

The Christian Messenger.

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WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XXI., No. 14.

Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

Mr. Editor,—

The following beautiful hymn used to be frequently sung, about fifty years ago, and was a special favorite of Father T. S. Harding. I have been hearing it again and again lately, sung in the same solemn, sweet, old tune in which Mr. H., of blessed memory, used to sing it. Both tune and hymn may compare favorably with any of more modern date, and the hymn deserves to be "preserved" in "Attie Salt." Please send a copy of the *Messenger* containing it to Mr. Gladstone, who seems to be about the only man who ventures in these days to publish Latin verses over his own name; and ask him to translate it. I subjoin an attempt, by a Nova Scotian, to versify it after the method of mediæval Latin, that is, in rhymes, and just in accordance with the *meters* of the original, so that it can be sung to the same tune as the English.

Yours truly,

SENECA ACADIENSIS.

The Faithful Friend.

1. One there is above all others—
Oh, how he loves!
His is love beyond a brother's—
Oh, how he loves!
Earthly friends may fail or leave us;
One day soothe, the next day grieve us;
But this Friend will ne'er deceive us—
Oh, how he loves!
2. 'Tis eternal life to know him—
Oh, how he loves!
Think, O think, how much we owe him—
Oh, how he loves!
With his precious blood he bought us,
In the wilderness he sought us;
To his fold he safely brought us—
Oh, how he loves!
3. We have found a friend in Jesus—
Oh, how he loves!
'Tis his great delight to bless us—
Oh, how he loves!
How our hearts delight to hear him
Bid us dwell in safety near him;
Why should we distrust or fear him?
Oh, how he loves!
4. Through his name we are forgiven—
Oh, how he loves!
Backward all our foes are driven—
Oh, how he loves!
Best of blessings he'll provide us;
Nought but good shall e'er betide us;
Safe to glory he will guide us—
Oh, how he loves!

[Latin Translation.]
Amicus Fidelis.

1. Unus est qui est Supremus—
Oh, quam amat!
Cujus amor est extremus—
Oh, quam amat!
Qui amicus est mortalis,
Ease positus inæqualis;
Sed non fallit hic Sodalis—
Oh, quam amat!
2. Vivit quisquis illum nescit—
Oh, quam amat!
Quantum nos debemus, poscit—
Oh, quam amat!
Suo sanguine redemit;
In deserto nos invenit:
Domum tulit, tutos mœnit—
Oh, quam amat!
3. Mirum quantum nos dilexit—
Oh, quam amat!
Nil e nobis unquam flexit—
Oh, quam amat!
Audentes pergaudent;
Juxta salvi habitemus;
Confidentes, non timemus—
Oh, quam amat!
4. Nos per Jesu condonatur—
Oh, quam amat!
Inimicis liberatur—
Oh, quam amat!
Rebus optimis polleat;
Mala nunquam sentietes,
Ducit, gloriæ tenentes—
Oh, quam amat!

Religious.

Unveiled.

"There is something wrong with our church, Elspie. Our minister preaches sermons that might raise the dead; and yet, we have not had a single baptism during the year."

So said Mr. West to his only child on the last evening of the old year, as they sat beside a glowing fire.

"There is something wrong in our congregation," said their minister to his wife. "I think I must resign. There has not been a single addition to the church this year."

Pensive sat they also as the dying year seemed to arise in judgment against them. The minister's wife answered,—

"If Mr. West and Elspie would only take the right step." And the minister answered, with a prayerful sigh, "If he only would!"

No wonder the minister longed for the right step, for Mr. West was his right hand in the congregation. No one more regular, more liberal, or less inclined to domineer. Summer and winter, seed time and harvest, he and Elspie were in their places, shewing a more vital interest in all that concerned the services than most of the church members; yet neither had taken the final step of coming out publicly, by baptism, on the side of Christ. But now that the year was dying in the night, there came a strange resurrection of old thoughts, arising from the dead in new and spiritual bodies. The father's thoughts came out in the solemn and silent past, the daughter's from that wondrous future on which she stood. Somehow, all their thoughts took shape and colour from the church, and they felt prepared to do anything for its success. Mr. West continued to speak in kind words of their minister, and tried to find out all the good points of the members. He was never mean enough to say, "If I were a member, I would live a very different life from those who have made such loud profession." And yet he did not come forward. His inner thought was, "I shall join sometime; but at present I do not feel earnest enough." He would have given him a push into the church. But the days wore on. Grey hairs were here and there upon him, yet he knew it not. Elspie also was thinking about her duty in relation to the church. She had never been conscientiously converted, yet she loved the Saviour, and trusted she was a true Christian. The sun had risen, but there had been no manifest sunrise. There was thus a veil between them and the full view of the truth—for only they who act truth can see truth. Unto the upright, to those who work righteousness, there ariseth light in darkness.

"Something wrong in the church," sounded again and again in Elspie's ears as she sat, with folded hands, looking into the fire. Then came a voice in her, "Something wrong in me." Conscience kindled her flame, and, in its light, there were revelations of sins committed by what was left undone. As if to hear less painfully the voice of God, Elspie took up a new collection of large photographs which her father had given her as a Christmas present. She turned them over, only half noticing, till she came to one which she could not pass. It was the Man of Sorrows, seated on a rock throne, wearing the robes of a priest, and the crown of a king. He was veiled. Around Him were those who spat on Him and buffeted Him, breathing out threatening and slaughter. Men of all ages and conditions set Him at naught. Yet was He as a deaf man who heard not, and as a dumb man who openeth not his mouth. He sat in veiled majesty, but His eyes were open, and glittered within the veil. They thought He saw them not, yet His glance pierced them through. The picture became eloquent, and, like all true eloquence, suggested more than it said. Elspie asked—"Am I, after all, for Christ? May it not be that He is still being crucified, despised and rejected of men, and yet I do not come out and say that I love him, and, if need be, will die for Him?" Then came a flash of thought into the very heart of truth, and she said to her father,—

"Perhaps the something wrong in our church may be that I have not professed Christ."

Scarce were the words spoken, when she saw her father wince, and feared she had done wrong. No wonder he winced. It was as if an angel from heaven had spoken to him. Mr. West felt the truth quivering in his soul. Had he also been a stumbling-block? Had his very goodness not made him all the more so? Were there not many who said, "If Mr. West can be so much respected, although he is not a church member, there is no use of our being baptized?" He feared exceedingly, as he heard the words of doom against those who cause to offend. Then came, also, the thought of how much the Saviour had done for him. He rose in agitation and went to the window. The moon and stars shone down upon the beautiful snow. He thought of how, in the same way as God's sun had come down to the frothy pools of earth, and had caught up those waters, dank and foul, which came by wharf and sewer and slimy bank, and, in the treasure lands of the snow, had purified and sent them down to earth again in Godlike purity, so the Saviour had taken him, as it were, into His bosom, and had given him a righteousness whiter than snow. The Saviour's love had made him all that he was, yet what was the return? Secret love! True; but when traitors mock the King, and would kill Him, what means secret love then? How far is it removed from cowardice? and what is cowardice, but death? The silent eloquence of the snow aroused his whole nature, and he began to write bitter things against himself. His character was unveiled, and he saw that, after all, it was little else than self-righteousness which had kept him from being buried with Christ by baptism into death. He stood at the window so long, that Elspie, fearing she had awaked him in some way, and crept silently to his side: she was astonished to see tears in his eyes. The strong man was a child again, and, speaking in his mother tongue, said,—

"I'm sair put about, Elspie. The something wrang in the church is a something wrang wi' mysel'."

That was all he said; then they turned from the window, and sat down again in front of the fire. Elspie waited for her father to speak. The moment of Christly weakness had passed; he was the strong man again, and his first words were:—

"I have long seen my duty, and have not done it. No wonder my soul has been dwarfed and stunted, when I thought more about the crucifixion of my own feelings, than of Christ's crucifixion."

He knelt down with his daughter, and prayed God to give him strength to make an open profession of his love. When he arose, it seemed as if scales had fallen from his eyes. Then to him, as to Nicodemus, came, with new meaning, the Master's words, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." He had all his life been outside the veil, and only as the veil of his flesh was rent could his spirit enter into God's holiest. Whenever he thus, in soul, stood openly beside the Saviour, then was the veil taken away, and, with unveiled face, he reflected, as in a mirror, the glory of Christ, and became changed into the same image.

Elspie saw that new thoughts were stirring in her father's soul, and she, too, had her eyes opened. The Master had come for her sister, and was calling for her. There was a smile on her face, as if she were hurrying to meet Him whom her soul loved. She longed for the New Year to come, that its days might bring the Sabbath on which she and her father would together confess their love to the Saviour. She broke the silence by saying,—

"Father, if we have been a hindrance to God's blessing on our church, the best way is to get baptized as soon as possible."

Mr. West looked with a bright smile, and something even of his old humour, as he said,—

"That's you, Elspie, always getting ahead of your old father." He would

have said more, but righteousness and peace embraced each other.

Slowly and mournfully died the year to the pastor, as the words came again and again, "Something is wrong." The darkness thickened, but he wrestled as if to conquer for God the treasures of darkness and the hidden riches of secret places. Why was it that he seemed to see Mr. West and Elspie? And why did he remember how often he had been to their house, and yet he had not once pressed on them the privilege they were losing in not professing Christ? He had prayed for them—had thought of them lovingly as he preached, but he had never gone to Mr. West and told him his fault between themselves alone. The veil fell from his eyes also, and he saw that after all, personal contact was a deeper influence than pulpit oratory. He remembered how often Jesus had touched men to heal them, and he saw that one reason why something was wrong might be found in his not having broken the bread of his own life in the midst of his congregation. He went over in his own mind those whom he would urge to profess Christ in the new year—among them were Mr. West and Elspie. But, as we have seen, God had the start of the pastor, and the angels were already speeding into heaven with the news that they were coming out from the world to be separate unto God. In the resolve, however, there came peace unto the pastor's heart. He, too, looked out at the window, saw the snow, and remembered the words, "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Earth bells
"Rang out the old, rang in the new.
Rang out the false, rang in the true."
Heaven bells rang for the marriage of the King's Son, who stood unveiled among his redeemed. They saw Him full, and rejoiced in His presence.

The old year was passed aside as an old garment. The new came radiant with hope. When Mr. West and his daughter stood side by side, waiting to enter the baptistry, Christ was revealed. The rejoicing pastor made no difference in their baptism, and manifested no more joy than he did over the baptism of a young mechanic. In Jesus Christ all we are brethren. And yet when Elspie stood in the water, like a young heroine, with God's smile smiting her face, many eyes were unveiled, and saw the glory of God. The grand old ordinance started up with new life and meaning.

It was the beginning of a new year in the highest, holiest sense of the words. Mr. West from a rock of offence became a foundation rock, for had he not confessed Christ as the Son of God? Elspie could now teach her class with a new power. The pastor, who had bewailed the low estate of the church, saw it revive as the corn, and grow as the vine. The tree of life yielded its fruit every month; there was a stirring in the hearts of all. Many who have been asleep awaked. Confessors not a few arose in their midst, confessing that Jesus Christ was Lord of all.

Towards the end of January Mr. West and Elspie were one evening sitting again together. Their talk as usual fell on the church.

"What a change has taken place," said the father, "it does not seem like the same church, and I do not seem like the same man. I had no idea there was such a wonderful power in confessing Christ. The truth of the Gospel has a new meaning for me. I can only compare my former conditions to that of a stagnant pool, which is the home of malaria and all manner of evil influences, but when it has been moved and aroused by the winds, the scum is driven off, and when calm is restored,

its placid bosom mirrors in the open heavens. It has been a blessed stirring of the pool to me."

"And if I were a preacher, father, I would say that the stirring of the pool had cured many impotent folk."

"Too deep, Elspie, too deep."

Now whether Mr. West referred to the analogy or to the pool must be left at present undecided. This we do know, that the right step of open profession gave Mr. West tenfold power for good, besides enabling him to see the Lord unveiled; and we assure our readers that if they begin the new year as he began it, they will find as they arise from the grave with Christ, that their resurrection is into a new life. Thus, becoming pilgrims of the dawn, they will find light pouring around them—earth becoming the vestibule of God's temple, and the body of ordinances stretching out helping hands to all who press upward to see Christ within the veil.

D. M.

—*Scottish Baptist Magazine.*

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

A Visit to the Trinidad Mission.

The Rev. George Christie, Presbyterian minister of Yarmouth has a son engaged in the mission work among the Coolies in the Island of Trinidad. Last year he made a visit to his son on that island and has written to the *Eastern Chronicle* some interesting extracts from his journal. Many of our readers will be pleased to read a short passage or two from his letter:

"You want to know how many Coolies attend the meetings and where the meetings are held. Let me answer the last question first. The place of meeting is generally in the large room of the *Coolie Hospital*. The Government of Trinidad is very particular in looking after the health of 'indentured Coolies.' Hence on every estate there is a hospital, and a doctor. The room (which may be perhaps 20x30 feet square) is generally used for the meetings on Sabbath, or if it should be occupied, the verandah is almost as convenient. As regards the number that can be got together in one place, it varies—a great deal depending on the activity of the 'scouts' sent to hunt them up. Yesterday morning we had between eighty and ninety. As the missionary and I drove slowly to the place of meeting, which was about two miles from his house, we had an opportunity of watching the young men who had been sent ahead to hunt up a congregation. We could see them darting from door to door among the bungalows, and we had the satisfaction of noticing that they generally succeeded in getting one or two. When we got to the place of meeting, however, I felt considerably perplexed. From previous experience at San Fernando *Coolie Church*, I knew that speaking through an interpreter was slow work, and on the present occasion my trouble rose from fear that the poor Coolies would get tired and leave. My reason for fear was that there were only about half-a-dozen seats in the room to accommodate one hundred people. How can they be accommodated? was the anxious inquiry that I kept making. I was soon relieved however, from all anxiety on the subject, for they began to squat down, either making a seat of their heels, or descending to a still lower level. Their several attitudes did not strike me as either very graceful, or very comfortable. They seemed, however, to be as well satisfied in every respect as some people that I have seen in nicely cushioned pews."

"As already hinted, the arrangements of the meeting provided for an address from me which of course must be through the aid of an interpreter, and as I already had had some experience in Mr. Grant's and Mr. Morton's fields, I felt very much at home. The preaching was not however the first part of the service. In the first place the choir already described, with Balaram leading, sung a hymn in Hindustani. It was very simple; and to me very affecting on account of its primitive simpli-