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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

"SAFE IN THE ARMS OF JESUS"

"Underneath are the everlasting arms."—
DEUT. XXXIII. 27.

In the arms of Jesus resting
Night by night and day by day
Comforted, encouraged, strengthened
Onward I pursue my way.

Arms of Mercy,—else they never
Unto me would have been reached,
From the miry clay have rescued
My continual sinking feet.

Arms of Love,—that brought salvation
Sweet to souls with sin oppressed—
Sweet because divinely given;
(He that feels it knows it best.)

Arms of Strength,—with power enlisted
To protect those resting there;
Whom, combined, the powers of darkness
Ne'er can sink to dark despair.

Arms which bear the marks of conflict,
Telling how severe the fight,
When the Son of God and man brought
Immortality to light.

Arms the power of death have vanquished
Having triumphed o'er his king,
So that Faith triumphant echoes:
"Where is now thy bitter sting!"

Arms of Jesus,—Oh how precious!
Aged one, you know their worth;
Youth has failed you, but He loved you,
E'er the morning stars had birth.

Arms of Jesus! Let me rest there
Crossing Jordan's swelling tide
Till I joined the loved and blessed ones,
Safe at home on Canaan's side.

M.

Religious.

DO CHRISTIANS IN HEAVEN PRAY?

This is not an idle question; but it may be said, "It is none of our business." I think otherwise. It concerns me that I am prayed for by God's people here. It certainly would be pleasant to know that my parents and others who prayed for me on earth are still praying for me in heaven. Yea, pleasant to know that the church triumphant, like the church militant are praying on the earth. And why not? They certainly desire it, as intensely now as ever they did here. We cannot suppose that they are idle; and it seems reasonable to suppose that as they supplicated here, so they will supplicate in heaven, provided they are permitted to do so. What hinders? Why may not the newly arrived mother still plead with God for the conversion of her ungodly son whom she has left behind? Would it not seem natural to suppose that her surroundings, and her nearness to Christ would intensify her desire for his salvation, and increase the earnestness of her intercessions for him, provided she is permitted to pray? For the same reason would not all the ransomed in glory more ardently desire, and more earnestly plead that Christ's kingdom may come and his will be done on earth, provided they are permitted to pray? Have they ceased to "pour out their hearts before him?" Are their prayers ended? This, I think, is the almost universal impression. How often we hear it said of departed ones "They have done praying—prayer is turned to praise."

Is there anything in God's Word that sustains this view? (Any hint in all the Scriptures to support the supposition? I know of none. What right, then, have we, in the absence of any proof to assume that the saints do not pray in heaven?

What right have we, it may be said, to assume that they do pray? I do not assert nor assume it. I claim that it is not unreasonable to suppose that those who prayed here still pray in their celestial abode. As their desires for the salvation of earth's millions must still exist, so it would seem unnatural to suppose that they refuse to

give vent to those desires now as they did here, provided they are allowed the privilege. As "Prayer is the breath of God in man," why may not that breath be breathed into the saints in heaven as well as into the saints on earth?

Are there not some things in the Bible which favor this supposition?

1. Analogy. Since a lost soul in hell actually prayed to God for his five brothers on the earth, does it not seem reasonable to conclude that the same permission will be and is granted to the saved in heaven? Not the praying of Dives, but the particular thing prayed for, was denied him—the sending of Lazarus. Now I submit that the permission of prayer in this case makes it reasonable to suppose a like privilege among the redeemed in bliss.

2. The intercessions of Christ and of the Holy Spirit in heaven serve to favor the view advanced,

"Nor prayer is made on earth alone,
The Holy Spirit pleads;
And Jesus, on th' eternal throne,
For sinners intercedes."

Since the Saviour intercedes, is it not natural to suppose the saints—so near him and so like him—do the same? Since the Holy Spirit pleads may not this indwelling one prompt the same spirit in the glorified saints? Does not the fact that Christ and the Holy Spirit pray in heaven seem to favor the view that the redeemed also continue their supplications for the salvation of men? If the fervent, effectual prayer of one righteous man avails much on earth, why not in heaven?

3. Have we not in Rev. 6: 9, 10, an example in the case of sainted martyrs? John saw the souls of the martyrs who had been slain for the word of God, and they were engaged in supplication: "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

"This does not imply," says Dr. Pond, "that the martyrs in heaven have any malice towards their persecutors, but they implore that the terrible scenes of torture and slaughter on earth may cease, and that God would magnify his glorious justice in visiting upon the infamous destroyers of his people that punishment which they deserve, and this, too, speedily. The answer to their prayer is, that they must forbear a season. Others are waiting for the crown of martyrdom, (v. 11) and their destinies must be fulfilled." Meanwhile, the suppliants are invested with peculiar honors. White robes are given to every one of them, denoting that they are in the number of those "who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Do not the above considerations favor an affirmative answer to the question which stands at the head of this article?—L. D. H. in *Zions Advocate*.

THE ELECTION OF DEACONS.

BY REV. LEWIS B. HIBBARD.

Some months since I learned from a friend that one of our large city churches—indeed, the one with which he was connected—had just passed through the ordeal of electing one or two deacons. They had proceeded with their election in the old way of nomination and voting openly in regular and special church meetings. Some were nominated who failed of an election; others declined, and from a variety of causes the meetings were numerous, and some of them witnessed the exhibition of no small amount of feeling not always the most amiable or Christian. During an experience of nearly a dozen years in the ministry, I have known of but one method of electing deacons, and it has worked admirably in every instance. At the request of excellent brethren I have written this brief description of the plan. I do this the more cheerfully as it did not originate with me. Two of our deacons had

died, and the other two in view of the infirmities of age asked to be relieved. Consequently the Church must elect a new Board, which was something of a task, as four was the traditional number, the church having a membership a little upwards of two hundred. To me the matter seemed almost perilous in view of the facility with which men sometimes wound the feelings of others or receive similar injuries at such times. Fortunately for the church the surviving members of the old Board were men of long service, mature Christian experience, and of rare wisdom, sagacity and prudence, and one of them suggested the plan which was as simple as it was efficient.

It was briefly this: the church at the first meeting appoints some one to receive ballots. Each member of the church any time during the month hands this "teller" a ballot with four names written thereon, and at the meeting—a month hence—the "teller" announces the names of the four persons who had received the votes, who are thereby declared elected. One suggestion was made, that there should be no "electioneering;" every one make the matter a subject of prayer, and then obey his convictions. The aged deacon who suggested the plan was appointed "teller," and during the month a ballot was received from nearly every resident member of the church. At the next covenant meeting the four persons thus elected were announced, and so far as I ever learned every one was satisfied.

Only two things are requisite for the success of the plan; first, the person chosen as teller must be one who can and will keep his own counsel. Our good deacon was naturally a reticent man, and himself ever knew who besides the four successful candidates were voted for. Nor did he ever reveal the number of votes which any of those elected received. The ballots were burned as soon as counted, and all that was ever known was that certain men were elected. Some busybodies in the community tried to "surmise" various things, but with ill success.

The second thing is that the members of the church avoid discussing the merits of any man before or after the election. Let the pastor at the outset preach a carefully prepared and thoroughly Scriptural sermon on the subject, and with that all discussion and gossip cease.

This method of electing deacons has these advantages over the usual plan:

1. It is purely democratic. As Baptists we boast of our democracy, but seldom does each member of the church act his own choice; in this method his freedom is entire. Consequently the deacons are the choice of the church and not of a managing few.

2. It saves all bricking and strife during the election, which on the old plan often occupies several weeks with its repeatedly adjourned meetings. The work goes on quietly, without any heated feeling or discussion; in fact no one seems to know any thing is being done.

3. The greatest merit of all, in many cases, lies in the fact that there are none who are nominated and voted for but fail of an election, who remain soured by their failure ever after. No man knows how near he comes of an election, or whether he is voted for at all. Every one is at full liberty to cherish whatever feeling is most satisfactory to himself in respect to the matter. He has no unhealable wounds.

4. It develops a rare sense of responsibility in the membership of the church. On the old plan many would vote as they saw others; but here every one recognized his personal responsibility; in many cases it fairly startled the individual. I never heard so many speak of their feelings in this respect touching any other matter. And I am persuaded that most went to God with burdened hearts for direction; hence the uniform satisfaction with the result. This spirit of respon-

sibility and prayerfulness was not lost after the occasion which called it into exercise had passed; it was rather a permanent addition to our spiritual forces.

These things then commend the plan. A church needs one or more deacons, and decides on their election. A teller is appointed, a few weeks pass, and lo, they are elected. All that any one member of the church can say of the "campaign," as it ought to be styled in many instances, is that having prayerfully considered the matter, he wrote the names of candidates on a billet of paper and gave it to the teller. The plan is Scriptural, simple, successful, without one objectionable feature. What more could be asked.—*Watchman and Reflector*.

ARABIAN LAUGHING PLANT.

In Palgrave's "Central and Eastern Arabia," are some interesting facts concerning this singular plant. The active principle appears to reside principally in seeds. These seeds, when powdered and administered in full, judicious quantities, produce effects similar to those produced by the celebrated laughing gas of Sir Humphrey Davy. The person to whom the drug is administered laughs, sings, dances, and conducts himself in the most extravagant and ludicrous style. After an hour of this intense excitement he falls asleep and upon awaking, is totally unconscious of anything he said or did while under the influence of the drug. It is a common joke to put a small quantity into the coffee of some unsuspecting individual, in order to enjoy a laugh at his antics, and it is said that when judi-

would be dangerous. The plant which bears these berries grows only in Arabia. In Kaseem it hardly attains the height of six inches above the ground, while in Oman it has reached the height of three or four feet, with wide-spreading limbs. The stems are woody, and when stripped of the bark have a yellowish tinge; the leaf is of a dark green color, and pinnated, with about twenty leaflets on either side; the stalks are smooth and shining; the flowers are yellow and grow in tufts, and the anthers numerous. The fruit is a capsule, stuffed with greenish padding, in which lie embedded two or three black seeds in size and shape much like French beans. Their taste is sweetish, but with a peculiar opiate flavor. The smell is overpowering, and almost sickly.

AN ENCOURAGEMENT.

The following thought is worthy of notice. Children sympathize more quickly than older people, and this is true in religion as in other interests. The thought cited is from the pen of Mrs. Davis:

In a skillfully conducted Sunday-school a solitary conversion is seldom met with. The Spirit of God, quick and powerful, forces some truth on a child's mind; the tearful eye, betokening anxiety, excites surprise among his class-mates; their attention is aroused, their interest excited; the teacher's heart is touched, his tone is solemn, his appeals searching, and the entire class shortly assumes a graver aspect. The feeling deepens, spreads from class to class, from teacher to teacher, till the whole school is imbued with a tender spirit, and, the presence of God is felt to be in its midst.

BAPTISM IN A TENT.

Mr. Ned Wright, who is working energetically amongst the lowest classes of South London, has just introduced to his mission a novelty in the shape of a moveable baptistery to accompany his tent. It seems that a number of the converts attending his evangelistic services had expressed their desire to make a public profession of their faith in Jesus by baptism, and accordingly arrangements were

made to enable them to do so. The baptistery, constructed by Wright and assistants, is of considerable proportions, and composed of five separate pieces, which can be easily taken down and removed with the tent. It seemed to be admirably adapted for its purpose when it was used recently. On which occasion forty men and youths were baptized. It was proposed to baptize the female portion of the converts on the Wednesday following. On the former occasion tickets of admission were issued for 1800, and the number using them was composed of all classes, some coming simply, no doubt, to see a baptizing in a tent. The opportunity was made available for the preaching of the Gospel, not without results, for at the after-meeting some professed to have been saved. The address to the candidates was given by Mr. Hodder.

LICENSE AT THE BAR OF GOD.

"Yes," said the Rev. John Pierpont, "you have a license, and that is your plea; I adjure you to keep it, lock it among your choicest jewels, guard it as the apple of your eye; and when you die, and are laid in your coffin, be sure that the precious document is placed between your clammy fingers, so that when you are called upon to confront your victims before God, you may be ready to file in your plea of justification and boldly to lay down your license on the bar of the judge. Yes, my friend, keep it, you will then want your license signed by the county commissioners and endorsed by the select men."

ISH COBBLER.

"He first findeth his own brother Simon." Now I am sure that 'tis a good plan to go looking after one soul. Every soul in the world do belong to our Lord. He made 'em every one, and He bought 'em every one with His precious blood. They're His every way; and the devil is a thief. I've very often thought what a poor master the devil's servants have got. Why, when he come up to tempt our mother Eve in Paradise, he hadn't got any bit o' a little thing for to bribe her with, an' all he could do was to tempt her to steal her Master's apples. He haven't got anything at all of his own. . . . Andrew didn't say, "I'll try to do all the good I can," and then do nothing because he couldn't find any to do; but he says, "There's Simon, I'll go and catch him." That's the way; pick out one soul, and set your heart 'pon it; begin to pray for that one, and go on tryin' till you've got it; and then try for another. We might do a good deal o' good in the world if we didn't try to do so much. I've heard folks a-singin'—an' meanin' it too—
Where the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small.
An' because the realm o' nature wasn't theirs, they didn't give anything at all.—*Daniel Quorn*.

MOTHS IN THE CANDLE.

Wine and strong drink form another candle in which millions have singed themselves, and destroyed both body and soul. Here the signs of danger are more apparent than in the other form of sensuality, because there is less secrecy. The candle burns in open space, where all men can see it. Law sits behind and sanctions its burning. It pays a princely revenue to the government. Women flaunt their gauzes in it. Clergymen sweep their robes through it. Respectability uses it to light its banquets. In many regions of this country it is a highly respectable candle. Yet, every year sixty thousand persons in this country die of intemperance; and when we think of the blasted lives that live in want and misery, of wives in despair, of loves bruised and blotted out, of children disgraced, of alms-houses filled, of crime