and force. He assumes all that we call the forces of nature. In science we don't hold that we can do anything until we have matter and force. We know nothing of force independent of matter, and nothing of matter independent of force: We only know the two things united, and know nothing of their origin; and therefore, as scientists, we must have these things before we can arrive at any conclusion. Then, having matter and force, our Spencerian philosophers maintain that from them they can produce life. When you talk of Darwinianism you talk of theories that make vaster demands on our faith than our science. Darwinianism takes in only one branch of it. Darwin says that if you will give me two or three species of plants I will show you how all species of plants are evolved out of them.

When he attempts to come to facts, his philosophy shows itself to be weak. There is no scientific proof in his doctrines. An English conchologist went to France to compare shells, and when he returned he said that the French and English species bore about the same relation to each other that a French franc bears to an English shilling; and that is the case with this question. The Scripture tells us things were created by God after their kind. Darwin would perhaps admit that a few things were created after their kind.

In conclusion, there is one thing I would point out. Sometimes we are apt to tie the Scripture down to things that we don't understand and which Scripture does not distinctly teach us. The manner in which Moses uses the word "create"—for the production first of animals and for the production of man as signifying a rational being—is illustrated when he says, "and lo! the land brought forth plants." Now, if I say that Moses maintained that the different kinds of plants were created separately, I might say—and more than Moses authorises me to—Science does not at present tell us how the species came into existence. We only know that they came into existence. We only know that they came into being at different periods of geological time. Science demonstrates by facts, but we have not the facts on this point. Don't be afraid, brethren, to talk on these subjects. Study them. Enter into them. It is my experience that after you have studied them all your life you will still find as much more to learn. [Applause.]

The Rev. Dr. Hodge—My idea of Darwinianism is that he teaches that all the forms of vegetable and animal life, including man and all the organs of the human body, are the result of unintelligent, undesigning forces; and that the human eye was formed by mere unconscious action. Now, according to my idea, that is a denial of what the Bible teaches, what reason teaches, and at what the conscience of any human being teaches: for it is impossible for any such organ as the eye to be formed by blind forces. It excludes God; it excludes intelligence from everything. Am I right? [Applause.]

Dr. Dawson—I think Darwin would not admit so much as has been said, and yet I believe his doctrine logically leads to that conclusion. That is what I have stated in writing long ago. The Darwinian theory takes hold of the production of varieties. Our doctrine is that these varieties are the action of external nature upon the species. I know that many people are confused in this way. As regards the varieties Darwin is well enough, but as regards species I don't believe in it because it comes in contact with the Bible. The Darwinian theory, I believe, is this: That species have come into existence by what he calls natural selection, which natural selection arises in the struggle of one species with another for existence in the world, and the survival of the fittest in that struggle. It is not science at all—only a bad philosophy."

"Darwinism," said Dr. M. B. Anderson of the University of Rochester, Darwinism is not science. Let us bear in mind that in every book on any branch of science properly presented to the public mind a very large portion of the matter is of the nature of hypotheses. No book of science can be written without discussing and examining a very great variety of hypothesis. Man cannot be proved to have been present at his creation for the purpose of evidence. I may believe in the doctrine of the unity of man, and I may look at it as a scientific man, from any point of view, accepting it for my working hypothesis. If a man talks to me about evolution, and believes in a God that unrolls the magnificent plan of the universe, I humbly thank God for such a doctrine. When a development is put before me that excludes God I don't believe a word of it.