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Poetry.

His and Mine.

I lift my heart to Thee,
Saviour Divine,
For Thou art all to me,
And I am Thine.
Is there on earth a closer bond than this—
That "my Beloved's mine and I am His?"

Thine am I by all ties;
But chiefly Thine,
That through Thy sacrifice
Thou, Lord, art mine.
By Thine own cords of love so sweetly wound
Around me, I to Thee am closely bound.

To Thee, Thou bleeding Lamb,
I all things owe;
All that I have and am,
And all I know.
All that I have is now no longer mine,
And I am not mine own—Lord, I am Thine.

How can I, Lord, withhold
Life's brightest hour
From Thee; or gathered gold
Or any Power?
Why should I keep one precious thing
From Thee,
When Thou hast given Thine own dear self
for me?

I pray Thee, Saviour, keep
Me in thy love,
Until death's quiet sleep
Shall me remove.
Then in that Realm, where sin and sorrow
O'er,
Thou and Thine own art oae for evermore.

Religious.

For the Christian Messenger. The last Persecution.

"The Church has endured," said the Rev. Richard Cecil to one of his friends, "a PAGAN and a PAPAL persecution. There remains for her an INFIDEL persecution, general, bitter, purifying, cementing."

On another occasion he spoke on the same subject as follows:—

"In the permission of certain bold infidel characters and writings, we may discern plain evidences of that awful system of judicial government with which God has been pleased to rule the world. Where there is a moral indisposition, where men are inclined to be deceived, where they are waiting as it were, for a leader—there he sends such men or such writings, as harden them in their impiety, while a teachable and humble mind will discern the true character of such men or writings, and escape the danger."

Again:—"I have not such expectations of the Millennium as many entertain, yet I believe that the figures and expressions of prophecy have never received their accomplishment. They are too grand and ample to have been fulfilled by any state which the Church has hitherto seen. Christianity has yet had no face suitable to its dignity. It has savoured hitherto too much of man—of his institutions—of his prejudices—of his follies—of his sin. It must be drawn out—defecated—exhibited—demonstrated to the world. Its chief enemies have been the men, by whom, under the profession of *Hail Master!* it has been distorted, abused, and vilified."

Once more:—"The Papist falsely charges the Reformer, as the father of Infidelity: the Infidel maliciously confounds Popery and Christianity: but the true Christian is as far from the licentiousness of the Infidel as he is from the corruption of the Papist."

"I am not inclined to view things in a gloomy aspect. Christianity must undergo a renovation. If God has sent his Son, and has declared that he will exalt him on his throne—the earth and all that it inherits are contemptible in the view of such a plan! If this be God's design—proceed it does, and proceed it will. Christianity is such a holy and spiritual affair, that perhaps all human institutions are to be destroyed to make way for it. Men may fashion things as they will, but if there is no effusion of the Spirit of God in their institutions, they will remain barren and lifeless. Many Christians appear to have forgotten this."

Cecil's Works, vol. 3, pp. 413-418. (Edition 1816.)

We have been so accustomed to connect persecution with dungeons, racks, and gibbets—with the Inquisition, thumb-screws, and iron boots—that we have listened with pleasure to the arguments of those who have maintained that in the present state of civilization persecution is impossible. But it has been overlooked that the forms of persecution are various. It does not always imply physical violence. There is a *smiting of the tongue*, as well as a smiting with the sword. The Press may persecute. The pen may be a more dangerous weapon than the axe. Many a useful and honourable life has been shortened by falsehoods; many a good man has been compelled to exclaim, "Reproach has broken my heart."

Look at the present indications of literary effort. See the leading periodicals of most countries called Christian, scattering infidel sentiments broadcast over society, listen to the sarcasms and satires by which numerous writers assail Christianity, which they do not understand, but have determined to hate. *The infidel persecution has begun.* The infidel writers of the age employ their powers in maligning the pious and scoffing at the truths of revelation, as set forth in Scripture, with hideous glee. Even Atheism is openly avowed in some quarters, and a woman's pen is said to have been employed in its defence, in one of our English popular periodicals. Three Dutch divines (!) have united in the publication of a volume of our Gospel, in which, all that is supernatural is expunged, and the divine narrative is treated as a common collection of human traditions—a book of fables—but not, in any sense, a book of God! We have fallen upon dark days in this nineteenth century. Science and art triumph; but scientists are largely imbued with materialistic notions, and even the working classes, all over the world, are in great numbers drinking the poisonous cup of unbelief, and refusing the heavenly manna. Eighteen hundred years ago, a little before his own death, the Apostle Paul penned this prediction:—"In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholly, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, dispisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." (2 Tim. iii. 1-5.) That prediction has doubtless had what Lord Beacon called "a springing and germinant accomplishment," and has been in course of fulfilment for centuries past; yet it will be confessed I think, that in the present state of society there is much to which the apostolic prediction may be applied. We have entered into the "perilous times," or, at least, are on the verge of that period.

It is further to be observed, that the abandonment of certain doctrines which have been long held as branches of Protestant orthodoxy, (particularly the inspiration of the Scriptures, and the future punishment of the ungodly) by leading men among evangelical denominations, cannot but be regarded with profound concern. Nor can it be denied that there is a general tendency to unsettledness of religious principles.

How far it will extend, and how long it will continue, we cannot tell. We have no means of calculating the times or the seasons, and our Lord forbids us to make the attempt; besides which there is a great difference between the heavenly and the earthly arithmetic. "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." "The last days" may cover a few centuries; they may reach to tens of thousands of years. Who can tell?

It is a favorite notion with some persons that the last days will be times of terrible judgments, involving the fates of all nations, and that in the midst of them the Lord will appear. Granting that there is some reason for that expect-

tation it is also certain that there is a large amount of unfulfilled prophecy, dealing with abundant blessings yet to be enjoyed on this sin-struck earth. Isaiah's picture of "the last days" (see ch. ii. 2-4.) has not been realized in fact; but it must be, because God is true and faithful. If the judgments are to fall upon the nations, the blessings are also to be enjoyed; and it may be that the two processes will be going on at the same time, in different parts of the world—the judgment *here*, and the blessings *there*—and this twofold operation will continue for many centuries, each working out the purpose of God. It was so in Jewish history: the times were "troubled," but the wall was to be built, and built it was, though the "troubled times" still disturbed the people, and all men's hearts quaked. Our modern Christian annals tell the same tale: Napoleon's ambition had well nigh reduced all Europe to one universal wreck; but at the same time the revival streams which "Make glad the city of God" were flowing, and Bible Societies, and Missions, and manifold other forms of Christian benevolence and zeal, were rising up in every direction. The troubles continued to produce gloom and despair, but the wall rose higher and higher, and the good work is going on. This twofold process may continue for hundreds or even myriads of years. At length on some bright and glorious morning the archangel's trumpet will be heard, summoning the dead, and the Lord Jesus will be seen in his glory, coming "the second time, without sin unto salvation," (Heb. ix. 28). We shall behold that glory!

The infidel persecution will probably increase in violence as the last day draws nigh. Hatred of God will vent itself in cursings, lies, and blasphemies, bitter as wormwood, and nauseous as gall. Ingenuity will invent new modes of opposition to truth and holiness, and the devil will "come down in great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." (Rev. xiv. 12.) But his cause is doomed. There will be a last battle, and a final victory. The conquering army will shout, as never army shouted before, and angels will listen with joy to the "voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!" (Rev. xix. 6.)

Brethren! We may be living in the morning dawn of that wonderful day, all that will take place between the present state of affairs and the consummation, may partake of the nature of *preparation*—though the "time appointed" may be "long." Meanwhile, let no man's heart fail him, but let each member of Christ's Church exclaim, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do." Each member, not ministers only, must work. The last conflict will be a long and wearisome one. Infidelity will die hard; but it will die—and the Lord Jesus will reign for ever and ever.

Each man must know his place in the ranks—and take it—having on "the breastplate of righteousness," and "the sword of the Spirit" in his hand. No neutrality in these "last days."

Jan. 3, 1880.

The Christian, a Soldier.

BY REV. GEORGE E. TUFTS.

The Bible represents the Christian as a soldier, and his life a period of struggle and warfare. Enemies meet him on every hand. He has foes without and foes within.

Paul says, "Put on the whole armor of God." It may be asked, perhaps, "How are we to become equipped? What are we to do in order to be fully armed?"

When soldiers enlist in the army of an earthly king, to battle for him, he provides them with an equipment. In going into the fight, they always find themselves armed. And in like manner, if we would become good soldiers of the King of kings, earnest workers for our Lord and Master, let us not only enlist under his banner, but let us

become his faithful laborers and followers, and he will give us the armor we require, and lead us forth to victory. With three hundred men, Gideon put to flight a host as numerous as the sands of the sea. And all who are in the army of the great Captain of our salvation, and supplied with the weapons He provides, performing each little duty he requires, will be sure to triumph.

Again, the law required a Roman soldier to polish his armor and keep it bright. Allowing it to be corroded with rust was a disgraceful offence. But how few Christian soldiers keep their armor bright. Do not many of us, after enlisting in the service, neglect our duty, desert our ranks, fail to be in our places at the roll-call? Whenever the bell rings on Sabbath, or on the week-day evening, for the hour of prayer, the sound is a summons to the call of the roll. By failing to be in our places, ready to perform our part, our armor becomes eaten with rust, the Lord's cause suffers thereby, and we suffer a spiritual decline. But to keep our armor bright we must be in the path of duty, do what our Saviour requires; then our spiritual gifts will be multiplied, and souls will be saved through our feeble efforts.

It requires more bravery to join in the battle than to be enrolled for service. Almost any one has courage enough to enlist, but not every one can face the enemy. So, also, many persons can join a church, but when fighting must begin, when work must be done, their valor fails, and they throw their armor off. Is such the course to be taken by a true Christian soldier?

In military circles it is considered a disgrace to desert the ranks. No true soldier wishes to be thought a deserter. Yet how many Christians abandon their places. When ever you see the seat of a professor of religion vacant on the evening of the prayer-meeting, you are reminded of a Christian soldier who has deserted his post.

An ancient warrior had no armor for the back. His shield, his helmet, his breastplate, etc., were valuable only when he faced the enemy. A retreat was never contemplated, and hence never provided for. Retreat was also certain death, because the unprotected part was fully exposed. In like manner, the Christian soldier is safe only when he presents a bold front to the foe. He must not turn back if he would be victorious. The Lord is his strength and his shield, and will never suffer him to be discomfited while he remains devoted to the cause and loyal to divine truth.

The Roman veterans, before entering upon their campaigns, were accustomed to gather around their standard, and take an oath of fidelity to their king and country. They solemnly pledged themselves never to desert their post. Having enlisted in the service, they kept their places; and when danger threatened, and foes most formidable, they remained undaunted, and fought the more bravely. Unqualified obedience to the chief captain was demanded. From these traits Christian soldiers can learn useful lessons. Let us gather around the standard of the cross. Let us never abandon our place. However difficult the task, let us remain loyal to the great Captain of our salvation. If we are faithful to the end, heaven's crown will be placed upon our head.

It is considered the duty of soldiers, who have been longest in the service, to take their places at the head of the army, and thus set a good example to the new recruits. For a veteran to throw off his armor, or to step out of the ranks, or behind his comrade, is a disgrace and a crime. But what do we frequently see in the army of Christian warriors? Some who were once at the front have now gone to the rear. Others have thrown their armor off, or allowed it to become corroded with rust. The result is, the enemy is gaining the victory.

But few new recruits are coming into the service. Christ's cause is languishing on account of the small number of faithful soldiers. Do we remember the time when we first enlisted? How easy it was to stand to the front. But are we not fighting less valiantly now than we did then? Has the Master's cause become irksome and repulsive, and have we grown weary in the service? Has our love to the Saviour grown cold, and heaven grown less attractive? Are we willing to see the church languish for the lack of a little effort to sustain it? If we are not where we should be let us gird on the armor again, step squarely to the front, stand fast against all enemies, and then joy and triumph and spiritual prosperity will follow as the result of our being in the path of duty.

Something gives way.

A Christian woman in a town in New York desired to start a school-house for the purpose of starting a Sunday school, but was refused by a skeptical trustee. Still she persevered, and asked him again.

"I tell you Aunt Polly, it is of no use. Once for all, I say you cannot have the schoolhouse for any such purpose."

"I think I am going to get it," said Aunt Polly.

"I should like to know how, if I do not give you the key?"

"I think that the Lord is going to unlock it."

"Maybe he will," said the infidel; "but I can tell you this: he will not get the key from me."

"Well I am going to pray over it, and I have found out from experience that when I keep on praying *something always gives way.*"

And the next time she came the hard heart of the infidel gave way, and she received the key. More than this, when others opposed the school he sustained her, and great good was done for perishing souls.

"Something gives way." Sometimes it is a man's will, and sometimes it is the man himself. Sometimes there is a revolution, and sometimes there is a funeral. When God's Spirit inspires a prayer in a believing Christian's heart, Omnipotence stands ready to answer it, "Something gives way."

Could not Stand it.

A parishioner of a venerable divine in Western Massachusetts took deep offense at a sermon of the pastor's, and vehemently declared, "I will never hear you preach in that house again." Then came the bland interrogation of the pastor, "But you will any one else who may occupy the pulpit?" "Most certainly," was the reply. "And I will take pleasure in having you constantly informed," said the pastor.

When the next preacher, other than the pastor, was at hand, there appeared at the door of the irate parishioner, his own minister with the courteous salutation, "I have the pleasure of informing you that the Rev. Mr. — will be in the pulpit to-day, and we shall be pleased to see you at the sanctuary."

Three or four such calls, on such an errand by the pastor, was more than he could bear, and, softened and subdued, the offended parishioner made reply, "If you will pay me no more visits of this kind, I will attend on your worship and preaching as long as I live." And he stood fast by his promise to his judicious and sagacious pastor to the end of life. — *Congregationalist.*

How true are the words of Dr. Payson: "You may bind a bird with a soft silken cord, and while he remains still he will not be sensible of his confinement; but as soon as he attempts to fly he will feel the cord that confines him; and the greater his desire and his efforts to escape, the more sensible will he be of his bondage. So the sinner will long be a slave to his sins, and never be aware of it till he rises to go to Christ."

One has only to die to be praised.