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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

Life.

"Oh what is life?"
Earnest the cry; heartfelt; and oft,
By sorrow's iron hand,
'Tis pressed from harassed souls, as wine
Is crushed from grapes in vintage-time;
And every age and land
Repeats the question, "What is life?"

"Oh, what is life?"
And glad, or strangely sad, by youth
And age is answer given,
With tears by the child of earthly woes,
With careless thoughtless joy by those
Who find this earth a heaven,
And ask no truer, purer life.

"Oh, what is life?"
Thoughtful the cry. A youth replies
With ringing voice and glad,
"Life is a cloudless, smiling day,
For laughter, mirth; for sport and play.
Why art thou gloomy, sad?
Why look with dismal face on life?"

Life? What is life?
A Summer day with sky unmarred
By clouds of care and wrong;
A path midst bright and fragrant flowers;
A glittering chain of golden hours;
A ceaseless stream of song;
All this and more is human life."

"Oh, what is life?"
Age answers now with trembling voice.
"Life is a transient light.
Its opening hours are bright and gay;
But soon is past the fleeting day;
Then comes the dreary night.
Soon ends the longest earthly life."

Life? What is life?
It promises to be a long
Succession of glad years,
But brief and incomplete its joys;
Its gifts to men are worthless toys;
And oft 'tis filled with fears,
All this and more is human life."

"Oh, what is life?"
Reply now comes from busy care,
And endless round of toil,
No cheering respite e'er is known,
An seed by weary hands is sown
On hard, unfruitful soil,
Oh, full of weariness is life!"

"Can this be life?"
"No!" gold-crazed men reply, "Life is
A mine where wealth is hid,
Exhaustless stores are buried deep,
And countless treasures heap on heap,
The dress of time amid,
Gold is the sum and end of life."

"Oh, what is life?"
Reply is made by one whose eyes
Are fixed on distant heights
Where he would stand, and 'neath him,
Applauding thousands, who should be
Revolving satellites;
Their centre, he; their sun, his life.

"Life? What is life?"
A ladder reaching upward far;
Upon its top, a crown;
Who wears shall hear the world's applause;
And wise are they who never pause,
Or from the heights look down,
Until they've seized the meed of life."

"Oh, what is life?"
A student answers, "Life is but
A school-day, busy, brief;
We sit at many teachers' feet,
We toil but e'er can task complete;
And oft we hear with grief
That night has come—the end of life."

Life? What is life?
Oh, would that man could tell!
These tasks unfinished speak
Of incompleteness, failure; yet
The pleasing toil we ne'er regret;
And though not all we seek
We find, not wholly vain is life."

"Oh, what is life?"
A Christian answers. Restful, calm
His face; cheerful his voice.
The embodiment of peace, he seems,
And anchoring hope. His heart no dreams
Of worldly gain rejoice.
He sees the royal end of life.

"Life? What is life?"
Not, as the poet lightly sings,
A path 'mid fragrant flowers,
O'er head the song of joyous bird
And music, sweet as heaven e'er heard,
Through sunny, care-free hours,
Not thus does Wisdom picture life.

Nor is this life,
A night of ceaseless, dreadful gloom,
Where sunshine ne'er is known;
Nor is't a charnel-house where death
Ever affrights, and gasping breath
Is heard, and horrid moan.
This pictures death and hell, not life.

List! This is life:—
An upward journey to a home,
Where glories are confessed,
In rapturous songs which angels sing.
Increasing joys the cycles bring.
Eternal peace, sweet rest.
Going home we tread a path called life.

The earthly life
Is full of surest promises.
These years are written o'er
With lines unfolding what shall be
Throughout that strange futurity
Where time is known no more.
A certain prophecy is life.

There is a life,
Which shows no good, foreshadows naught
Of pleasing harvest. Dark
The present; darker still the years
Which stretch before like living fears,
Beholding, all may mark
The bitter end of such a life."

Oh fleeting life!
To folly's votaries how vain?
How vain to those who turn
From Wisdom's pleading voice!
How rich to all whose hearts rejoice
Her saving words to learn,
Who seek and find Eternal Life.
O. C. S. WALLACE.

Religious.

For the Christian Messenger.

Theology at Wolfville.

No. 7.

In these papers so far, I have adverted to some of the arguments which might be urged in favor of the establishment of an efficient Theological school at Wolfville. I have shown, and I think conclusively, that hereby a larger number of ministers would be produced among us, and of those produced, a larger number retained; that hereby our ministry would be trained into completer sympathy with their surroundings—with the wants and condition of our provincial people; that the strength and independence of the denomination would hereby be more largely and perfectly developed; and that the College itself would be more highly benefited, than if no such provision were made and our young men were consequently obliged to enter upon their ministerial work without proper preparation, or else go abroad for it. The attainment of these ends, to say nothing of others which might be named, were quite sufficient to justify even extraordinary efforts in order to their realization.

But these views do not appear to be entertained by all. The project I have recommended is thought by some to be an impracticable and impossible one, and one therefore which should not be attempted. It is maintained by some that complete Theological instruction cannot be provided at Wolfville, and that if it were the young men would pass it by and go to Newton or elsewhere. Yea more: it is maintained that if the Theological instruction given at Wolfville were made as thorough and complete as at Newton, it would yet be the duty of the young men to pass it by and seek it at the latter place, on account of the collateral advantages which would thus be reaped, such as contact with Boston thought and Boston culture.

Now if these views—and I think I have stated them fairly, they have been uttered in our denominational gatherings and put before the public in print—if these views are sound, they should be embraced by all. But if they are not sound, they should be rejected by all.

It is because I believe that they are radically unsound and harmful, that they strike at the very root of our denominational independence and prosperity, and that, if adopted and acted upon, they would make us weak at the very point where we should seek to be strong, that I feel in duty bound to oppose them.

Let us then briefly consider these points in order. What is there so peculiar to Old or New Testament Interpretation, or the Transmission of the Sacred Texts, or Christian Theology, or Church History, or Homiletics, that they may not be studied at Wolfville, as well as anywhere else? Simply nothing. They are substantially the same wherever taught or learned. With adequate helps they may be as thoroughly and profitably investigated in one place as in another. But these adequate helps, it is said, have not been provided at Wolfville and cannot be. The first part of this statement must be admitted to be true, but not the last. It is because the Theological instruction already provided at Wolfville is inadequate to existing need; it is because more is required, and the denomination has the means of providing more, and would be highly advantaged by doing

so, that this humble plea is made. But adequate helps do not mean the same thing in all minds. If it be contended that Theology cannot be efficiently taught at Wolfville with fewer than four or five teachers, or that to be intelligible and serviceable to the learner, it must be taught according to certain methods pursued in other Institutions, I beg respectfully to dissent from the ground thus taken. For as to methods: probably there are no two Theological schools in which they are alike. Newton, Andover, and Princeton proceed each on a general plan of its own; and every teacher in each has his own way of communicating instruction,—a way differing from that of those in the same department in the others. Every teacher will of course best succeed by retaining his own individuality, by running in his own groove, and by adapting himself, according to the dictates of his own judgment, to the circumstances in which he is placed.

As to the number of teachers necessary on the staff of instruction in an efficient Theological school, some persons would make it higher than others. Some persons seem to think that study must necessarily be successfully prosecuted in the Institution that can boast of a large number of teachers. But no conclusion is more unwarrantable. Very often, perhaps in the majority of cases, the best work is done, the best mental discipline acquired, and the best foundation laid for future distinction, in the smaller and more unpretentious Institutions of learning. Many of the most distinguished presidents and professors in the large Colleges in the United States were trained first of all in the small ones. A two-fold explanation may be given of this. In the first place, the attention of the student in the small college is not apt to be so distracted as in the large one. He devotes himself probably to fewer studies, but masters them more thoroughly. He does not spread his energies over so large a surface, but goes deeper down. He makes himself more familiar with the few grand principles which admit of such almost universal application in the acquisition of all knowledge. Having completely mastered one branch of learning, he has necessarily mastered several others, for all knowledge is related: in the great field of truth, single truths are touched on all sides by others. So that the saying is verified that the man is most to be feared who has mastered one book. But in the large college or university the student may be injured by the very multiplicity of the educational helps to which he has access. With so many professors to teach and so many branches to be taught, he may yield to the temptation of attempting far more than he can accomplish. He succeeds probably in spreading his investigations over a large field, but it is at the expense of making them correspondingly thin.

In the second place, in the small college the student usually comes into more direct personal contact with his teachers, and also with his fellow students, and receives consequently a higher stimulus than is gained in the same way in the larger college where this contact is less close and personal. In the small college the student will be likely more thoroughly to know his teacher than in the large one; and better knowing his classmates also, he will be the better prepared to measure his powers with theirs, and run with a mightier enthusiasm the educational race with them. It is helpful to the student to be able to compare himself both with those before and with those behind him, and his progress also with theirs. This is more difficult in proportion as the College is largely attended. In the large universities of Germany students often sit beside each other for years, listening to the same lectures, but without knowing each other. What use each makes of the instruction given, whether it is listened to by intellectual pigmies or giants, appears from nothing that transpires in the class-room.

I do not say that large colleges with their numerous professors and large

libraries, &c., have not peculiar merits and attractions, which may be turned to excellent account; but I contend that all the excellent work is by no means done in them. The College that has for example, only one man to teach the Classics, and only one to teach Mathematics, and only one the natural sciences, may and very often does, do first class work, and turn out first class men. And what is true of small colleges is also true of small Theological schools. Excellent work may be, and often is done in them. Several of the Theological schools of England among the different bodies of Dissenters are taught by two men, a Principal perhaps, and a Tutor. At the outset Newton began with one teacher, Dr. Chase, and the effects of the splendid work performed by him are still visible.

I believe that three men in the Theological Department at Wolfville, would be all that the Baptists of these Maritime Provinces would require for the next fifty years. Very respectable work may be done even by two men who give their whole time to this department. But the idea of getting along with less than two should not be entertained. With two men only, the first work to claim their attention should be Old Testament Interpretation and New, the one taking the one and the other the other. For in every course of Theological instruction the first importance belongs to these. The minister who is able to read and soundly interpret the Sacred originals can construct his own Systematic Theology; the minister who can do this is strong, and strong at the point where he ought to be strong. The minister who cannot do this, but is obliged to learn the mind of the Spirit from the interpretations of others, is in a certain sense weak. He can never feel sure that the last exposition of Scripture he has seen is not set aside by another which he has not seen.

With two men at Wolfville first of all caring for Old and New Testament Exegesis, the other work of the course might be divided between them as best possible. In a short time, or as soon as the denomination should be able to do so, the third man might be added to the staff.

D. M. WELTON.

For the Christian Messenger.

His Appearing and His Kingdom.

FOURTH ARTICLE.

Having established it as a fact that the Church in the first three centuries was looking for the return of Christ and a subsequent Millennial Kingdom on earth, we might almost rest here, with the assurance that the doctrine of the primitive Christians generally was the doctrine promulgated by the Apostles and by Christ himself. An unprejudiced study of the New Testament will afford ample proof of the correctness of such a conclusion. But my plan is to strengthen the position by continuing the history of the doctrine down to our own times.

We come then to the formula prepared by the Council of Nice, A. D., 325:—"We expect a new heaven and earth, according to the Scriptures, when the Appearing and Kingdom of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, shall have shone forth. Then as Daniel says, the saints of the Most High shall receive the Kingdom. And the earth shall be pure and holy, a land of the living and not of the dead, which David foreseeing, exclaimed: "I believe I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." For, "Blessed," says Christ, "are the meek, because they shall inherit the earth."

Again Daille, an anti-chiliasm writer declares: "It plainly appears that in Jerome's time, that is about the beginning of the fifth century, this opinion generally prevailed in the Church."

But it appears that before this time a change was coming over men's minds with reference to the subject. "When Christianity became a worldly power by Constantine," says Bengel, "The hope of the future was weakened by

the joy over the present success." In the commentary of Jamieson and Faussett, the same historical fact is expressed thus: "Christianity being established Christians began looking at its existing temporal prosperity as fulfilling the prophecies, and ceased to look for Christ's promised reign on earth." Or as Auberlen has it "Chiliasm disappeared in proportion as Roman Papal Catholicism advanced." The Millennium came to be considered as then present. The Christian Church had triumphed over the Pagan State, and now the State-Church was regarded as "the Kingdom come." The prophetic visions of Daniel and John came to be understood as referring to the first advent instead of the second. It was held that the 1000 years had begun with the birth of the Saviour. Hence, toward the close of the tenth century, men supposed that the last judgement was at hand, and made extensive preparations for the end of the world. Only as the year 1000 rolled into the past, did they become convinced of the falsity of their theory. Subsequently, the commencement of the Millennium was placed at the victory of Constantine, A. D., 312, when the so-called Kingdom of Christ was established in outward form. This change of date brought on another panic of expectancy in the fourteenth century; and then disappointed again, people made up their minds that the 1000 years were to be of indefinite duration. The 'Catholic Church,' under the rule of the Papal 'Vicar of Christ' on earth and the superintendence of the saints in heaven, was the Kingdom foretold by the prophets and apostles. So Dr. Dollinger represents it in his volume on First Age.

At length, however the true light, hidden for centuries, began to shine out here and there. The enormities of the Roman hierarchy were discerned by not a few. Bold champions of a purer faith and a better life pointed to Rome as Babylon,—to the Pontiff as the predicted Antichrist. Such was the interpretation of the most of the Reformers in the 15th and 16th centuries, and, as Dr. West says, "of the purest Roman Catholics for ages previous."

"The Protestant interpretation," says the same writer, "did three things." Changing the language somewhat, these may be thus stated: 1. It fixed at the Second Advent the time of judgment on the Papal Anti-christ; 2. It forbade the introduction of the 1000 years between that judgment and the coming of Christ; 3. "It threw the 1000 years into the future, out of mediocrity, and beyond the Advent." "And doing these things, it opened the door for Chiliasm to walk in and take possession of the faith and hope of the Church as in martyr days."

During the Reformation period, when war was waging against the corruptions of Rome and in defence of the great doctrines of grace, there was not time for a careful revision of those portions of the articles of belief which relate to things future. Some Protestants continued to hold the exploded notion that the 1,000 years dated from Constantine. Various forms of false Chiliasm prevailed;—so much so that the frequent declarations made against such errors under the name Millenarianism, have been taken as condemning the Chiliasmic belief in general. The following may, however, be taken as expressing the views of the leading reformers.

Martin Luther says: "Some say that before the latter day the whole world shall become Christians. This is a falsehood forged by Satan, that he might darken sound doctrine. Beware of the delusion." "Let us not think that the Coming of Christ is far off; let us expect our Redeemer's coming with a longing and cheerful mind."

John Calvin says in his Commentary: "Whoever would persevere in the course of a holy life, let him apply his whole mind to the hope of the Advent of Christ."

John Knox says: "The Lord shall return, and that with expedition. What were this else but to reform the face of the whole earth, which never was, nor yet shall be, till that righteous