

The Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

NEW SERIES.
Vol. XX., No. 38.

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Wednesday, September 8, 1875.

WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XXXIX., No. 38.

Poetry.

THROUGH TEARS.

I do not ask Thee, Lord, to take away
The trials that are burdening me;
I only ask for strength and sight each day
To look beyond them all to Thee.

I know, dear Master, that unpunished, I
Might wander from the narrow way;
So not rebellious is the childish cry
That rises oftentimes through the day.

But when the way seems hard to understand,
And hedged along with many a thorn,
I seem sometimes to miss Thy guiding hand,
And fearing, walk alone, forlorn.

When thro' the dust of doubt, and earthly
cross,
Our blunted vision fails to see,
Then the kind Father sends some bitter cross,
That we may learn Him perfectly.

The eyes that weep most, surely see thee
clearest,
As flowers are brighter made by rain—
And so, on those whom God holds dearest
He sends the most of sorrow and of pain.

So as I ponder o'er the cares and crosses,
That sometimes seem so burdensome to me,
I know I should not count them all as losses,
Since they are teaching me of Thee.

Sermon.

(Published at the request of the Convention.)
**THINGS THAT ARE WANT-
ING.**

SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE BAP-
TIST CONVENTION OF NOVA SCOTIA,
NEW BRUNSWICK AND PRINCE ED-
WARD ISLAND, AT THE THIRTIETH
ANNIVERSARY, HELD IN HILLS-
BURGH, N. S., AUGUST 22ND, 1875.

By Rev. J. D. Pope, of Saint John,
New Brunswick.

"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that
thou shouldst set in order the things that
are wanting."—Titus 1. 5.

About seven hundred miles west of
Jerusalem is a beautiful island, known
in modern times by the name Caudia.
It is the largest island in the Mediter-
ranean Sea, being about 50 miles in
width, 250 in length, and some 600 in
circumference. During the last two
hundred years it has been under the
Turkish government, and has a popula-
tion of something over 350,000 souls.
It is described by travellers as being
one of the most salubrious countries in
the world, abounding in the elements
of wealth, and capable of supporting at
least treble its present population.

This beautiful island became inhab-
ited long before the period of authentic
history, and by the ancients was called
Crete. It was famous of old, being
civilized while Greece was yet barbarous.
Homer celebrated it in song as
thus rendered by one of our own poets:

"Crete was the circling waves, a fruit ul soft;
And ninety cities crown the sea-born isle;
Mix'd with her genuine sons, adopted names
In various tongues avow their claims:
Cydanians, dreadful with the banded yew,
And bold Pelasgi boast a native's due:
The Dorians, plumed amid the files of war,
Her foedial glebe with fierce Achæans share;
Gonosus, her capital of high command;
Where scepter'd Minos, with imperial hand,
Divided right; each ninth revolving year,
By Jove received in council to center."

Who were first to preach the gospel
in Crete does not appear. We know
that some of the inhabitants of this
island were at Jerusalem on the day
of Pentecost and listened to the preach-
ing of the apostles. It may be they
were then converted to Christ, and,
returning to their own homes, carried
with them the knowledge of the gospel.
These converts would thus become
germs of Christian churches among
their countrymen. It is certain that
churches were planted in Crete in
apostolic times, and nourished with
much care.

But they seem never to have risen
to any great eminence. They did not
succeed in making themselves felt by
any special and efficient usefulness,
and are scarcely known in ecclesiasti-
cal history. The natural inference is
that they were composed of poor ma-
terial, or their affairs badly managed.

We suppose the wealth and luxurious
habits of the people were unfavorable

to the Christian life. The Cretans
were notoriously mendacious and im-
moral. All the vices of heathenism
had there taken deep root and brought
forth their deadly fruit in great abun-
dant. "A Cretan lie," denoted a
falsehood framed with peculiar tact
and subtlety. No community was
ever more thoroughly infected, or we
may be sure that the apostle would
not in this epistle to Titus, have ap-
plied to them so freely the old Grecian
proverb of the poet Epimenides, when
he declared—

"The Cretans are all ways liars,
Evil beasts, slow bellies."

From our text it appears that Paul,
probably towards the close of his
eventful life, visited Crete in company
with Titus, and there laboured more
firmly to establish and build up the
churches in the spirit and principles of
the gospel. But being soon called
away by duties elsewhere, he left
Titus to complete the work thus aus-
piciously begun. "For this cause left
I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set
in order the things that are want-
ing."

The progress of true religion in the
world has ever been much retarded by
defects of one character or another
among its professed friends. And a
great part of the work necessary to a
right Christian education and training,
is required in the removal of these
obstacles. Multiplying converts, plant-
ing churches and building them up to
efficient strength and beauty, must
always and everywhere be attended
with great care and labor. Errors of
opinion, false ideas of duty, evil habits,
in short, the fallow ground of the heart
must be broken up before men can sow
to themselves in righteousness or reap
in the merciful fruits of rich spiritual
prosperity.

This principle is held as a law in
temporal things. The bread of pros-
perous fortune must be eaten in the
sweat of the face. Ever since man's
fall wearisome toil has been an essen-
tial condition of accumulation and
sustenance. Only "the hand of the
diligent maketh rich;" and the divine
sentence is, that if any will not work,
neither shall he eat. Industry there-
fore is vital to human virtue and hap-
piness.

And it is as essential to churches
and societies as to individuals. With-
out constant watch and care, without
ever enduring patient effort, there is
no promise of success. A working
people are those always rich in divine
blessing. As a general thing we have
and enjoy just what we seek and labor
for. Some churches may have to con-
tend with greater difficulties than
others, may be set to cultivate harder
fields, or more unfortunate in the
character of their members, and hence
be compelled to toil harder and longer
to reap the same fruits, but the harvest
is sure to all those who do not faint.
God's word shall not return unto him
void. It shall accomplish the thing
whereunto he has sent it. It shall
always be found able to make men
wise unto salvation through the faith
of Christ.

But the word of the Lord does not
always have free course. It is often
hindered. Those who fear it are not
profited by it because it is unaccom-
panied with faith. The hindering
causes to its full benefits are manifold;
and it cannot be denied that these
causes are to a great extent, the same
at all times, and work out the same
practical results. They are found both
in the churches and in the world. So
far as relating to the churches it is the
duty of Christians to search out and
remove them.

We are therefore first and perhaps
chiefly concerned with the essential
conditions to the full success and un-
interrupted prosperity of the churches.

To secure such a state, what are
some of the things that are wanting?
and how are they to be supplied?

I venture to state that there is
wanted, first of all, in the churches of
our beloved Zion an increased measure
of the Holy Spirit's presence and
power. The gift of the Spirit is a part

of Christ's purchased possession for
his people. And it is no inconsid-
erable part of that possession. The val-
ue of his presence and agency is im-
mense. To the sinner he is absolutely
essential to salvation. Without him
there can be no spiritual illumination,
no deep and effectual conviction of sin,
no true repentance, no renewal of the
heart, no coming to Christ, no pardon,
justification, sanctification, or redemp-
tion, and no heaven. As with the
formless and void earth at the begin-
ning, so with an unregenerate soul.
Until the Spirit comes with "mighty
wings outspread," and dove-like sits
upon it and imparts life, all is dark
and vain and wild, the very picture of
desolation and emptiness.

To the Christian the Holy Spirit is
equally indispensable. Where from
any cause his agency is withheld, no
real progress in the life of holiness
can be made. Nothing then will be
actually accomplished towards the
evangelization of the world. Religious
duties become a burden or sink into a
dead formalism, and all efforts at re-
formation are of no avail. We labor
and spend our strength for nought.
We all know that our sufficiency is of
God, who gives "the earnest of the
Spirit in our hearts." And this gift is
of priceless value. It is even better
than the personal bodily presence of
our Lord himself, who said to the sor-
rowing disciples, "It is expedient for
you that I go away, for if I go . . .
away I will send the Comforter unto
you."

By the Spirit we are enabled to dis-
cern spiritual things, and to draw nigh
to God. From the Holy Spirit a
powerful influence goes forth to en-
lighten, strengthen and comfort the
disciples of Jesus. He is the spirit of
grace, of supplication, and of holiness.
By his gracious indwelling we are
made depositaries of grace to others.
We become the agents of spiritual and
eternal blessing to the world.

Now, there is a general conviction
of the need of the Spirit's agency; but
here the matter is too apt to end. Too
little attention is given to the relation
of this agency to the Christian's own
acts. If we mistake not there are
prevalent errors on this subject.
Aside from sheer indifference, is not
the feeling quite common that the
operations of the Holy Spirit are ab-
solute and sovereign? that they come in
such a manner as not to depend on
any conditions in the believer himself?
and that we must wait till he moves
us before setting about the work of re-
ligion in good earnest? Are not
many waiting under the vague im-
pression that the church will be re-
vived, and the power of the Spirit
become more manifest before they can
be expected to take any very deep
interest in the religious concerns of
men? Let us beware of falling into
such a state as this. Here is
enchanted ground, and to enter on it
involves great danger. Against this
Zion's watchmen must be awake.
They must lift up their voice like a
trumpet to warn the Lord's people,
nor fail to take the alarm which they
themselves give. All hopes of reli-
gious revival resting on such absolute
or unconditional gift of the Spirit, are
deceptive and false. Such waiting is
itself a sin.

I know that God is indeed a sover-
eign; and as such he has appointed
the means of grace, and established
the conditions on which their benefits
shall be secured. The gift of his
blessed Spirit is included. But let not
the terms of enjoying this gift be mis-
taken. It is offered without money
and without price. It is as free as the
air we breathe. We have but to ask
and it shall be given. Let our hearts
be open and let the Comforter will
come and make his abode with us.

It was intended that this abode
should be permanent. Said the
apostle to believers, "Ye are the temple
of the Holy Ghost." Now a temple is
a place consecrated to the perpetual
uses of divine worship. In you there-
fore God is pleased to dwell. It is
your distinguished and peculiar privi-

lege to occupy with him the same
tabernacle. Hence it is the bounden
duty of every Christian always to be
filled with the Spirit. We know of
nothing that should prevent this. The
entire nature of the gospel favors it.
The Christian's daily trials and duties
require it. The Word of God enjoins
it both by command and promise.
"Be ye filled with the Spirit." "He
shall abide with you for ever." That
grace which brings salvation is not a
Sabbath blessing to be neither thought
of nor sought after on any other day.

And as of individual Christians, so
of a church which consists of many in-
dividuals associated together. It is
their duty always to possess the Holy
Spirit, and to be filled with his saving
influence, and all the more so because
of their associate capacity as a church,
for here they are to be helpers of each
other, striving together in the unity of
the Spirit and the bond of peace. To
believers in these relations the Spirit
is specially promised.

If a church, therefore, is not filled
with the Holy Spirit she is wanting in
the most important of all things. No
other excellencies can compensate for
the lack of this. Other blessings may
be desirable; this is indispensable.
There may be wealth uncounted; there
may be tasteful, elegant or magnificent
sanctuaries; there may be the finest
display of art in the service of song;
there may be charity without stint;
and there may be discourses eloquent
and learned; but if God be not in it,
all is as sounding brass or a tinkling
cymbal. A church without the Holy
Spirit is worse than a body without a
soul, for it is a dead body unburied.
Religious service in such a case, sinks
into mere forms, and the whole is des-
titute of meaning and of practical
force.

You know the results. No saving
power goes forth; the light is hid, or
burns dimly, or goes out altogether;
the salt loses its savor and the truth
its charms. Practical atheism takes
place of the living acceptable sacrifice.
But let the Spirit be poured out from
on high, let his gracious operation be
felt, and how glorious the change.
The heavens drop down from above,
and the skies pour down righteousness;
the earth opens to receive the truth,
and salvation is brought forth. It is
life from the dead. Saints are revived
and sinners converted. Peace abounds
with joy unspeakable and full of glory.
The love of Christ constrains his peo-
ple to zealous effort. You cannot re-
frain from persuading men to be re-
conciled to God. Believers are the
more added to the Lord, while their
hearts are enlarged to keep his com-
mandments.

How blessed were it always thus in
all churches of the saints. And why
may it not be so? Why not? Does
any one know why the Spirit of God
should not be poured upon his people
every time they come together? We
believe his agency is designed to be a
permanent gift. We believe it the
duty and privilege of every church and
of every disciple of Jesus to possess
this gift day by day and hour by hour.
We are persuaded that nothing can
separate us from the love of Christ
except our own sins. Is there not dan-
ger that we greatly underestimate
the value of this gift of the Comforter?
How many indulge in such a course of
life as to grieve and quench the Holy
Spirit. They are careless of their
words and actions. They are negli-
gent and remiss in duty. The stand-
ard of piety is allowed to fall to the
lowest point of decent respect, or to
degenerate into the observance of mere
ritualistic forms. Thus is the Spirit
grieved and quenched.

And this is one of the things to be
set in order among the churches. A
great change in sentiment and feeling
is imperatively demanded on this sub-
ject. A due estimation must be placed
on the Spirit's agency. All adverse
influences must be avoided. Minis-
ters must hold the subject up before
their people, and tell Christians plainly
that if they lose the presence of the
Holy Spirit, they are guilty of a great

sin. In short the whole church must
come back to her God and her privilege
in this matter. We must set our
hearts on the full and permanent pos-
session of this one gift of all gifts. With
earnest supplications let each and
every one cry unto God, "Cast me not
away from thy presence: and take not
thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore
unto me the joy of thy salvation; and
uphold me with thy free Spirit. Then
will I teach transgressors thy ways;
and sinners shall be converted unto
thee."

(Conclusion next week.)

The Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, N. S., SEPTEMBER 8, 1875.

THE BAPTIST CONVENTION.

The speech of Dr. Fyfe, at the Edu-
cation meeting on Monday evening was
one of great interest and eloquence.
It being on a subject with which the
speaker, being Principal of the Cana-
dian Baptist Institute at Woodstock,
Ontario, was so much familiar and so
much at home, he was listened to with
rapt attention. He produced illustra-
tions so appropriate and figures so
striking that those who heard him will
not easily forget portions of what he
said. In referring to knowledge at
the present day he remarked that it
would be necessary to speak of it in
the plural number, the subjects being
so numerous. The types of Education
are now so various, there are intellec-
tual, moral, Christian, scientific, clas-
sical, and art education—each of which
would afford a wide field of profitable
discussion. Yet they are all embraced
in one thought—that of the cultivation
of the faculties of the soul.

The first difficulty for a young per-
son is fix his attention on a subject.
Every one has felt that "he can't keep
the think on't." The great object of
education is to teach a man how to
work, to control his thoughts. Dr. F.
noticed that the mind might be filled
with all knowledge yet be without the
most important and valuable kind of
knowledge, the knowledge of God.
Without religion all other knowledge
was imperfect and all mental training
deficient. A grand fallacy is often met
with here. It is supposed that a
teacher of intellectual or scientific sub-
jects might perform his work as well
without religion as with it—that an in-
fidel or atheist might be as suitable to be
employed in such work as a Christian.
This he most emphatically denied. No
teacher could do his work well who
did not impart his spirit to his pupils.
It was even more important for young
men that this matter should be well
guarded than in the earlier periods of
life. Children at school have a large
portion of their time with their parents
and are under home influence and the
Sabbath School, to correct errors incul-
cated in the Day School, but when the
young man passes out into the world,
his principles and habits of thought and
action become fixed, and if he respects
his teacher he must copy him to a cer-
tain extent. The question then arises
in the mind of the thoughtful parent.
Where shall he send his son or daugh-
ter to get the more advanced course of
study? Here comes the great import-
ance of having Higher schools and Col-
leges where religion is the controlling
force. Dr. F. here alluded to the
Toronto University as supplying high
mental training but where no religious
influences were recognized. No prayer-
meetings are held there, hence the
Baptists of Toronto felt that it could
not supply what they needed for their
young men. What could they expect
after having dedicated their children to
God and desiring his blessing in con-
nection with their preparation for a life
of usefulness they sent them where God
was not known, not recognized, and
not worshipped? Education was not
simply a training to enable a man to
make his living in this world—a thing
of bread and butter, but a blessing for
this life and for that which is to come—
for time and eternity. Having given
yourself and your son or daughter to