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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

A WALK BY THE SEA.

PART I.

'Twas on a quiet summer's eve,
The sun was sinking in the west:
Wandering along the ocean shore,
I sat upon a stone to rest.

Beside me was a little pool,
And little wavelets on it played;
To speak or sing, it seemed to me,
These little wavelets essayed.

Close to the pool I bent me down,
To know what these soft words might be,
And, near as I remember now,
This was the song it sang to me:
"O I'm the sea, O I'm the sea,
How great, how grand my billows be!
Go search the whole creation round,
No sea like this will e'er be found."

I rose and left that little pool,
Feeling amazed beyond degree
To hear a pool just five feet wide;
Sing with such pride and vanity—
"O I'm the sea, O I'm the sea, &c."

A little farther on I walked
And saw another "little sea,"
And I thought too seemed to have its song,
And, this is what it proved to be—
"O I'm the sea, O I'm the sea, &c."

Onward I went, and soon again,
Another pool appeared to me;
And, would you be surprised to hear—
It sang this song as merrily—
"O I'm the sea, O I'm the sea, &c."

'Twas getting dark, I homeward turned
Disgusted with such vanity,
To hear these pools, a few feet wide
Sing "I'm the sea, O I'm the sea."

Next day again my walk I took
Upon the shore, my wonted round;
And to my small astonishment,
These little seas could not be found.

And why? Because another sea,
The Ocean, like some living thing,
Had swallowed them, their songs and all,
No more they boast, no more they sing—
"O I'm the sea, O I'm the sea, &c."

And, how is this? at once I asked,
A wave came rolling broad and high,
And running up to where I stood,
In haste it gave me this reply—

"The Ocean sent me up to say,
These little pools of yesterday
Were only pools, and not the sea,
And now they're swallowed up in me."

Then down the pebbly beach it ran,
And back again it quickly came:
"Just one word more, I quite forgot;
Inland you'll find it quite the same."

PART II.

'Twas Sabbath morn, the Sabbath bells
Tolled out the hour of praise and prayer:
I went within the sacred place,
The young and old were gathered there.

The minister gave out the text,
He spoke of faith, love, liberty;
The blessings of the Christian life,
The glories of eternity.

But, would I had not this to tell,
Too much alas! there seemed to be
Of absence of those very things,
Of faith, and love, and liberty.

The sermon done, the service o'er,
I wended homeward pensively;
And thinking o'er what I had heard,
This the sum total seemed to be—

"The church are we, the church are we,
The garden walled around are we;
Go search the whole creation round
No church like this will e'er be found."

And so I found where'er I went
Church or Dissent, to bond or free,
Each seemed to think itself the church,
And each one sang this song to me:
"The church are we, the church are we, &c."

Then on the rapid wings of thought,
I soared beyond the bounds of time:
And standing on the eternal shore,
A voice from every land and clime

Rose high and loud with one consent,
Like thunder's peal, or ocean's roar;
Distinct and clear this song I heard:
"The Lord doth reign for evermore."

I looked along the shores of time,
Where I had walked in days of yore;
The sea of truth, and light and love,
Now rolled sublime from shore to shore.

Those little pools I could not find,
And then I asked the reason why;
A wave from that bright, glassy sea
Came rolling grandly, broad and high.

And bounding up to where I stood,
It seemed to speak, and speak to me,
And these are just the words it spoke:
"I can explain the mystery!"

"The Ocean sent me up to say,
Those "little pools" of yesterday,
Were only pools, and not the sea,
And now they're swallowed up in me."
—*Cora Bay.* J. B.

Religious.

ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS.

BY HENRY VARLEY.

"Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist." Such was the testimony of the Lord concerning His servant whom persecution had suddenly cast into prison. The thousands of eager listeners no longer hear his burning words, and from active work to lonely imprisonment he now learns the service of suffering. We might have supposed that at such a time as this the Lord had need of John's mighty ministry, and, possessed of all power, as He says, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father," how easy for Him to deliver John, even as on a subsequent occasion He delivered Peter (Acts 12). Evidently His "ways are not our ways," and oftentimes it becomes us to fold our mantle about our heads, saying: We wait in reverent silence His word. Dost persecution hide in prison, it may also bring the master forth to utter a testimony before its time, the chime of which shall refresh the weary spirit, and give songs that cannot be hushed, even though the singer be caged within iron and stone, as Bunyan sings:

"For, though men shut my outer man within their bolts and bars,
Yet by the talb of Christ I can mount higher than the stars."

The disciples of John hear their Master's "Well done" centuries before the great Lord speaks to His other servants. Even thus doth He compensate the world's rejection of His servants by the knowledge of His mind. "It is a small thing to me," says Paul, "to be judged of man's judgment [day, margin]; he that judgeth me is the Lord." Man's tiny little *day* how fast the world's [day] judgment hastens onward to the day of the Lord, when every false judgment shall be reversed, and God's judgment stand forever. Surely "Wisdom is justified by and of her children."

But why this wonderful testimony of John, "Among them that are born of women?" No longer look back upon the whole line of human history. Gather the great men of the past; let the patriarchal and prophetic ages send their foremost men; let history, war, commerce, art and science unroll their records of the dead past, and the Eternal One says, "A greater hath not risen than John the Baptist." It is not within the limits of a brief paper to answer fully the why of these words. I can but simply give suggestive thoughts, gathered from brief records of this wondrous man. 1st. The cause of his greatness is given in these words: "An angel, Gabriel, gives his character thus, Luke i: 15, "For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb; and thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth, and many of the children of Israel shall be turned to the Lord their God." May character in our children be a design of God, as well as a product of our earthly example and teaching. Then in this also let our dependence rest upon Him who says, "In all thy ways acknowledge me." In personal purity and excellence he began his career, strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man. How in the ap-

pointed time he came forth crying in the wilderness. "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" how as the fore-runner he testified in burning eloquence of the coming "One," "the latchet of whose shoes he was not worthy to unloose," until the thousands of "Jerusalem and Judea and all the region round about Jordan" came out to the mighty man and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins, all this is known to the student of the Divine Word.

Not more, I suppose, than nine months' ministry, and John stood alone in the wonderful popularity of those days. And it is to the lessons of that season I would call attention—less for his admiration than our imitation—his absolute abandonment to Christ, how utterly lost he was in his Master's work, how his light became absorbed in the glory of his Lord. "And this is the record of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?" Well might they say this, for his ministry and name had become the center of attracted thousands, and he confessed and denied not, but confessed I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. "Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? Mark his reply. He said: I am the Voice of one crying, etc. (John i: 19). What! hast thou no personality? is thy parentage, training and past life nothing? Art thou so merged into the glory of thy Lord and the import of thy message that no mention is made of any power thou hast save the faculty of speech—a voice only, and always crying in varied strain, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world?" And still the voice increases. The sound goes out in far reaching notes of gladness to Him whose manifested glory is about to burst forth. The Lord is come, and now every power of the Baptist is centered upon Him "who is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person."

To my own mind, one of the finest passages ever recorded is this now given of John: "And they came to John and said unto him, Rabbi, He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold the same baptizeth and all come to Him." Surely, words were never framed more calculated to stir a man's envy than these. But very plainly, they say to John: You have done a nice thing for yourself. Here a few weeks since you were the most prominent man in this whole province, and right in the height of your fame. You bare testimony to another. You cried, Behold Him; and now behold the same baptizeth and all come to Him. You testified to another, and now He has taken your calling and your fame. Your breath filled the sails of another, and, like a stranded bark, you are left high and dry upon the sands. Oh! mark the answer of this man, whose greatness lies beyond the loss of self or work: "John answered and said, A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom which standeth and heareth Him rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. This my joy, therefore, is fulfilled. He must increase, but I decrease." They came to stir John's envy; they find his joy fulfilled. Not fullness of envy, but fullness of joy. The platform is to be filled by the Lord. He has no compeer there. John joyfully stands aside. His Lord has come. His ministry, like the torrent of a mighty river, has reached the great sea, and, now lost in the breadths and lengths and depths and heights, he knows his work over, his ministry fulfilled; and, like as we have watched the waves of the incoming tide

flowing joyously on, and yet accompanied by their minor ebbings, even thus the music of the "Voice" is heard. He must increase, I decrease. Ah! I wonder not that John was trusted with success. Grace had enabled him to reach the point at which it is not dangerous. He could rejoice in the success of another with all his heart, though the costs to him were position, service, fame, liberty and life. Of John also it may be written: "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up."

Let not the reader of this paper think me censorious if I venture, after much experience among my fellow Christians, to add that the spirit of jealousy and inability to rejoice in the success of others is among the foremost causes of our personal weakness. We are not judges, but we are observers, and in my personal observation I have noted self. Some few years since a servant of Christ, that I now love very much, came near the church where I labor when in London. He is a great teacher, and his ministry very blessed and very profitable. After some months I missed some of my hearers. I soon found myself the subject of feelings of unkindness and jealousy, about which I need not enlarge. Suffice it to say that I became utterly disgusted with myself about them; for when I came to analyze my thoughts I found that it was as though I should say: "Lord Jesus, if thy kingdom come not by me, it had better not come." If ever I loathed myself it was then, and I prayed either that I might die, or His grace enable me to be purged of this atrocious wickedness. Since then I have known more of His blessing, and I yearn that we may so realize His prosperity, that, like as we have seen a huge harvest-field in which the reaped sheaves were piled in stacks so many that the reapers were hidden and only the united voices shouted, "Harvest Home," even so may we be hidden in Him, lost in our work, ever singing John's refrain: "He must increase; I decrease."—*Independent.*

For the Christian Messenger.

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JOHN BARNEVELD, ADVOCATE OF HOLLAND. BY JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY, D. C. L., L. L. D., &c. In two volumes, pp. 389, 464. Harper and Brothers, New York.

John of Barneveld was a true patriot. He was a man of profound judgement, rare statesmanship, wonderful skill in discerning character, and in unravelling plots and detecting dark schemes. The Republic of the Netherlands was greatly indebted to him; he fought for her in his youth, and devoted his long life (he lived seventy-one years) to her establishment and defence. His reward was execution by the sword, on pretence of treason, May 13, 1619.

Henry IV. of France held Barneveld in the highest respect. He trusted him entirely, and continually consulted him in his political perplexities, particularly in counteracting the efforts of Spain on behalf of despotism and Popery.

Barneveld's ruin was owing to the bitter strife between the Remonstrants and Contra-Remonstrants (the Armenians and Calvinists) of the Netherlands. For himself, he would have all men believe as they were convinced, and profess their belief in their own way, undisturbed by others. But religious liberty was little understood in those days. *Cujus regio, ejus religio*, was the motto of society—a man must be of the religion of the country he lives in—if not, he must look for the dungeon, or the hangman's rope, or the headman's axe. Protestants and Papists, who differed on almost every thing, agreed in persecuting—and the former persecuted each other. They have now unlearned the lesson; but the Papists stand by the old traditions. At any rate, Pius IX. protests against liberty of conscience, and the Vatican Council declares that he is infallible. The mischievous effects of hate,

political and religious, were never seen, we think, under such revolting circumstances as in the trial, condemnation, and death of Barneveld. No;—it was not a trial. It was an inquisition, continued for three months, before twenty-four Commissioners, who laboured all that time to extract from the prisoner such testimony as might be warped by perverse ingenuity into a declaration of guilt. No accusation was lodged against him: No witnesses were called. There were no pleadings. Barneveld was cruelly badgered to death. After more than forty years had been spent in the service of his country, the malice of the Stadholder, Maurice of Nassau, who differed from him on the religious question of the day, was gratified by his murder. For that it was a murder, under the guise of law, will be acknowledged by all impartial students of the history of the time. A more disgraceful and atrocious deed never blackened the records of a free country.

The closing scene is thus described:—

"The old statesman, leaning on his staff, walked out upon the scaffold and calmly surveyed the scene. Lifting his eyes to Heaven, he was heard to murmur, 'O God! what does man come to!' Then he said bitterly once more; 'This, then, is the reward of forty years' service to the State!'"

"La Motte, (a clergyman) who attended him, said fervently, 'It is no longer time to think of this. Let us prepare your coming before God.'"

"Is there no cushion or stool to kneel upon?" said Barneveld, looking around him.

"The provost said he would send for one, but the old man knelt at once on the bare planks. His servant, who waited upon him as calmly and composedly as if he had been serving him at dinner, held him by the arm. It was remarked that neither master or man, true Stoics and Hollanders both, shed a single tear upon the scaffold."

"La Motte prayed for a quarter of an hour, the Advocate remaining on his knees."

"He then rose and said to John Franken, 'See that he does not come near me,' pointing to the executioner who stood in the background grasping his long double-handed sword. Barneveld then rapidly unbuttoned his doublet with his own hands and the valet helped him off with it. 'Make haste! make haste!' said his master. 'The statesman then came forward and said in a loud, firm voice to the people:

'Men, do not believe that I am a traitor to the country. I have ever acted uprightly and loyally, as a good patriot, and as such I shall die.'

"The crowd was perfectly silent."

"He then took his cap from John Franken, drew it over his eyes, and went forward towards the stand, saying:

'Christ shall be my guide. O Lord, my heavenly Father, receive my spirit.'

"As he was about to kneel with his face to the South, the provost said:

"My lord will be pleased to move to the other side, not where the sun is in his face."

"He knelt accordingly, with his face towards his own house. The servant took farewell of him, and Barneveld said to the executioner:

"Be quick about it. Be quick."

"The executioner then struck his head off at a single blow."

Maddened by the injustice which deprived them of their father, the sons of Barneveld conspired against the Stadholder, and planned his death. Others joined them. The conspiracy was discovered, and fourteen lives were sacrificed to vengeance. The widow of Barneveld besought Maurice to spare the life of her son, who was one of the victims: his brother had secured safety by flight.

"Referring to the bitter past, Maurice asked Madame de Barneveld why she now asked mercy for her son, having refused to do so for her husband."