

The Christian Messenger.

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NEW SERIES.
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WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XLIII., No. 8.

Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

A Song of Praise.

"I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart."
Precious Giver of Salvation,
Thine entirely I would be;
I would praise thy name for ever,
For thy boundless love to me.
My poor song accept dear Saviour,
'Tis love's offering to Thee.
I have been upheld and strengthened,
By thy grace through many a year;
In the midst of pain and suffering,
I have felt that thou wast near
And each trial laid upon me,
Lord, has made Thee still more dear,
Faith is daily growing stronger,
For I knew that Thou art mine:
O I cannot doubt, dear Saviour,
Such a perfect love as Thine!
And my sinful soul I gladly
To Thy faithful hands resign.
Thy kind arms are folded round me,
With such tender love and care;
And I find such peace within them,
I would rest forever there.
Lord I know Thou ne'er wilt leave me,
But Thy glory I shall share.
Thou wilt carry me, kind Shepherd,
Safely to my journey's end:
O I do not fear to trust Thee!
On Thy love I can depend.
And Eternity I'm hoping
By and by with Thee to spend.
In Thy righteousness I'm trusting,
All my sins to Thee I bring;
Thou art all I need, dear Saviour,
And to Thee alone I cling.
I can never, never, perish
'Neath the shadow of Thy wing.
O my Saviour! for Thy goodness
To my soul from day to day,
I will never cease to praise Thee,
While upon the earth I stay.
And when life is o'er I'll praise Thee,
When I soar to Heaven away.
Help me in my songs I pray Thee,
To uphold Thy love to view;
Great will be my joy dear Saviour,
If this only I may do.
Let Thy Holy Spirit guide me,
Till life's pilgrimage is through.
H. COLE.
Milton, Queens Co.

Revision of the New Testament.

The Post (London, Eng.) publishes the following from the pen of the Dean of Lichfield:—
JERUSALEM CHAMBER, WESTMINSTER.
Friday, December 13, 1878.
The day on which the Revisers of the Authorized Version of the New Testament finished their second Revision.
Propitious hour! in which we saw with joy
Our hopes well-nigh fulfilled, the approaching end
Of nearly nine years' toils. The Almighty Friend
Has blessed our work, and given us to enjoy
His peace throughout this dignified employ.
His Love has been our banner on our road!
His Truth has led us, Truth without alloy;
Therefore we knelt, and humbly thanked our God.
Glory to God! for He our minds has taught
To shed some rays of light which He has given
Upon the abiding Word which came from Heaven;
Contented we, if, through our careful thought,
These living Waters henceforth flow more clear
The longing soul to satisfy and cheer.
E. B.
Deanery, Lichfield, December, 21.

Religious.

Conscience against Catechism.

Rev. Dr. Armitage, the distinguished Baptist divine of New York, was reared in the Church of England. Of course he was "made a child of God, a member of Christ's church, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven," by his so-called baptism, when an infant. He was taught by the catechism and ritual of that church to believe himself "regenerate" and in a state of salvation. When he was about ten years of age,

he was called upon one day by his rector to say his Catechism, as found in the Book of Common Prayer.

"What is your name?" the minister asked.
"Thomas."
"Who gave you that name?"
"My godfather and godmother, in my baptism—the child stopped."
"Well, go on, child."
"Mr. Wilson," he said, "there is nothing more."
"Why, do you not know your catechism?"
"Yes."
"Repeat it, then."
"I cannot."
"Why?"
"Because it is not true."
"What do you mean?" asked the astonished rector.
"Precisely what I say."
"Cannot you repeat it?"
"Yes: wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. Sir, I was made nothing of the kind. Only yesterday my grandmother whipped me for being wicked. I am not a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven."
"Where have you got these views, sir?"
"Mr. Wilson, from hearing your sermon last Sunday week, on the text, 'Ye must be born again,' and you showed me that unless my heart is renewed, and I am made a new creature in Christ Jesus, I cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. I am not a new creature; my baptism did not make me anything like a new creature."—*Baptist Herald.*

Dr. Chalmers on keeping the Sabbath.

We never, in the whole course of our recollections, met with a Christian who bore upon his character every other evidence of the Spirit's operation, who did not remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. We appeal to the memory of all the worthies who are lying in their graves, that, eminent as they were in every other grace and accomplishment of the new creature, the religiousness of their Sabbath day shone with equal lustre amid the assemblage of virtues which adorned them. In every Christian household, it will be found that the discipline of a well-ordered Sabbath is never forgotten among the old lessons of a Christian education; and we appeal to every individual who now hears us, and who carries the remembrance in his bosom of a father's piety, if, on the coming round of the seventh day, an air of peculiar sacredness did not spread itself over that mansion where he drew his first breath, and was taught to repeat his infant hymn, and lisp his infant prayer. Rest assured that the Christian, having the love of God written in his heart, and denying the Sabbath a place in his affections, is an anomaly that is nowhere to be found. Every Sabbath image, with every Sabbath circumstance, is dear to him. He loves the quietness of that hallowed morn. He loves the church-bell sound which summons him to the house of prayer. He loves to join the chorus of devotion, and to sit and listen to that voice of persuasion which is lifted in the hearing of an assembled multitude. He loves the retirement of this day from the din of worldly business and the inroads of worldly men. He loves the leisure it brings along with it; and sweet to his soul is the exercise of that hallowed hour, when there is no eye to witness him but the eye of Heaven, and when, in solemn audience with the Father who seeth him in secret, he can, on the wings of celestial contemplation, leave all the cares and all the secularities of an alienated world behind him.

Chemists tell us that a single grain of the substance called iodine will impart a color to seven thousand times its weight in water. It is so in higher things—our companion, our book, our habit may affect the whole life and character,

(Published by special request.)

The Second Coming of our Lord.

BY REV. DR. CRAMP.

AN ESSAY PREPARED BY REQUEST OF THE KINGS COUNTY BAPTIST MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE, AND READ BEFORE THAT BODY AT KENTVILLE, FEBRUARY 3RD, 1879.

When the time of the Lord's death drew near, he informed his disciples of the fact, and warned them that he must soon leave them, and return to the place whence he came. They were greatly disturbed by the announcement, having entertained the hope that he would assume the royalty which he was heir to, and give peace and glory to Israel, which nation had been miserably distracted by internal commotions for many years, and had been compelled to submit to the Roman yoke. To quell their anxieties, the Lord further instructed them, stating that the communications of truth were to be made, which would be the result of the bestowment of the Holy Spirit, and that the bestowment of the Spirit depended on the Redeemer's departure. (John xvi. 7-11.) To us, all this is very clear, but it does not appear that the disciples understood the spiritual nature of the new dispensation at that time. Their minds were beclouded by Judaism, and the light broke in upon them gradually. A distinct revelation was given to the Apostle Paul by the Lord himself, and his views were from the first transparent and settled, requiring no change, except by addition. The Lord's earliest intimation on this subject was given in his closing discourse to his disciples. (John xiv. 2, 3.) About six weeks after the resurrection (Acts i. 2, 3,) he went up to heaven in the presence of his disciples, including, perhaps, many besides the twelve, (Acts v. 9-11.) The expression "in the same manner," used by the angels, refers to the cloud in which the Lord was received into his heavenly dwelling. As he went up in a cloud, so he will return in a cloud. That he would return, and that in all likelihood it would be soon, became the common belief of Christians, who are especially characterized as "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," (1 Cor. i. 7.) They not only expected him to come again, but they hoped it would be in their lifetime, and that they themselves would see the Lord. (See Rev. i. 3; xxii. 10, 20.)

The angels who were in attendance at the Lord's ascension forgot his re-appearance, but they gave no note of time. It might be five thousand years. Nobody could tell. So it was left. But the "earnest expectation" of the people began to produce undesirable effects. If the world was so soon to come to an end, why should its interests be cared for, and anxiety be cherished on behalf of that which might vanish in a moment? Industry seemed in danger of being paralysed, and religion threatened to be associated with inglorious idleness. Something required to be done to check the growing evil. The Apostle Paul interposed his authority, and sternly taught that "if any would not work, neither should he eat," (2 Thess. iii. 10.) But this did not prove sufficient, and Paul was directed to convey at the same time prophetic announcements of a forthcoming apostasy, which would overwhelm the churches, and well nigh destroy the fair hopes of God's people, (Acts xx. 29, 30; 2 Thess. ii. 1-12; 1 Tim. iv. 1-4.) Again, there was no note of time. But the prophecies were fulfilled. Long before the close of the first century, the departure from the faith had taken effect, Jewish tradition and Gentile philosophy had entered into a league against Christianity, and were as intent on its ruin as were the conspirators against the Apostle Paul, who swore that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed him. (As they did not succeed, it is fair to infer that they died of starvation.) The Lord Jesus had promised his servant that he should "bear witness for him at Rome;" (Acts xxiii. 11,) and He kept his word.

The last of the Apostles had passed away. Jesus had come but not visibly. He came at the destruction of Jerusalem. Titus and the Roman hosts were the Lord's ministers, executing his righteous vengeance. "Ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies"—He had said: "There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke xxi. 5-24.) All came to pass, according to his word, and truthful history records the horrible details. Christians believe that the Saviour himself superintended the execution of the divine sentence. No one saw Him, for he was not bodily present; yet heathen soldiers, unconsciously obeyed the behests of the invisible Ruler:—He, meanwhile, was "within the veil."

Five hundred years had run their course. Satan, as was his wont, had been busy all the time. He revelled in blood and ruin. His servants covered the lands with dead saints, burned bibles, and demolished churches, under the orders of the emperors Decius, Valerian, and Diocletian, and men of that class, who fondly imagined that they had triumphed, and that Christianity was about to expire. But they had miscalculated. Jesus had said, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. xvi. 18,) and so, though error beguiled many unstable souls, and superstitious mummeries amused the brainless, the good work went on. Many eminent men appeared, and sustained the truth by their pen; and the learned still read with satisfaction the works of Jerome, Augustine, and Chrysostom.

The next five hundred years were more perilous. Drivelling superstitions had crept in, in abundance, and were patronized by men who ought to have known better. Ritualistic childishness deprived the Church of its power. The

abominations of monkery defiled and deformed the bride of Christ. The ceremonies by which Christian worship was overlaid were rather the adoption of Pagan forms in Christian guise, than the legitimate results of gospel truth, understood and felt. A succession of public men had been kept up, but their work lacked the point, vigor, and unction of those of their predecessors, although some of them continue to adorn the shelves of clerical libraries, and are read with weariness and impatience. Here and there an extraordinary excitement sprung up, which was declared to be a revival. But medieval revivals will not abide the application of gospel tests. The tenth century exhibits the culmination of evil. Cardinal Baronius, the celebrated Roman Catholic historian, is candid enough to confess the ignorance, superstition and immorality that universally prevailed at that time, among all ranks and orders of men, including even the highest clergy. It was at this period that the world was startled by a strange phenomenon. All at once the people fell under the power of a wild notion, and its effects were surprising. A thousand years had passed away since the Saviour's birth. Misapplying Rev. xx., men agreed that the coming of the Lord was to be expected, and that he would appear in Palestine. "Immense numbers," says Mosheim, transferring their property to the churches and monasteries, left all, and proceeded to Palestine, when they supposed Christ would descend from heaven to judge the world. Others, by a solemn vow, consecrated themselves and all they possessed to the churches, the monasteries and the priests; serving them in the character of slaves, and performing the daily tasks assigned them; for they hoped that the superior Judge would be more favorable to them, if they made themselves servants to his servants. (Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii. p. 274. Edit. London, 1845.)

The Lord saw it all, but paused not in his intercessory work. The time had not come. After a few years the tumult subsided, and affairs re-assumed their ordinary condition.

There was a healthier state of society in the sixteenth century than in the tenth. The people were not so easily frightened. They were reading the scriptures, and had learned to judge for themselves. If here and there an individual was disposed to visionary views, the bulk of Reforming congregations obeyed the dictates of common sense, and "followed the Lamb," who was among them in the power of the Spirit, bestowing the blessings of a genuine since, in almost all parts of Europe and America, and latterly in Asia and Africa; many a "wilderness and solitary place" have been gladdened by the gospel, and tens of thousands have been educated for heaven.

But very much remains yet to be done. The Lord Jesus said to his disciples, "This gospel of the Kingdom must be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matt. xxiv. 14.) These words must be fulfilled. But how much work must be completed by the church, ere that desirable result is brought about? How many millions are there, who have not yet heard the glad tidings! What a vast amount of conversions must take place before it can be affirmed that the truth of God has been sufficiently proclaimed in any country, so as to warrant the statement the gospel has been preached there, "as a witness"—that is, that the people generally have had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the "great salvation!" Myriads of additional labourers must be employed, and immense sums of money expended, before it can be honestly affirmed that every country now unevangelized has been blessed with the "gospel of the Kingdom." The Lord's words will not "pass away;" he has distinctly declared that his second coming waits for the issue now referred to, and depends on its development. Many of his predictions have been fulfilled over and over again, in a spiritual sense, and will continue to be so as long as the present dispensation lasts. They have what Lord Bacon calls "a springing and germinant accomplishment." He who said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," (Matt. xviii, 20,) is present with his people wherever they meet, with combined love and zeal, to promote the interests of his kingdom, and his faithfulness to his promise is a matter of every day experience.

The special circumstances connected with the Lord's coming are very noteworthy. The coming is conditioned on the accomplishment of an event, which must be brought about by human instrumentality, employed in obedience to the Lord's will. The preaching of the gospel to all nations which is to precede the final arrangements of the dispensation, is the work of the Church, for which she has received the Great Commission. As in Apostolic times, the messengers go forth, "the Lord working with them," (Mark xvi. 20.) But the messengers must go forth, or the Lord will not come. Those who are truly "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," can only show their sincerity by diligently working for him. And the work which requires to be done must be done more heartily. The churches must "shake themselves from the dust;" quickened activity must take place of modern dulness; the work of a hundred years must be performed in ten, or perhaps in two; and every disciple must take part in the labour. Then, when the church shall have filled the world with the gospel, she will be prepared for the arch-angel's trumpet, and will "meet the Lord in the air" with joyful satisfaction. But not till then.

Some, who think that the Lord's coming is near; maintain that the gospel was generally spread in apostolic times, as in Col. i. 6, but it is clear that the phrase "all the world" means the Roman Empire only; besides which, a large part of the world was then unknown.

If the considerations that have been now adduced are correct great responsibility rests upon all professing Chris-