

# The Christian Messenger.

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## POETRY.

For the Christian Messenger.

### I Wonder Why?

I wonder why this world's good things  
Should fall in such uneven shares;  
Why some should taste of all the joys,  
And others only feel the cares?  
I wonder why the sunshine bright  
Should fall in paths some people tread,  
While others shiver in the shade  
Of clouds that gather overhead?

I wonder why the trees that hang  
So full of luscious fruit, should grow  
Only where some may reach and eat,  
While others faint and thirsty go?  
Why should sweet flowers bloom for some,  
For others only thorns be found?  
And some grow rich from fruitful earth,  
While others till but barren ground?

I wonder why the hearts of some  
O'erflow with joy and happiness,  
While others go their lonely way  
Unblessed with aught of tenderness?  
I wonder why the eyes of some  
Should ne'er be moistened with a tear,  
While others weep from morn till night,  
Their hearts all crushed with sorrow here.

Ah, well, we may not know, indeed,  
The whys, the wherefores of each life;  
But this we know, there's One who sees  
And watches us through joy or strife.  
Each life its mission here fulfils,  
And only He may know the end;  
And loving Him we can be strong  
Tho' storm and sunshine He may send.  
Windsor. MRS. L. K. BENNETT.

## RELIGIOUS.

### Presbyterian difficulties with Baptism.

Our Presbyterian brethren in Wales, at their quarterly assembly held a few days ago in Llansawel, seem to have experienced some little difficulty in making smooth the contradictoriness of infant baptism. In the *Golevad*, the Presbyterian organ for Wales, we find the following interesting report:—

#### BAPTISM OF ADOPTED CHILDREN.

In the previous Assembly a message was received from the North Cardiganshire monthly synod "That they desired the attention of the Assembly to a matter pertaining to the ordinance of baptism, to wit:—Is it proper to baptize infants that have been adopted by religious people, when neither the one nor the other of the parents were or are converted?" A considerable time was spent in free conversation upon this matter, and, as a result of the discussion, a few of the brethren were appointed to prepare a resolution on the matter, and to report to a subsequent meeting of the Assembly. The resolution thus framed was endorsed by the Assembly at the Thursday morning session, and is as follows:—"In reply to a request from North Cardiganshire concerning the baptism of adopted children, &c., resolved,—Though we adhere to the rule that believers and their seed are the subjects of baptism, yet circumstances may arise when adopted children may be baptized without transgressing this rule, but much wisdom and deliberation must be exercised in matters of this sort."

So much for the report of Presbyterian doings. It surely bespeaks what the Americans call "cuteness on the part of our friends that they do not reply to the question of the Cardiganshire people at all. They are asked if, in certain specified circumstances, an adopted infant may be baptized—the answer is that circumstances may arise when it would be proper. Of course, when one of the true parents was converted this would be so, and the Assembly may mean no more. Truly the matter "requires wisdom and deliberation." How clever people must be if they depart from the straight line of Christ's command! Episcopalians will baptize any one who has a complement of god-parents. Independents baptize infants whose parents are unknown, but for the Presbyterians it is not enough that the foster-parents bringing the adopted child to the font are believers, unless the blood in the child's veins is that of a Christian

parent—the little infant must be sent back unbaptized! Fitness for baptism runs in the blood. Surely it would have been but a single step farther to go if they framed a doctrine that fitness for heaven ran in the blood too?—*London Freeman*.

### About Newspapers.

The *Watchman* gives some extracts from its "Picket's" paper on the Press. Here are a specimen or two of what he says:—

"It ought to be remembered that printing a newspaper is a business. We have no right to demand that these papers take up our interests, advocate our plans and moral work, any more than we have a right to demand such a thing of any other business, or of any department of the government, as the post-office, for instance. A paper must furnish what its readers demand, or any considerable number of them, for it has all sorts of people for subscribers and buyers. Just as it is easy to be benevolent with other people's money, so is it easy for us to say to the editor of our paper, you must not give place to such an article, when its exclusion might cost him hundreds of dollars, and its insertion our subscription; or you must advocate these measures when their advocacy would be just as costly. A man must not be expected to jeopardize his income and business for the whims or wishes or plans of other people, especially when the measure is one concerning which good people are divided, and in whose success or defeat he is not specially interested.

Editors are often complained of for not cutting off their own heads in supporting a little faction. And sometimes they have decapitated themselves financially in helping a good cause, only to get not help in their trouble, but a large contribution of sympathy for their foolishness,—a thing which never yet paid compositor or printer. Ministers visit an editor, calling on him in the name of everything great and small to "pitch in." But why should an editor "pitch in" just to do the legitimate work of the pulpit? an act which he would feel in his subscriptions and advertising columns for twelve months. No man has a right to ask an editor to do that which he dare not do himself,—to publish an article which he dare not, if occasion asked for it, sign with his own name. I say again, the field is wide and has many tillers, and in this free country no hindrance to dropping or stopping a paper is allowed, providing it is paid for. Remember the law will not let you banish it till you have paid the uttermost farthing.

#### THE RELIGIOUS PRESS.

It remains now for me to say a word concerning the religious papers, which find a place in so many homes, and which the best welfare of a family will keep. They are generally denominational, and therefore all the better. An unsectarian sheet so-called, which hangs that banner on its outer wall, is about as conducive to growth in grace as a hornet to meditation. By all means and always, if one would know the religious world further than is made known by his own papers, let him take the recognized organ of some branch of the church. The home literature under a religious dress which is not honest, which assails what the family holds dear when its promise was to cultivate only that common ground of Christianity on which all stand together, is vastly more objectionable than a sheet whose real and only object is to combat the views of that family or subscriber. Happily the days of five dollar chromos given for a three dollar subscription have departed, and under the guise of cultivating the fine arts, there will be no more invasion of our homes.

Baptists have every reason to be satisfied with their journals, which compare well with the other religious organs of the country. And all these papers of every denomination are capital home visitors, on which special pains are taken to make them attractive

in some department to each member of the family.

In early days of religious journalism they were very religious, and very dry and unreadable. Articles for the papers compared in length with the sermons from the pulpit.

The world needs to be invaded by religion in its every corner. Christianity has been too much a thing for Sunday and the meeting-house; would to God it might cover in a holy baptism every department of human endeavor. The religious press are helpers and pioneers in this blessed work, and no family can afford to be without its influence.

The family taking a first class religious journal at this day and paying for it, so as to save the conscience from boils, really needs no other, save, perhaps, the local press. It will keep the family up with all the movements of the world in politics and religion. And if economy begins anywhere, save in the house of God, it ought not to banish this weekly visitant.

### The Prayer-Room.

BY REV. S. HARTWELL PRATT.

Connected with many of our large manufactories are engine rooms where the power is generated. The church of God obtains power for its work in the prayer-room. There is a great demand to-day for attractive, drawing preachers. The pulpit is thought to be the place of power; but the pulpit fails without the blessing of unction in answer to the petitions of the prayer-room. Praying places were known long before preaching places. Prayers of faith brought blessings from the skies before ever a pulpit was built. We believe in the pulpit when the power-belt from the prayer-room is on the wheel. Pentecost preaching was wondrously successful, because the prayer-room was successful. We would lay no less stress upon preaching, but we must make more of the prayer-room.

Come to the prayer-room to pray for the Holy Ghost. Much time should be devoted in the prayer-meeting to prayer. We often talk too much, and sing too much, and pray too little. We may sing all the songs, our singing books, and not get power with God. We may talk scripturally, and tell our experiences and not get power with God. If we would obtain power we must pray. Nothing will answer as a substitute for prayer. We may have zeal, glibness, eloquence, but these will not answer in place of prayer. With one heart and one mind the church on their knees should cry unto God until the Holy Ghost comes in great moving power. Then shall hymn and testimony be as the message of God to men. What we want, what we must have first of all, is the power of the Holy Ghost.

We should come to the prayer-room to witness for Christ. When we are filled with the Holy Ghost, then we can testify, then we must testify. We shall feel like the apostles who could not be restrained; "we cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard." The Spirit gives utterance. One of the weapons with which we are to overcome the world is testimony to the Lamb that was slain for us. By reason of intellectual pride and ungodly fastidiousness, many of our prayer-meetings have been yielded to the few who are supposed to speak to the edification of the church. The weak, the unlearned, receive but little encouragement, as they are supposed to have no gifts to exercise. But when the Holy Ghost is upon the weak, they are strong; and when He rests upon the unlettered, they are eloquent. Israel often fought grandly with javelin and sword and sling; but Shagar with the Spirit of God upon him slew six hundred of the Philistines with an ox-goad. And Jael with the rude hammer and tent pin destroyed the leader of the mighty host.

If our talented people ever bring usury to God they must be encouraged to throw away their napkins and employ what God has given them.

Satan utilizes all his forces. He does not keep the young back from profanity until they can swear well. He is quite satisfied with half correct oaths and the bungling, confused manner of beginners. He does not keep the sceptic back until he understands all the objections of scientific men to the Bible before he allows him to speak, but is quite satisfied to have him instil his scepticism in an unlearned manner, suggesting doubts in the minds of his associates. The church must utilize all of its forces in the prayer-room. The simple story of Jesus and His love, told again and again by those who love Him, shall bring honor to His dear name and bless men.

We should come to the prayer-room expecting a blessing. The secret of many a poor prayer-meeting is found just here; we come together having made up our minds that we will take no part, and that the meeting will be dull and profitless because the same few will speak and pray and observe the same formal routine. O brethren, is it to be wondered at that our meetings are so barren and uninteresting? When the old prophet went to his praying place on Carmel, and fell on his face before God, he expected the answer of rain, and sent his servant after every prayer to look for the cloud. When the disciples came together in the upper room they came with expectancy, and they received the Holy Ghost. Christ honors faith and trust. Those who "believe they receive," obtain the blessing. Come from your private closets to the prayer-room, expecting to meet Jesus, expecting the Holy Ghost, and you will never go away disappointed.

We must come to the prayer-room for salvation. Here is where we are to lead men to Christ. Here is where the sown word is to be wet with tears, causing it to come to harvest. Here is where the theories and doctrines of the pulpit are to be demonstrated by living tender experiences. The sermon may arouse, impress, convict, and souls may leave the sanctuary resolved on a change of life; but they need the warmth, the fellowship, the heart and hand contact, the prayers, of the prayer-room. Men are lost to the kingdom of God, because they simply go and come to the sanctuary, without earnest, personal invitation to the prayer-room. Scores of our congregations and Sunday school scholars might be brought to Jesus if we believed more in, and worked more for the prayer-room.

O church of the living God, would you have more able, eloquent, successful preachers of the Word, then gather about your ministers in the prayer-room, and stay up their weary hands! Would you have well-filled sanctuaries? Would you have salvation? See that the prayer-room is not neglected for a trifling excuse.—*Watchman*.

### Sent His Prayers.

A poor man who had a large family broke his leg, and, as he would be for some time destitute of the means of grace, it was proposed to hold a prayer-meeting at his house. The meeting was led by Deacon Brown. A loud knock at the door interrupted the service. A tall, lank, blue-frocked youngster stood at the door with an ox-goad in his hand, and asked to see Deacon Brown. "Father could not attend this meeting," he said, "but he sent his prayers, and they are out in the cart." They were brought in in the shape of potatoes, beef, pork, and corn.

The German Reformed Church reports the following progress for the century: ministers, from twenty-three to 650; congregations, from sixty-five to 1,350; members, from 13,000 to 145,000; communicants, from 8,000 to 123,000; Sunday-schools, none to 75,000. This Church is the Calvinistic Church of Germany.

Of all mean words from tongue that flow, The meanest are, "I told you so."

### A few Curiosities.

**ECONOMY IN GAS.**—The following is from the *Portland Advertiser*, the part being the regular telegraphic news dispatch:

By an error in engrossment of the legislative appropriation bill, which has been approved by the President, there is omitted an appropriation of \$14,000 for the contingent fund of the Department of Justice. The effect of this will be to deprive this branch of government service of light, fuel, ice, etc.—*Morning News*.

What does Justice want of light?

Both her eyes are blind;  
What good use for gas or oil,  
Prithee, could she find?

What does Justice want of coal?

Truth, her mate, doth dwell,  
Far remote from food and fire,  
Even in a well.

What does Justice want of ice?

Never flushed or hot;  
Since she is just-ice herself,  
She requires it not.

Justice knows these luxuries

Needless—thus it follers  
That the government has saved  
\$14,000.

**JOINT STOCK MATERNITY.**—A Welsh correspondent sends to *Nature* an interesting instance of a joint stock concern in the poultry yard: "Two hens sat on, or by, one nest, and thus between them hatched one chick. They have since, for some weeks, been parading the yard, each clucking and manifesting all the anxiety and care of a true mother over this one. The hens never quarrel, or show the least appearance of jealousy or rivalry.

A venerable English divine, who had been dining out the night before, went into a barber's shop one morning to be shaved. He saw that the barber had been getting more drink than was good for him, for it made his hand shake very much, and, naturally indignant, he began to give him a little moral advice by saying:—"Bad thing, drink!" "Yes," said the barber, "it makes the skin unco' tender."

In a suburban school a teacher gave out the word "psalter" to a class in spelling. It was a "poser" to all till it reached the foot of the class, when a curly-headed little fellow spelt it correctly, and on being asked to define it, shouted out, "More salt!"

At a public meeting in Devonshire the landlord has it painted up outside his door: "Good beer for sale here, but don't take my word for it."

Dr. Newman spoke, in a recent sermon, of "the sad funeral procession" which followed Abel to the grave. An irreverent woman in the audience nudged her companion and whispered: "Not such a large procession, but very select. None but the first families."

The best way for a church to secure a desirable minister is to be a desirable church. The effect is magical.

Miss Clinton, the fashionable lady-artist—the Miss Thompson of America, in fact—who is carrying all before her in the way of portrait-painting in Canada and the United States, has just finished a portrait of Longfellow, for which the citizens of Cincinnati pay her the respectable sum of \$8,000 gold. The painting took the artist two months' easy working.—*World*.

In a divorce case now before the courts in New York the original cause of difficulty between the parties appeared to be that the wife remonstrated too strongly with her husband for eating green raspberries and wanting chicken for dinner.

KO THAH-BYU, the first Karen Christian, was baptized in 1828. We have now three hundred and forty-seven self-supporting churches among the Karens.

When you know a thing, to hold that you know it; and when you do not know a thing, to allow that you do not know it;—this is knowledge.

When you have faults, do not fear to abandon them.