

The Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

NEW SERIES.
Vol. XXIV., No. 24.

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Wednesday, June 11, 1879.

WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XLIII., No. 24.

Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

"Be of good Cheer."

Dear servant of Jesus,
Your heart should not fear;
The Saviour is with you,
Then "Be of good cheer."

He looks on you toiling
Along the rough way;
And marks all the trials
Of each busy day.

And you will receive
A bright crown from his hand,
When you reach your sweet home
In the heavenly land.

And among the redeemed,
You will joyfully meet
The souls that you led,
When on earth to his feet.

And O when you hear
The sweet anthems they raise,
To the God who has taught them
The language of praise.

Your joy will be great,
And you'll feel then repaid
For each trial borne here,
And each sacrifice made.

Your faith here on earth,
Very often is tried;
But fear not dear worker,
You've Christ by your side.

In light or in darkness,
He always is near;
He smiles on your labour,
Then "Be of good cheer."

H. COLE.

Milton, Queens.

Onward, Christian Soldiers.

Onward, Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war,
With the Cross of Jesus
Going on before.
Christ, the Royal Master,
Leads against the foe;
Forward into battle
Do his banners go.
Onward, Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war,
With the Cross of Jesus
Going on before!

At the sign of triumph
Satan's host doth flee!
On then, Christian soldiers,
On to victory!
Hell's foundations quiver
At the shout of praise;
Brothers, lift your voices,
Loud your anthems raise.
Onward, Christian soldiers, &c.

Like a mighty army,
Moves the Church of God.
Brothers, we are treading
Where the saints have trod.
We are not divided,
All one body we.
One in hope, in doctrine,
One in Charity,
Onward, Christian soldiers, &c.

Crowns and thrones may perish,
Kingdoms rise and wane,
But the Church of Jesus
Constant will remain:
Gates of hell can never
Gainst that Church prevail;
We have Christ's own promise,
And that cannot fail.
Onward, Christian soldiers, &c.

Onward then, ye people,
Join our happy throng,
Blend with ours your voices
In the triumph song—
Glory, praise, and honour
Unto Christ the King!
This through countless ages
Men and angels sing.
Onward, Christian soldiers, &c.

Religious.

The Second Coming of Christ.

AN ESSAY READ BEFORE THE BAPTIST MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE HELD AT LAWRENCE TOWN, ANNAPOLIS CO., APRIL 8TH, 1879.

By Rev. John Brown.

(Published by request of the Conference.)

(Concluded.)

What is it that lies at the root of all this coldness, apathy, and indifference on the part of the Church? I hasten to answer, and my answer is—UNBELIEF! A sin which of all sins is most common, and most damaging, and injurious both in the Church and in the world, and may account for that sluggishness and lethargy that is such a fearful drawback to the Church's power with God and with men, and so sadly hinders the progress of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. The word is as true to-

day as it was when first written. "Faith without works is dead," which I understand to mean that works prove the existence of faith, and where this proof is lacking, faith is lacking also.

"Faith's meanest deed more favour bears,
Where hearts and wills are weighed;
Than brightest transports, choicest prayers,
Which bloom their hour and fade."

May we pray in real earnest, that God will give us a large increase of faith and love, a holy determination to leave nothing undone or unattempted for his glory; that the Holy Spirit may fully convince us of our personal responsibility in the matter of the world's redemption, and awaken in us a burning zeal to do our own part faithfully and well.

Peter (2 Ep. iii. 12), says: "Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, &c." The margin reads "hastening the coming of the day of God;" by which it would appear as if the coming of that day was in great measure dependent upon the efforts of the Church. How then shall the Church hasten that day? By attempting greater things for God, and expecting greater things from God than she ever has as yet. By "casting off the works of darkness, and putting on the armour of light." By taking to herself "the whole armour of God." What is it that keep us back from well-known duty? Foremost I again answer stands Unbelief, the crowning hindrance, and the crowning sin. To this may be added selfishness, indolence, pride, love of money, which leads to many other evils, love of the world, fear of man, unpardonable timidity and cowardice, and the desire and effort to shift our own responsibility to the shoulder of others; which can never be done; and not the least is the lack of a right and due sense of our obligation to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, "who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us, from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS." Titus ii. 14.

We have great need to pray with David, "Create in me a clean heart O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Ps. li. 10. When this prayer is offered in sincerity, and graciously answered; when our hearts are touched with that sympathy for men which so moved the heart of Christ, causing him even to weep; surely then the day of the world's redemption, will soon dawn. We may then hope to be large sharers in the joy of our Lord when "he shall see of the travail of his soul" in a redeemed, emancipated world.

The proclamation and belief of the gospel is to introduce the Millennium, which will not be "a new dispensation but the completion and consummation of the present, the attainment on earth of the object of the Saviour's advent, and the universal reign of divine principles, through the meditation of the Son of God." The gospel is to be preached to every creature, and it will be by the general reception of the same through the enlightening and saving power of the Holy Spirit that the world's Jubilee is to be introduced. The close of which happy time will be marked by a short apostasy and the "coming of the Son of Man." Then the affairs of the universe will be wound up, then will be the one general, universal resurrection of the good and the bad, for as concerning the good, Paul says, (1 Cor. xv. 23.) "Christ the first fruits (that is from the dead,) afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." "At his coming" let me repeat. Then the general judgment, and the apportionment of good and bad to the final reward.

Whether this world is to be the final home of the saved, the day will declare. If it is to be, then, assuming that the judgment will take place in the air, the earth consequently depopulated, it may be presumed that then the burning of the earth will take place. This however is but supposition, and it is not safe to press too far where revelation holds no lamp.

This earth was the home of our first parents in their holy and sinless state,

why may it not be so again when the redeemed shall be made free from sin and pure as the angels, yea, like Christ himself. Banish sin, and earth becomes Heaven.

John, in Revelation (xxi. 1-3.) says: "And I saw a new Heaven, and a new earth; for the first Heaven, and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of Heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." If this be so, then it is to be presumed that the angels will take up their abode on earth also, and that the present Heaven, the dwelling place of God and Christ, and the angels, and "the spirits of just men made perfect," will be vacated for ever, unless we are to understand that by the descent of the Holy City, Heaven itself is meant, which can scarcely be, for it says, "I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven." If this prophecy is to be taken as literal, then we must conclude that God and Christ, and all the present and future occupants of Heaven up to the time of the coming of Christ will, after that event, make their home on earth as well as those who will be above at His coming.

While the future of the world is rapt in so much mystery, and while it is our duty and privilege to seek to understand all we possibly can of the Word of God (and if we fail to unravel a mystery, or perceive the meaning of certain dark passages, let us not give up before we have done our utmost to discover it): let us not forget that our present pressing duty is to seek to glorify the name of God and our Lord Jesus Christ by spreading abroad the gospel of his grace by all means within our reach. As to seeking to be ready for Christ's appearing, that is well; although for my part I consider that event to be many centuries down the future:—but he who is prepared for death is prepared for Christ's appearing. Both events are altogether uncertain. He who is ready for the one is ready for the other. He who is fit to live, is fit to die, and he who is fit to die, is fit to meet Christ, come when he may.

Life comes before death, let us then take them in their order. By the help of God let us seek to live, not merely exist; to serve our day and generation: praying "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" and when he tells us, by opening channels of usefulness, then do his will. If we live thus, we need trouble ourselves but little about death; we shall then have no fear of what is such a terror to so many. Our feeling will be, "Come welcome death, I'll gladly go with thee." What we fear most, in truth we should fear least. To the Christian man, death, which is the end of life, is at the same time the gate of Heaven. It is a door which opening out from this cold world, opens clear into Heaven's unheard-of joys.

With such bright prospects: with such exhilarating hopes: with such "exceeding rich and precious promises;" rejoicing that God has so honoured us as to permit us to be co-workers with him, and to have something—anything—to do towards bringing about the blissful era when one song shall employ all nations, and all cry "Worthy is the Lamb," "Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth:"

"Go on! go on! no moments wait
To help the right;
Be strong in faith, and emulate
The virtues of the good and great
With all thy might."

Go on! go on! bravely fulfil
Thy mission here!
Whate'er thou doest, do it well,
Nor let a doubt within thee dwell
Or coward fear.

Go on! go on! thy onward way,
Leads up to light;
The morning now begins to gray;
And soon the cheering beams of day
Will chase the night.

Go on! go on! Oh, doubt it never—
This strife with wrong
Is fated not to last for ever,
But if we boldly make endeavour,
Will cease ere long.

The Thatcher Preacher.

Richard Godfrey was a thatcher, and quite skilful in that craft. He spent his weekdays in covering cottages, barns, and stacks with straw, and on the days of the Lord he explained the gospel and edified the church. He was in good repute as a preacher: and among the members of the church were some of the middle classes, as well as the tillers of the soil. His sermons were plain and powerful, adapted to impress the heart; and they did produce impressions, strong and lasting. As Father Booker, of Wivelsfield, used to say, he went "slab-dab at the subject, and his words stuck."

The wife of an opulent farmer in the neighbourhood was a member of the Baptist Church. While her husband did not trouble himself about religion, and perhaps seldom went to church, he allowed his wife to take her own course, and she took it.

The rector of the parish and the farmer were not on good terms; they quarreled about the tithes. The rector's waggon went through the fields in the time of harvest, collecting the tithes, and it was not at all surprising that now and then there was a disagreement about the quantity, or "some temper-flaw unsightly" showed itself. The breach between the parties grew wider, threatening serious consequences. The farmer was not a man of violence, but he was fully disposed to have his own way, and not always very particular as to the means by which it was accomplished. In this case his plan was laid with considerable ingenuity. He knew that the rector despised Godfrey, and he resolved to bring them together, and to arrange the interview, in such a manner that the rector should receive mortification. So the reverend gentleman was invited to dinner at the farmhouse on a day when it was known that Godfrey would be thatching on the premises. As he approached the house, the farmer went out to meet him. They were walking through the garden to the front door, when Godfrey appeared on the ladder at his work. "There's my wife's parson," said the farmer. They took dinner, and sat down afterwards to pipes and ale, conversing on the ordinary topics of the day. In the course of conversation, the opinions and proceedings of the dissenters came in for a share in the discussion, and reference was frequently made to "my wife's parson," as the farmer called him. "I wonder why you speak so often about that man!" the rector exclaimed; "he is an ignorant fellow, and deserves no notice." "That won't do," the farmer replied: "Godfrey is a sensible man; he shall come in and talk with ye."

A messenger was sent to the barn, and Godfrey soon appeared—wet and dirty, as thatchers generally are—wondering why he was sent for, and apologizing for his rough appearance. "Oh, never mind, Master Godfrey," said his employer; "come in and sit down, and take a pipe and some ale." He then contrived to engage the rector and the thatcher in conversation on religious subjects. It turned out as he expected: Godfrey was a Bible student. It was his one book, which he daily studied and prayed over, but with which rectors in those days were but imperfectly acquainted. The two men differed, and they disputed, and the rector evidently felt the force of Godfrey's homely arguments—lost his temper—and reviled when he should have reasoned. It was monstrous that an ignorant thatcher, who could scarcely read, should get into a pulpit, and pretend to preach! "Come, now," said the farmer, "this won't do; you must not put upon my wife's parson; he shall preach with you for a guinea any day." The art of irritation was understood by the thatcher's friend. He pursued the advantage which the rector had given him by losing his temper, and it was

actually agreed that the preaching-match should come off that day month! The farmer found the guinea, to be staked on Godfrey's side.

The question then arose—who should choose the text. "Oh!" said Godfrey, "he left that to the gentlemen." "The gentleman" chose Eph. iv. 5, thinking it likely that Godfrey would be unable to interpret that passage on Baptist principles.

The place chosen for the preaching trial was a field near the farmhouse. The farmer took care that the meeting should be extensively advertised, and that a commodious platform should be erected. On the day appointed, the combatants and their friends met on the spot, where a large congregation had assembled. It was mutually arranged that Godfrey should be the first speaker. He ascended the platform, read the text, put himself in a free attitude before the audience, and poured forth his own oratory, in his own way. What he said, and how he said it, is not recorded. Reporters were not abroad in those days. All that is known is that the thatcher-preacher conducted the service so much to the service so much to the satisfaction of the people that they greeted him with a hearty cheer at the close. The rector's friends received it as a knell of defeat. It would be lowering himself, they told him, to go any further; and advising him to pay his guinea, and thus confess himself the loser, they withdrew with him from the meeting-place, leaving Godfrey master of the field.

The Baptist Church Meeting at Shallows heard of the transaction, corresponded with Godfrey, and secured him for their pastor. There he lived and laboured till his death, in 1724. His immediate successor is not known.

J. M. CRAMP.

Wolfville, Nova Scotia, July 17, 1877.

When temperance was being discussed in our Local Legislature, Mr. Ford referred to a member of one of our best families of the Province recently buried as a pauper by means of his being addicted to strong drink, and he called it a temperance lecture in a nutshell. Mr. John Pugh the member for Halifax, rose and said he was a liquor seller, and he considered his business just as legitimate and respectable as a carriage builder. This struck Mr. Ford, who is a carriage builder, and so he applied briefly and as follows: "I build carriages, and when I turn out a fine wagon I feel proud of it, and point to it moving along the street and say—that is my work. I would ask the honorable member for Halifax if he is proud of his work as he sees it reeling along the streets?" To this there was no response. It was, in old fashioned parlance, a settler. Such incidents as these do not always appear in the published debates, more is the pity.—*Albion Journal*.

"Why I Married her."

How a wedding was brought about is told by the *American Baptist*.

"Where did you first meet with your bride?" I said to a young friend of mine, who had invited me to his wedding.

His reply was, "A year ago I was one of a large dinner-party of ladies and gentlemen at which a young lady was noticed not to drink any wine. Our host observed it and said,—

"A glass of wine, with you miss?"

"Excuse me sir," said she.

"What! are you a teetotaler?"

What have we a teetotaler here? Ha! Ha! Why, do you never drink wine?"

"Never, sir."

"Why not?"

"From principle, sir."

"Nothing more was said. Her decision of character deeply impressed me. I sought an introduction to her, satisfied that one of her principles would make a good companion. I became a teetotaler myself, and now she has just become my wife. That's why I married her."

Our friend was right.