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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.
"Only Three Minutes."

[These lines were suggested by a remark made before a Sunday-school convention. He said that in his school at Springfield, a bell was rung three minutes before time for closing the lesson that the teacher might be able to make any suggestion which might occur to his mind.]
"Only three minutes!" Oh, what shall I say—
What promise present, what danger por-
tray?
I've only three minutes! they may be
my last,
And the doom of some dear one forever
be cast.

I have come to my class this morning
with prayer.
The lesson has been my every-day care;
But, oh have I said all that I could say
To bring my dear pupils to Jesus to-day?
Have I used every talent my Father has
given?
Do they see that I feed on the sweet
bread of heaven?
Do they feel that I speak of the things
I know
When I urge them with me to the Sav-
iour to go?

Have the words I have spoken gushed
warm from my heart,
All freighted with love? Has each had
a part
Of earnest instruction, entreaty and
prayer?
Must meet them in judgement—dear
Lord can I dare?

O Teacher Divine! to thee do I fly;
My ignorance help and do Thou supply
My heart with the grace, my lips with
the speech,
Each soul in my class with thy message
to reach.

Only three minutes! Come heavenly
Dove,
And brood in each heart in infinite love,
That teacher and pupils, ere parted may be
United, dear Saviour, forever with thee.

Religious.

For the Christian Messenger.
We shall live Again.

"I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."—JOHN xi. 25.

I have read this verse often, but it never before seemed as beautiful and forcible as now. What glorious words sounding through a world which, for thousands of years, had been the dormitory of sin and death! For centuries upon centuries heathendom could describe no light through the bars of the tomb. She was dumb on the subject of a future life, and more especially concerning the resurrection of the body. Or, if she spoke at all, her words were uncertain mutterings. Even the Jewish Church seemed to enjoy but transient and feeble glimmerings of the great light. It required the great Abolisher of death, to show to a benighted and death-stricken world, the path of life. In Him reposed the bringing in of a better hope, the unfolding of mysteries which had been hid from generations. This is a marvellous disclosure! This mortal body, decomposed into its original dust, shall burst from the grave a glorified body! Not like the earthly tabernacle, a shifting, moving, movable tent; but incorruptible, immortal. The beautiful transformation of the insect from its chrysalis; the seed springing up into the full ear or beautiful flower; these are Nature's mute utterances of the great truth.

The gospel has clearly shown what Reason in her highest flights could not attain unto. Jesus Christ has brought life and immortality to light. He, the bright and Morning Star, has "turned the shadow of death into morning." And he is the firstfruits of the immortal harvest to be gathered into the garner of heaven. Precious truth! These words of Christ span, like a rainbow, the entrance to the dark valley.

When a Christian dies, say not that he has been committed to a dishonored tomb, but, rather, that he has been locked up in God's casket, until that day when Christ shall make up his jewels. Then this body will be fashioned like unto the glorious body of our Redeemer. Angels are commissioned to watch till the trump shall sound. They are the reapers waiting for the world's great "Harvest Home." Then Christ shall come, not as once, in sorrow and humiliation, but clothed with glory and triumph, to carry his sheaves home. "Lord, to whom shall we go but unto thee? Thou hast the words of ETERNAL LIFE."

NELLIE MAY.

Chelmsford, May 4, 1878.

Knowing our Friends in Heaven.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

There is not enough in the Bible about heaven to satisfy our curiosity; but there is quite enough to satisfy a reasonable faith. It is certainly more than a happy condition of glorified spirits. It is a holy place. Such expressions as "city with foundations," a "building" or structure of God, and a "habitation" all point to a definite locality. Certain characteristics of the abode of the blest are clearly indicated. It is a rest that remaineth for the people of God. No sin can penetrate it, or anything that whatever that defileth. Neither shall any of its inhabitants suffer from sickness or pain. Knowledge shall be commensurate with the enlarged powers of a glorified soul. We shall know even as we are known. Companionship with the spirits of the just made perfect will furnish endless variety and unbroken harmony of social intercourse. Above all, we shall see God, and not die.

These are among the most distinct truths which the Scriptures reveal concerning that Jerusalem the Golden whose walls are like unto precious stones and whose gate to orient pearls. For whom is this celestial habitation prepared? For beings of other worlds, or for those occupants of this globe whom Jesus hath redeemed unto himself? Certainly the latter. Christ says to his disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you." Where he is, he desires that his own shall be also. The occupants of heaven shall be those who were once occupants of this sinful earth. The transfer from earth to heaven does not (according to the only Book which reveals heaven) destroy personal identity. On the contrary, God's Word assumes continually that this identity will be preserved. The same living organism, the same characteristics which made the Patriarch Abraham a different man from everybody else in heaven. These physical and mental traits enabled his neighbors in "Ur" to recognize him. He has carried with him into the eternal world also such personal characteristics that he is recognizable there. According to Christ's statements the rich man "saw Lazarus in Abraham's bosom." He also declared that the righteous will yet sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in that celestial kingdom. It is preposterous to imagine that these persons are some other persons than those who passed by those names on earth. No matter what change death and the resurrection may produce on the forms or organisms known as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The body here changes by chemical processes, so that there are entirely new particles in my physical form from what were there six or seven years ago. Yet I am the same person. My individuality is not changed in the slightest degree. Lincoln, the nursing infant, and Lincoln, the noble president, were the same individual.

In like manner, Paul before the throne is, and inevitably must be, the identical Paul who preached at Athens and was martyred at Rome. When he longed to "depart and to be with Christ" he expected to be not somebody else, but the same individual. Moses died fifteen centuries before the advent of Jesus Christ. Yet there was a person-

ality still existing who appears at the time of Christ's transfiguration on the mount, and who was addressed by him as Moses. The Prophet Elijah, who had died seven hundred years before, was there also. When the great apostle speaks of his Thessaonian converts as his "glory and joy in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ" he assuredly expected to meet the same persons in heaven that he had labored with in Thessalonica. If they were not the same people, and if he could not meet them there, how could they be to him a "crown" or a "joy"?

This point is clearly in accordance with scripture and with common sense. Whatever change may be produced by death, personal identity will not be altered by one jot or tittle. The sinner who sins he will be the same sinner who will be punished in the world of woe. The believer who is welcomed with the glad salute, "Come, thou blessed of my Father!" will be the same person who on earth had done the Father's bidding. Without this preservation of perfect identity the whole idea of a future retribution of rewards and punishments would be an absurd impossibility.

If identity is preserved in eternity, will the faculty of memory also survive the grave? Undoubtedly it will. The obliteration of memory would amount to a partial destruction of the individual. It would remove some of heaven's richest enjoyments. If I cannot remember what my Redeemer has done and suffered for me, how can I join in the ever "new song" of grateful praise before his throne? The obliteration of memory would take away the severest and the bitterest of sin's just retributions in hell. Upon this point the description of Lazarus and of the selfish rich man "in torment" throws a distinct light, for Abraham said, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things."

Put now together these two facts: (1.) personal identity is not lost in eternity, and (2.) memory remains also unimpaired. It follows inevitably that we shall know each other in heaven. When David cried out, over his dead body, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me!" that bereaved father expected to meet again the child whose spirit had flown home to God. Certainly, we shall not be more stupid in heaven than we are on earth. If I could recognize such a person as Chalmers in his pulpit, I cannot fail to recognize that same servant of God in his celestial appareling. Martin Luther, in "Table Talks," makes much of this intercourse with father and mother and kindred in the heavenly home. Sharp, unpoetic old Doctor Emmons used to say, "I hope to have some talks with the Apostle Paul in heaven." And who of us would not experience a fearful shock, even amid the hallelujah raptures of Paradise, if the sweet affections of kinship were to be obliterated forever? Surely, God would not so punish those whom he loves to bless.

That infants will be doomed to the everlasting weakness and helplessness and ignorance of infancy seems, to my mind, impossible. No mother would ever want to see the darling babe stunted to an unchanged babyhood even here. It would become a pitiable monstrosity. Half the charm of childhood is its constant growth, its delightful openings, like the rosebud, to new thought and development. The idea of an undeveloped infancy in heaven would be almost a libel on the Creator! My darling boy will be none the less my own child in the "Father's House" because (like another child at Nazareth) he has increased in stature and knowledge, and in favor with God and man. That I shall know him there—if God's rich grace doth bring me there—I have no more doubt of than I have of the existence of a heavenly rest. Good Dean Alford struck a chord in every Christian heart, when he sang:

"Oh! then what raptured greetings,
On heaven's happy shore;
What knitting severed friendships up,
Where partings are no more!"

Independent.

The Board Fence.

"Shoo, shoo, get home you plaguey critters!" cried Mr. Babcock, waving his arms as he chased a dozen sheep and lambs through a gap in the fence.

It was a wooden fence, and when he had succeeded in driving the animals the other side of it, he lifted it from its reclining position and propped it up with stakes. This was an operation he had found himself obliged to repeat many times in the course of the season, and not only that season, but of several previous seasons.

Yet Mr. Babcock was neither slack nor thrifless; in fact, he rather prided himself on the ordinary appearance of his farm, and not without reason. How then shall we account for his negligence in this particular instance?

The truth was that this fence formed the boundary line between his estate and that of Mr. Small; and three generations of men who owned these estates had been unable to decide to whom it belonged to rebuild and keep it in repair. If the owners had chanced to be men of peaceful dispositions, they would have compromised the matter and avoided a quarrel; but if on the contrary, they belonged to that much larger class who would sooner sacrifice their own comfort and convenience than their so-called rights, this fence would have been a source of unending bickering and strife.

And of this class were the present owners. Again and again had they consulted their respective lawyers on the subject and dragged from their hiding-places musty old deeds and records, but always with the same result.

"I say it belongs to you to keep it in repair; that's as plain as a pike-staff," Mr. Babcock would say.

"And I say it belongs to you—any fool might see that," Mr. Small would reply; and then high words would follow, and they would part in anger, more determined and obstinate than ever. The lawyers' fees and the loss by damages to each other's cattle had already amounted to a sum sufficient to have built a fence around their entire estates, but what was that compared to the satisfaction of having their own way?

There were not wanting in their neighborhood peace-makers who would gladly have settled the affair by arbitration, but to this neither of the belligerents would listen for a moment.

At last, one day, Miss Letitia Gill, a woman much respected in the village, and of some weight as a land owner and tax-payer, sent for Mr. Babcock, to come and see her on business; a summons which he had made haste to obey, as how could it be otherwise where a lady was concerned?

Miss Letitia sat at her window sewing a seam, but she dropped her work and took off her spectacles when Mr. Babcock made his appearance.

"So you got my message; thank you for coming I'm sure. Sit down, do. I suppose my man Isaac told you I wanted to see you on business—a matter of equity I may say. It can't be expected that we women folks should be the best judges about such, you know; there's Isaac, to be sure, but then he lives on the place, and maybe he wouldn't be impartial in his judgement about our affairs."

"Jes' so," said Mr. Babcock.

"Well, the state of the case is this: When Isaac came up from the long meadow to dinner—they're mowing the meadow to-day, and an uncommonly good yield there is—when he came up to dinner, he found that stray cows had broken into the vegetable garden."

"He did, hey?"

"You can fancy the riot they made. I declare, Isaac was almost ready to use profane language. I'm not sure that he didn't say, 'and I'm certain he did say 'darn' and, after all, I couldn't feel to reproach him very severely, for the pains he has taken with that garden is something amazing; working in it, Mr. Babcock, early and late, weeding and digging and watering, and now to see it all torn and trampled so that you

wouldn't know which was beets and which was cucumbers'—It's enough to raise anybody's temper."

"It is so," said Babcock.

"And that isn't all, for by the looks of things they must have been rampaging in the orchard and clover-field before they got into the garden. Just you come and see;" and putting on her sun-bonnet, Miss Letitia showed Mr. Babcock over the damaged precincts.

"You don't happen to know whose animals did the mischief?" said Mr. Babcock.

"Well, I didn't observe them in particular myself, but Isaac said there was one with a peculiar white mark, something like a cross, on its haunch."

"Why that's Small's old brindle," cried Mr. Babcock. "I know the mark as well as I know the nose on my face. She had balls on her horns, didn't she?"

"Yes, so Isaac said."

"And a kind of hump on her back?"

"A perfect dromedary," said Miss Letitia. "I noticed that myself."

"They were Small's cows, no doubt of it at all," said Mr. Babcock rubbing his hands. "No sheep with them hey?"

"Well, now I think of it, there were sheep—they ran away as soon as they saw Isaac. Yes certainly, there were sheep," said Miss Letitia.

"I knew it—they always go with the cows; and what of me—"

"It's to fix damages," said Miss Letitia. "As I said before, women folks are no judges about such matters."

Mr. Babcock meditated a moment, and then said:

"Well, I wouldn't take a cent less than seventy-five dollars if I were you—not a cent."

"Seventy-five dollars! Isn't that a good deal, Mr. Babcock? You know I don't wish to be hard on the poor man; all I want is a fair compensation for the mischief done."

"Seventy-five dollars is fair ma'am—in fact, I might say it's low; I wouldn't have had a herd of cattle and sheep tramping through my premises in that way for a hundred."

"There's one thing I forgot to state: the orchard gate was open, or they couldn't have got in; that may make a difference."

"Not a bit—not a bit. You'd a right to have your gate open, but Small's cows had no right to run loose. I hope Isaac drove them to the pound, didn't he?"

"I heard him say he shut 'em up somewhere, and didn't mean to let 'em out till the owner calls for 'em. But Mr. Babcock if he should refuse to pay for damages? I should hate to go to law about it."

"He won't refuse; if he does, keep the critters till he will pay. As to law, I guess he's had about enough of that."

"I'm sure I thank you for your advice," said Miss Letitia, "and I mean to act upon it to the very letter."

Scarcely was he out of sight when Miss Letitia sent a summons for Mr. Small, which he obeyed as promptly as his neighbor had done.

She made to him precisely the same statement she had made to Mr. Babcock, showed him the injured property and asked him to fix the damages. It was remarkable before he did this that he should ask the same question Mr. Babcock had asked, namely, whether she had any suspicion to whom the animals belonged.

"Well, one of them I observed had a terribly crooked horn."

"Precisely—it's Babcock's heifer; I would know her among a thousand. She was black and white, wasn't she?"

"Well, now I think of it, she was; one seldom sees so clear a black and white on a cow."

"To be sure, they're Babcock's animals fast enough. Well, let me see—what you want is just a fair estimate, I suppose?"

"Certainly."

"Well I should say ninety dollars was as low as he ought to be allowed to get off with."