

# The Christian Messenger.

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WHOLE SERIES.  
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## Poetry.

### Transplanted.

The gardener came into the garden,  
It was very fair to see,  
And his Lord walked slowly beside him,  
Looking at shrub and tree;

Through borders of odorous roses,  
Through lily-beds, purple and white,  
By thickets enkindled with crimson,  
And arbors that prisoned the light,

Till they came to a tender flower,  
A frail but a beautiful thing,  
That drooped its snow-white petals,  
Like a bird with a broken wing.

"I think," said the gardener, clasping  
The plant with a gentle hand,  
"This flower is much too tender  
For the winds of this lower land."

"I marvel if even with shelter  
"Twill thrive in this coarser earth,  
Where cold dews fall upon it—  
"Tis a flower of priceless worth."

Now his Lord had another garden,  
Its gates were of pearl and gold;  
And its slopes were nearer heaven  
Than this land with breezes cold.

There, never the sun gave languor,  
There, never the east wind blew,  
And the provident care of the Master's  
Hand  
Was tender as sun or dew.

His Lord looked down on the flower,  
And his heart went out to its need;  
"Tis just the plant for my garden,  
A plant of celestial seed."

The gardener loosened the fibres,  
Raised the plant for the Lord to see;  
Then the gracious Master said with a  
smile,  
Give the little flower to me."

And into the gates that were golden,  
And over the fadeless plain,  
And close by the wonderful river of life,  
He planted the flower again.

And there in deathless splendor,  
It blooms and brightens to-day;  
And there in an endless, marvelous light,  
It will bloom and brighten alway.

There shall never be want of tending,  
Or lack of love or of care,  
For the Lord of the garden so near to  
heaven  
Is Lord of the sea and air.

## Religious.

For the Christian Messenger.

### Our Denomination.

#### I. PRINCIPLES.

When the Lord Jesus was about to ascend to heaven, he gave his last commission to the apostles (Mat. xxviii. 18-20). Three things were to be done:—(1) The people were to be taught. (2) Those who received the truth were to be baptized. (3) They were to be instructed "to observe all things, whatsoever the Lord had commanded."—That they might be able to do this, a special promise had been already given: "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John xiv. 26). We have the fulfilment of this promise in the writings of the New Testament, which contains as much of the Lord's instructions as he chose to commit to the keeping of his people for their use till the end of time. The New Testament is especially Christ's book, and Christian theology, properly so called, is to be derived from it.

What, then, is to be said of the Old Testament? Baptists are sometimes represented as neglecting it; but this is an unjust accusation. We hold, as the Apostle Paul has taught us, that "every scripture inspired by God, is also profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for discipline, for correction which is in righteousness," and that "the holy scriptures" which were in Timothy's possession were able to make him "wise unto salvation," through faith

in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. iii. 15, 16, Ellicott's version). But the various portions of the holy volume are to be consulted and used according to the purposes for which they were written. The historical division is the most venerable relic of antiquity. The Book of Psalms is a treasury of religious experience, available to the use of the pious, in every age and in all parts of the world. The prophets are to be listened to with utmost deference, particularly when they speak of Him who "was to come." So we find that the Lord Jesus said to his disciples, after his resurrection, "all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me" (Luke xxiv. 44). But we must not seek developments of purely Christian truth in Leviticus or in the Canticles. Men who are possessed by the allegorizing spirit are apt to run wild in ascribing to the sacred writers opinions and teachings with which it can hardly be proved that those writers were acquainted. The safest course to be adopted in the interpretation of supposed typical passages is to follow the example of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and "restrain our fancy accordingly." That the gospel was typified under the law, is clear. But it is equally clear that the typifying was limited to generals, and was not spun out into particulars, as has been too commonly taken for granted by third-rate commentators. Thus, the paschal lamb typified the Saviour; but an ingenious expositor might find many points of resemblance between them, for which there is no warrant in the New Testament; and if he were to demand reception of his teachings as containing true and orthodox doctrine we might reply that there is a great difference between the general fact and the special application. We might admit the former, but very seriously demur to the latter. In fact, we must learn to distinguish between the text and the interpretation. We are bound to receive the one; but the other has claims on us only so far as we discern its consistency with the original record and the main principles of the gospel system.

There has also been a strange tendency to the formation of creeds, and then to the substitution of creed for scripture. The New Testament was not written in a systematic manner, but there were early attempts to reduce it to system, by classifying together all the passages that treat or seem to treat, of any one doctrine. Then, if it is asked what is the New Testament doctrine on such or such a subject, the answer may be given in the words of the systematical collection, which becomes the standard—the "authorised formula; and the members of some denominations are accustomed to refer to "our standards."

Baptists are careful in this matter. They do not object to bring abstracts, but they do not quote them as authorities, for they do not think that they contain all that is revealed, either on any subject in hand, or on any other, or that the form of expression is essential, so that any departure from it might subject a man to the suspicion of heretical leanings. It is a sin to "make a man an offender for a word," and it may be remarked that although about eighteen hundred years have passed away since the book of the New Testament received its completion, there are heights and depths yet to be reached in regard to the meaning of words and phrases. Every close student of the Bible will endorse that assertion: "I am verily persuaded," said John Robinson, addressing the pilgrim fathers before their departure, "that the Lord hath more truth yet to break forth out of his holy word."

The habit of pleading the authority of a human standard is a very serious evil, and its effects are injurious to religion. The study of the Bible falls into neglect; and instead of holding truth, as taught in the denominational formula, in subordination to the authority of Scripture, it is too frequently the

case that Scripture itself is judged by the creed, and the meaning of texts comes to be decided by the manner in which they are expounded in the human document. He who is contented to commit himself to such a mode of forming an acquaintance with the truth of God will be a great loser. His examination of the holy oracles will be superficial, and his Christian character will be stunted. The words of an Old Testament saint may be quoted in the way of rebuke—"O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day" (Psalm cxix. 97). It is to be feared that there are very many professing Christians who are unable to adopt these words in reference to the book which we now have in its completeness. The utterances of the saint respected the small portion of the volume which was then issued, and of which he spoke in such affecting terms of impassioned attachment. The honest application of his words to the whole book is probably a rare attainment.

Chillingworth's celebrated saying is accepted by Baptists—"The Bible, the Bible only is the religion of Protestants." It is the sole authority in matters of religion. No creeds—or Confessions—or Catechisms—or decrees of Councils—or Acts of Legislatures—or Bodies of Divinity—or Ecclesiastical forms, can be brought into competition with it. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it because there is no light in them" (Isa. viii. 20). An opinion may be plausible and pleasing, but unless it has the sanction of "Thus saith the Lord" we cannot receive it. A practice may be recommended as very appropriate and becoming, but if it be not in agreement with Apostolic precept or precedent, or if it be inconsistent with that spiritual worship which the New Testament commands and enjoins, we must refuse to adopt it, lest we be drawn into a snare. Many a one has begun by uniting in services which appeared to be innocent or even instructive and highly devotional, who is now on the road to Rome, perhaps within sight of its walls.

Let it not be supposed, however, that all theology is wholly contained in the Bible. We have outlines—facts—and general principles—and sublime and heart-affecting truths. But there are thousands of questions respecting God and his ways to which the sacred volume furnishes no answers. The reasons are doubtless manifold. In some cases, the subjects themselves are out of our reach, or an explanation could not be expressed in human language, so as to be intelligible in this, the age of our childhood. In others, more full and definite information is not required. Curiosity might be gratified, but would also be the more incited, and new questions would continually arise, and be multiplied *ad infinitum*. Abundant provision is made for our instruction and comfort. "Holy Scripture"—to quote the sixth Article of the Church of England—"containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or to be thought requisite or necessary to salvation,"—and the phrase, "necessary to salvation," points out the main object of the Book; it was given to guide and prepare us for heaven, and how well the purpose is accomplished millions of saved souls who have crossed the flood in successive ages can testify. They are now before the throne, and "the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters" (Rev. vii. 17). Those of us who are still on the road have to take care that the guide-book is well studied and its directions faithfully regarded; and if inquiries are started which the book does not satisfy, or we are tempted to stray into paths which are not marked in the map of the journey, we must beware lest we be caught in some snare, and sorely hurt, if not ruined.

Some one ordered this line to be

engraved on his tomb—"The itch of disputation is the bane of the Church." It is presumed that he did not mean to condemn all inquiry and discussion. A thinker will speculate on many points, and ask innumerable questions. But there must be a check on his activity. There is a written book. Our speculations must not contradict it, or loosen our hold of any of its contents.

Still more. There is a DIVINE TEACHER. Let the following passages of Scripture be carefully studied:—Psalms xxv. 4, 5, 8, 9; cxix. 18, 36, 87; cxliiii. 10. Luke xi. 13. John xvi. 12-15. James i. 5.

J. M. C.

(To be continued.)

### How to keep 'em out.

BY REV. L. PHILETUS DOBBS, D. D.

Recently I attended a large meeting of divines who took up by appointment the question, "How to reach the non-church-going masses." A flood of light was thrown on it from all quarters of the moral hemisphere. So important was it considered, that it was laid over to the next meeting of the body. After returning to my home, I was sitting in my chair before the fire, thinking over the matter, and presently I found myself in another and strange land. Following the popular current I was carried to a building adapted for public resort, where (curiously enough) was a body of the representatives of the popular religion of the country, discussing the question, "How to keep out the non-church-going masses." The chairman alluded to the importance of the subject, and the reasons why it was desirable to keep the masses at a distance. He said, "We don't want to have them coming in and crowding us. When a lot of wealthy people put up a church, they want to enjoy themselves in it. They don't want to be jostled. And then, too, we don't want to see the distinctions all broken down. I quite agree with that amiable and aristocratic lady who thought that these had better be maintained here as long as possible, since they must necessarily be given up in the other world, whichever of the worlds we go to. What (exclaimed the speaker) what can be more unpleasant to a man like Deacon Cresus, worth a million, than to have a man not worth a thousand dollars come and sit down in the next pew to him? And then how can Mrs. Satingloss enjoy her devotions when she knows that Sally Scrub, who does house cleaning at \$1.00 a day and found, is sitting right across the aisle? But I need not enlarge; the reasons are obvious.

"And yet (he added), it is awkward; we can't put over the door 'the masses not wanted'; or 'nobody admitted who is worth less than \$50,000.' That would give rise to remark. And some minister on an exchange might inadvertently read passages out of the Sermon on the Mount that would seem incongruous, and that would grate on our feelings.

"So it is needful to adopt a less direct course. We are met to-day to hear the views of brethren on this point."

The matter being then opened, one speaker said: "It appears to me that a good deal can be done by the choir. These plain, no-account people, want a certain popular style of music. They want to understand what is sung, and to join in it. Now, we find that having very high-up music, sung in such a way that they can't catch the words, and that they cannot possibly join in, has a discouraging effect on the masses, and leads them quietly to stay away."

Another speaker said: "The sermon is an important element. At our church, we try to preach above their heads. The rich people spend their time in reckoning up their wealth, and in planning schemes of business. The stylish ladies study upon bonnets and fashions. But the poor people, not having these resources, want to hear something that they can get hold of;

and not getting it, after a while, they stay away."

Said another brother: "I regard church architecture as the hand maid of this great movement for keeping 'em out. You see, the lower classes want to hear, and see and breathe. They have little light or air in their homes; and they want to enjoy the unwonted luxury when they are at church. Now, the ideal of church architecture is a structure where seeing, hearing and breathing are alike out of the question. The effect is really grand."

Said still another: "A good debt is a great help in keeping 'em out. It enables us to put a good price on the pews, and to keep them out of the reach of scrubs."

The last speaker remarked: "Mr. Chairman; the brethren who have spoken have omitted the most effective of all. I tell you, sir, that the silks and satins and fine furs of the ladies do more in the right direction than all other influences put together. You see the plain folks won't come and be put in the shade. So we have pretty much abolished all fustian and velveteen and corduroy."

The applause which greeted the speaker was so vociferous that I started up, and behold it was all a dream.—*National Baptist.*

PERSONAL STATISTICS.—The oldest member of Her Majesty's Privy Council is Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe, G. C. B., aged 89; the youngest his Royal Highness Prince Leopold, aged 24. The oldest Duke is the Duke of Portland, aged 77; the youngest, the Duke of Montrose, aged 25. The oldest Marquis is the Marquis of Donegall, aged 80; the youngest, the Marquis Camden, aged 5. The oldest Earl in the House of Peers is Earl Bathurst, aged 86; though the oldest bearer of that title is the Earl of Kilmorey, an Irish Peer, aged 89; the youngest is the Earl of Hopetoun, aged 17. The oldest Viscount is Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, aged 89; the youngest, Viscount Clifden, aged 14. The oldest Baron is Lord Chelmsford, aged 83; the youngest, Lord Southampton, aged 10. The oldest member of the House of Commons is the Right Hon. Joseph Warner Henley, M. P. for Oxfordshire, aged 84; the youngest, the Hon. William O'Callaghan, M. P. for Tipperary, aged 25. The oldest Judge in England is the Right Hon. Sir Fitzroy Kelly, Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer Division of the High Court of Justice, aged 81; the youngest is Sir Nathaniel Lindley, Justice of the Common Pleas Division, aged 49. The oldest Judge in Ireland is the Hon. James O'Brien, of the Court of Queen's Bench, aged 71; the youngest, the Right Hon. Christopher Palles, LL.D., Lord Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer, aged 46. The oldest of the Scotch Lords of Session is Robert Macfarlane, Lord Ormidale, aged 75; the youngest, Alexander Burns Shand, Lord Shand, aged 48. The oldest Prelate of the Church of England is the Right Rev. Alfred Ollivant, Bishop of Llandaff, aged 79; the youngest is the Right Rev. Edward Parry, Suffragan Bishop of Dover, aged 47. The oldest Prelate of the Irish Episcopal Church is the Right Rev. John Gregg, Bishop of Cork, aged 79; the youngest is his son, the Right Rev. Robert Samuel Gregg, Bishop of Ossory and Ferns, aged 43. The oldest Prelate of the Scotch Episcopal Church is the Right Rev. Robert Eden, Bishop of Moray and Ross, aged 73; the youngest, the Right Rev. George R. Mackarness, Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, aged 54. The oldest Baronets are Sir Richard John Griffith and Sir Moses Montefiore, each aged 93; the youngest, Sir Henry Palk Carew, aged 7. The oldest Knight is Field-Marshal Sir John Forster Fitzgerald, G. C. B., aged 91; the youngest, Sir Ludlow Cotter, aged 24.—*Who's Who in 1877.*

The N. Y. Independent says, "The Baptists are on the increase everywhere."