

The Christian Messenger.

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NEW SERIES.
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WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XLIII., No. 1.

Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.
"And he was not, for God took him."
Gen. v. 24.

The servants of the Lord,
Who on Mount Zion stand,
Are passing on to heaven,
To join the glorious band.

Some, in the morn of youth,
Their armor lay aside,
And o'er the narrow stream
Of death, they sweetly glide.

There yet remain with us
Some veterans of the Cross;
But one by one they fall,
And Zion mourns her loss.

Now "in a moment, in
The twinkling of an eye,"
The angel messenger
Bears one to rest on high.

Even while the warrior stands
Faithfully at his post,
He hears the holy call
To meet the ransomed host.

With zeal and love he raised
The banner of our King;
He touched the key-note of
The songs that angels sing.

But now, the mortal form
Rests in a sacred spot;
From all his Christian toils,
"God took him, he is not."

One hour may yet remain,
To close our labors here;
Then let us watch and pray,
The Master may be near.
Dec. 14, 1878. HAWTHORNE.

On a New Year.

When Yule logs are burning low,
And the echoes of the strain
That we sang at Christmas go,
Comes a bright New Year again:
Pure as falling flakes of snow,
Bringing blessing in its train.

Earthly blessings; fruits and flowers,
Gathered in with grateful hands;
Genial sun and freshening showers;
For the promise ever stands—
While remains this earth of ours,
These shall gladden all her lands.

Neither will the year supply
Earthly benefit alone;
Heavenly blessings in it lie;
It must prove a stepping-stone
That shall leave us, by and by,
Nearer to our Father's throne.

Pilgrims, see! the pearly dawn
Makes the far horizon clear;
Lo, the night is past and gone,
Light is breaking, morn is here;
In the day swift drawing on,
Welcome we another year.

Pilgrims, sing! your voices lift
In adoring accents, even
Till the feeblest note shall drift
From low earth to highest heaven;
Sounding praises for the gift
That is ours to-day—God-given.

Then, before the rising sun
Banish hence the dawning grey,
Ere the quiet hour be run,
Pilgrims, let us kneel and pray;
And, the New Year thus begun,
Go, rejoicing on our way.

Religious.

Week of Prayer 1879.

We published the Programme of the Evangelical Alliance several weeks since, yet we are assured that another insertion this week will be welcomed by many of our readers as it will assist them to participate more fully in the devotions of the week.

January 5-12, 1879. The following topics are suggested by the Evangelical Alliance, for daily exhortation and intercession:—

Sunday, January 5th.—SERMONS:—
"The years of the right hand of the most High."—PSALM lxxvii. 10.

Monday, January 6th.—PRAISE:—
Praise to God for his long-suffering kindness and mercy, for the goodness of His providence; and especially for salvation in Jesus Christ, and for the blessings enjoyed under the present dispensation of the Holy Ghost. Thanks-

giving for the peaceful settlement of European questions; also for the Divine blessing which has attended the distribution of the Holy Scriptures throughout the world.—Confession of unbelief and unfruitfulness.

Tuesday, January 7th.—PRAYER:—
For the power of the Holy Spirit to rest upon and operate in the Church of God everywhere, so that the disciples may be led into all the truth; that errors in doctrine and corruption of Scriptural worship may be stayed; that faith and hope, brotherly kindness and charity may be increased; and that the general tone of spiritual life may be elevated in communion with the Lord. Intercession for believers who are afflicted.

Wednesday, January 8th.—PRAYER:—
For the energetic operation of the Holy Spirit in the world at large, convincing men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and bringing those who are merely nominal Christians under the quickening and transforming power of truth. Also for Christian families; for the training of the young in the fear of the Lord, that they may be kept from error and evil, and especially that the Grace of God may be upon them.

Thursday, January 9th.—PRAYER:—
For the effusion of the Holy Ghost "upon all flesh;" for the continuance of peace; for the establishment of righteous government; for the spread of enlightenment, good-will, and love of justice among all nations, and for their conversion to Christ; for the removal of intemperance and other social evils; special prayer for the nation, its Sovereign and all in authority.

Friday, January 10th.—PRAYER:—
For the blessing of the Spirit of God to accompany evangelistic and missionary labours, and render them fruitful to Christ; for the turning of all Israel to the Lord; for the growth and stability of the young Churches gathered from heathen communities; for the revival of Bible Christianity in Eastern lands; for the preaching of the Gospel among all nations, and for "cheerful giving" on the part of those who give not themselves to this work.

Saturday, January 11th.—PRAYER:—
For those who preside over the Churches of the saints, and for all who are called to preach and to teach; for the due observance of the Lord's Day; for the wise guidance of biblical translators and critics; for successful resistance to secularism and infidelity.

Sunday, January 12th.—SERMONS:—
Looking for "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 COR. i. 7, and MATT. xxiv. 42-51.

The following arrangements have been made for the City of Halifax:—

SUNDAY, Jan. 5.—Meeting at 4½ P. M., in Y. M. C. A. Hall.

Morning Meetings will be held (beginning on Monday the 6th.) in the Association Hall, at 9½ o'clock. Evening meetings will be held as follows:

MONDAY, Jan. 6.—Granville Street (Baptist) Church, and St. John's (Presbyterian) Church.

TUESDAY, Jan. 7.—Fort Massey (Presbyterian) Church, and Brunswick Street (Methodist) Church.

WEDNESDAY, Jan. 8.—In all the Churches.

THURSDAY, Jan. 9.—Grafton Street (Methodist) Church, Star Street (Baptist) Church, Charles Street (Methodist) Church.

FRIDAY, Jan. 10.—St. Andrew's (Presbyterian) Church, and Tabernacle (Baptist) Church.

SATURDAY, Jan. 11.—St. Matthew's (Presbyterian) at 3½ o'clock, P. M.

Collections will be made at all these meetings in aid of the funds of the Alliance.

S. L. SHANNON, President.
ROBERT MURRAY, Secretary.

Carnal ease and worldly wisdom are not becoming in the soldiers of Jesus Christ. He has need of sterner qualities than those which sparkle in the eyes of fashion or adorn the neck of elegance.

John Buryan's Vision.

I saw, as if they were on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds. Methought also betwixt me and them, I saw a wall that did compass about this mountain. Now through this wall my soul did greatly desire to pass, concluding that if I could, I would there also comfort myself with the heat of their sun. About this wall I betwixt myself to go again and again, and praying as I went, to see if I could find some way or passage by which I might enter therein; but none could I find for some time; at the last I saw as it were, a narrow gap, like a little doorway in the wall, through which I attempted to pass. Now the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many efforts to get in, but all in vain; at last with great strivings, methought I at first did get in my head and after that, by sidelong striving, my shoulders and my whole body; then I was exceedingly glad, and went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun.

Now this mountain and wall was thus made out to me. The mountain signified the church of the living God; the sun that shone thereon, the shining of his merciful face on them that were therein; the wall I thought was the world, that did make separation between the Christian and the world; and the gap which was in the wall, I thought was Jesus Christ, who is the way to God the Father, John xiv. 6. But as the passage was wonderful narrow, even so narrow that I could not but with great difficulty enter therein, it showed me that none could enter into life but those that were in downright earnest, and left the wicked world behind them; for here was only room for body and soul, but not for body and soul and sin, Matt. vii. 14.

What Arthur Mursell thinks of Mr. Talmage.

Mr. Mursell is on a visit from England to the United States. Here is a picture he draws of Talmage and his doings at the Brooklyn Tabernacle:

The service—if such it may be called—commenced with the playing, by an organist seated below the platform, of a kind of voluntary. The organ itself is a huge and gaudily-decorated instrument behind the dais, but the keyboard is down in front upon the floor. During this voluntary a gentleman, with a low forehead and hair parted in the middle, came in a hasty and rather sidling way upon the stage, with a black felt hat in one hand and an overcoat slung upon his arm, as if he had just arrived from a journey by rail, and sat down in a large chair, without seeming to look at the people. There was no desk upon the stage; only a very small table beside the very big chair, on which a large Bible was lying, which was never once opened throughout the entire service. When the organ ceased playing, the occupant of the stage rose, and advancing, still with his eyes cast down, to the front, called out in a rough, grating tone the name and number of a hymn—The Doxology, I think; whereupon a person in full evening dress, with a large expanse of shirt front, mounted suddenly upon a high table in advance of the stage bearing a shining silver cornet-a-piston in his hand. This was "Arbuckle," the famous cornet-player of the United States, the Levy of the New World. He fixed his dark eyes upon the people as the organ was softly rolling out the tune, or some preparatory bars, and then, with a most complacent and dramatic wave of the right hand high in the air, he signalled them to rise, which they did en masse and the cornet poured forth in stentorian and almost deafening tones the numbers of "the Old Hundredth." A short prayer in the sawlike tones we had already heard followed, in which there was nothing particular to startle; and from

a small Bible held in the hand a Psalm was then recited. More music of the noisiest kind I ever heard in or out of an equestrian circus followed; and then came the sermon. The text was not read from the Bible, but chapter and verse were given from memory; and then the speaker stepped to one end of the platform, and slowly and hoarsely gave out the words, "The summer is ended;" then, advancing to the other end, and turning in an opposite direction, he repeated in precisely the same key and measure, "The summer is ended." For three-quarters of an hour, at the top of a harsh voice, we were treated to a series of pictures and anecdotes, illustrative of the vengeance of our Father who is in heaven, and the material hell to which the careless are to be consigned. There was no eloquence, but unflinching volubility. Here and there what was intended to pass current as a jest was interjected amidst the lurid rhetoric; and now and then it made its mark by eliciting a buzz of laughter from the crowd. There was no train of thought, no graceful imagery, no attempt at reasoning, nor even any sign of genius to light upon the dark river of invective which rolled its tide along. It was a series of abrupt and jerky sentences, intended to be rousing to the dissolute and cheerless, but apparently making small impression on the minds or hearts, while violating every fibre of feeling and every canon of taste. The sentences were like great splashes of paint flung by an inartistic brush; meant probably, to be Turneresque, but really only like the scenery of the "Victoria." As the footsteps of the retreating people sounded on the pavement, and the jargon of the cornet blended in my ears with the echo of a sulphurous denunciation, I felt that I was quitted the Windmill street of worship, a kind of consecrated Cremorne, with all the glare without the gaiety.

Good-Greetings.

The etiquette of Caucasian salutations is extremely elaborate and ceremonious. It does not by any means satisfy all the requirements of perfect courtesy to ask a mountaineer how he is, or how his health is, or how he does. You must enquire minutely into the details of his domestic economy, manifest the liveliest interest in the growth of his crops and the welfare of his sheep, and even express a cordial hope that his house is in a good state of repair, and his horses and cattle properly protected from any possible inclemency of weather. Furthermore, you must always adapt your greeting to time, place and circumstances, and be prepared to improvise a new, graceful and appropriate salutation to meet any extraordinary exigence. In the morning a mountaineer greets another with "May your morning be bright!" to which the prompt rejoinder is: "And may a sunny day never pass you by!" A guest he welcomes with "May your coming bring joy!" and the guest replies, "May a blessing rest on your house!" To one about to travel the appropriate greeting is, "May God make straight your road!" to one returning from a journey, "May health and strength come back with rest!" To a newly married couple, "May you have sons like the father and daughters like the mother!" and to one who has lost a friend, "May God give you what he did not live to enjoy!" Among other salutations in frequent use, are, "May God make you glad!" "May your sheep be multiplied!" "May you blossom like a garden!" "May your heart-fire never be put out!" and "May God give you the good that you expect not!"—Kenneth.

God words do more than hard speeches; as the sunbeams without any noise will make the traveller cast off his cloak, which all the blustering wind could not do, but only make him bind it closer to him.—Leighton.

God delivers only those who do their lawful utmost to deliver themselves.—R. South.

Under Constraint.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"The love of Christ constraineth us." I suppose "constrained us," is about the best rendering of the passage that could be given; but it might be translated "restraineth." The love of Christ restrains true believers from self-seeking, and forbids them to pursue any object but the highest. Whether they were beside themselves or sober, the early saints yielded to divine restraint, even as a good ship answers to her helm, or as a horse obeys the rein. They were not without a restraining force to prevent the slightest subjection to impure motives. The law of Christ controlled them, and held them under its power. But the word "restrained" only expresses a part of the sense for it means that he was "coerced or pressed," and so impelled forward as one carried along by pressure. All around him the love of Christ pressed upon him as the water in a river presses upon a swimmer, and bears him onward with its stream.

All great lives have been under the constraint of some mastering principle. A man who is everything by turns and nothing long, is a nobody; a man who wastes life on whims and fancies, pleasures and pleasures, never achieves anything; he flits over the surface of life, and leaves no more trace upon his age than a bird upon the sky; but a man, even for mischief, becomes great when he becomes concentrated. What made the young prince of Macedon, Alexander the Great, but the absorption of his whole mind in the desire for conquest. The man was never happy when he was at ease and in peace. His best days were spent on the battle-field or on the march. Let him rush to the forefront of the battle, and make the commonest soldier grow into a hero by observing the desperate valor of his king, and then you see the greatness of the man. He could never have been the conqueror of the world if the insatiable greed of conquest had not constrained him. Hence come your Cæsars and your Napoleons—they are whole men in their ambition, subject to the lust of dominion. When you carry this thought into a better and holier sphere, the same fact is clear. Howard could never have been the great philanthropist, if he had not been strangely under the witchery of love to prisoners. He was more happy in a hospital or in a prison, than he would have been at Court, or on the sofa of the drawing-room. The man could not help visiting the jails, he was a captive to his sympathy for men in bondage, and so he spent his life in seeking their good. Look at such a man as Whitefield, or his compeer, Wesley. Those men had but one thought, and that was to win souls for Christ; their whole being ran into the one river-bed of zeal for God, and made them full and strong as the rushing Rhone. It was their rest to labor for Christ; it was their honor to be pelted while preaching, and to be calumniated for the name of Jesus; a bishopric and a seat in the House of Lords, would have been the death of them; even a throne would have been a rack, if they must have ceased hunting for souls. The men were under the dominion of a passion which they could not withstand, and did not wish to weaken. Their whole life, being, thought, faculty, spirit, soul and body became one and indivisible in purpose, and their sanctified manhood was driven forward irresistibly, so that they might be likened to thunderbolts flung from the eternal hand, which must go forward till their end is reached. They could no more cease to preach, than the sun could cease shining, or reverse his course in the heavens.

Now this kind of constraint implies no compulsion, and involves no bondage. It is the highest order of freedom; for when a man does exactly what he likes to do, if he wants to express the enthusiastic joy and delight with which he follows his pursuit, he generally uses language similar to that of my