

# The Christian Messenger.

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WHOLE SERIES.  
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## Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.  
A Moravian Hymn in French.

The following is a specimen of the deep devotion and earnest evangelical piety, that pervades the Hymnology of the Moravian Christians. It is from an old hymn book, published in Guernsey, in 1827, a collection of over three hundred, few of them being as short as the one here selected, and some of them being quite long poems. So many of your youthful readers in these days study French, that it may be presumed so small an article in that language, will be admitted without a murmur, even by those who cannot understand it, especially as I have added an attempt at translation; and those who can read the French, may find in it both pleasure and profit.

1. Que le jour où pour mon péché,  
Christ mourut en croix attaché  
Me soit intimentement présent,  
Cher et nouveau à chaque instant.
2. Que je contemple, constamment,  
Ton corps, O mon Sauveur sanglant,  
Comme Marie et Jean t'ont vu,  
Entre deux brigands suspendu.
3. Que je sente aujourd'hui ton sang,  
Qui jadis coula de ton flanc,  
Découler sur mon pauvre cœur,  
Et l'enflammer de son ardent.
4. Que chaque jour, O Roi de rois,  
Je saie prosterné sous ta croix,  
Pour recevoir le sang et l'eau,  
De ton cœur percé, cher Agneau.
5. Qu'attentif à nourrir mon cœur,  
Du corps et du sang du Sauveur,  
Je sois en au, qu'il soit en moi  
Par une vive et ferme foi.

### TRANSLATION.

1. O may that day when Christ for me  
Died, hanging on the scoured tree,  
Be ever present to my eye,  
More fresh and dear as days glide by.
2. I would at all times gaze on thee,  
Like John and Mary, near the tree,  
Where 'twixt two robbers crucified,  
My Saviour hung, and bled, and died.
3. As gushing still, I fain would see,  
That blood that flowed on Calvary,  
O'erflow and warm my languid soul,  
And all my powers of thought control.
4. And day by day, thou Lord of all  
Prostrate beneath thy cross I'd fall,  
To bathe me in that sacred flood,  
From thy pierced heart, thou Lamb of God!
5. Thus might I daily live, and feed,  
On Thee, that "meat and drink  
indeed."  
That I in thee, and thou in me,  
May dwell, through faith's sweet mystery.

## Religious.

### Church Attendance.

A simultaneous count of Sabbath congregations in our cities is revealing a sad state of things. Some months since Cincinnati was stirred up by the published results of such a count, and now Chicago is having a like experience. These figures reveal a great change since the days when everybody went to church. But the impression of these figures is an exaggerated one. The impression is that the number found at church on any particular day represent the church-goers, while the number absent represent the non-church-goers. It would seem as if the great mass of the people had abandoned the church. But this makes no allowance for the absence of church-going people. Let any pastor take the number of the persons whom he considers attendants at his church, and compare this with the number of those same persons actually present at any one service, and he has a rare people if more than one-half are found. Again let the census of any church-going community be taken, and the number who report themselves as church attendants will vastly exceed the number found at church by any simultaneous count. This may indicate a great deal of irregularity in church attendance, but

it shows also that entire neglect of the church is by no means as great as published figures would indicate. In a certain congregation the minister's written list of families showed over over eight hundred persons who counted that their church home. The actual attendance was less than six hundred, and one third of these were strangers or persons not identified with the congregation. Any pastor who keeps a list of his congregation will find a somewhat similar state of things. The number found at church on any particular Sabbath may be at least doubled to give the church-going population. It is sad that people are so easily detached from church, but it is not as sad as if the great mass of the people had abandoned the church, as those published figures seem to indicate. There has doubtless been a decline in church-going since the olden-times. Then thousands went to church simply because everybody else did. These are no loss except in the census returns. The general upheaval of things also is largely responsible for what change has occurred. The people in the country are going to the city; the people in the East are going West; and everybody everywhere is going somewhere else. Old church associations are broken up, and new ones are not always formed. The old country church was a dear old spot—a place of precious memories and kindly greeting. In the cities they are among strangers. They go and come unnoticed and unknown. "It does not seem like home a bit," they say, and they cease to go. They have no deliberate intention to abandon the church, but unconsciously, and often sadly, they drop out of the habit of church-going. The outlook is not as bad as it seems. The church neglect is not as great as figures would indicate by at least one-half. Then again, of those who neglect church, a large proportion have come to that condition through shifting circumstances and not by deliberate intention. It is a large part of the mission of each church to follow its departing members with kindly interest and influence, and to meet those coming within its bounds with a cordial welcome, and seek to renew the sacred ties which have been severed by the change.—*Christian Union.*

### Presbyterian Singing.

In his sermon before the Presbyterian Council, Dr. Paxton was cheered when he said that Presbyterianism allows "any psalmody that puts the crown on the brow of Jesus." It is well-known, however, that while some Presbyterians use the hymns of Luther, Watts, Doddridge, Wesley, and even of P. P. Bliss, there are those who insist on the use of the Psalms alone. Indeed, during its sessions, the Council used a collection of the old Scotch version of the Psalms. And what was the result? The *Independent* tells us:

"Though all joined with great sweetness and forbearance of spirit in a song so new and unattractive to most of them, they discovered a very serious and unexpected theological deficiency in this part of the worship. It had ceased to be distinctively Christian, and had become Jewish, or, at best, Unitarian. We have taken pains to look through the whole collection, and we find in the forty-four hymns and the eight doxologies not one mention of our Lord Jesus Christ, not even one plain allusion to him. It is true the word 'Saviour' appears in one; but Jesus Christ is hardly meant in the lines:

'Turn us, O God our Saviour, turn,  
Nor longer let thine anger burn,  
Wilt thou forever angry be?  
Through ages shall thy wrath survive?'

"It is true the name of Christ appears in one or two titles; but the psalm, 'The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want,' hardly warrants this mention of Christ in the title. But the worst effect is in the doxologies. Think of it, that in the final doxology the collected Presbyterians were not allowed to unite in their familiar ascription of

praise to the Holy Trinity! Instead of Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise him all creatures here below; Praise him above, ye heavenly host, Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; they have had to sing,

'Let Israel's God be ever blessed,  
His name eternally confessed;  
Let all the saints with full accord,  
Sing loud Amens, praise ye the Lord;'  
or this,

'Bless'd be Jehovah, Israel's God,  
To all eternity;  
Let all the people say, Amen,  
Praise to the Lord give ye.'

Here is no Son and no Holy Ghost, no blessed Trinity of the Christian faith; but all is toned down to the religious belief of the old Hebrews and the modern Unitarians. Even Christ's church cannot be mentioned, and the best substitute for it is some eulogy of the old Jewish city:

'Jerusalem as a city is  
Compactly built, and fair;  
To it the tribes go up; to it  
The tribes of God repair.

'To Israel's testimony, there  
To God's name thanks to pay;  
For thrones of judgment, ev'n the thrones  
Of David's house, there stay.'

'Jerusalem indeed!

"Now, it is not our purpose here to complain of the literary character of these, with few exceptions, painful caricatures of the Psalms. We only wish to express our astonishment that the common sense of Scotchmen can be so smothered by a crankiness of reason that they should, first, banish our Lord Jesus Christ from one of the finest departments of worship, allowing him to be adored in sermon, reading, and prayer, but forbidding to sing the name that is above every name, and that is hymned by all the choirs above; and, secondly, that they should be so discourteous and, therefore, unchristian as to impose their own will worship on their brethren."—*Zion's Advocate.*

### A Man of Fame.

Rev. Willis Warren, a Baptist minister, a negro, a few miles from Albany Grove, is known everywhere, among his race, as "Father Warren," and has more influence in his bishopric than any man of any denomination of whom I know anything. He has three churches—one with 2,000, another of 500 and the other with 300. They pay him from three dollars to fifty cents a member, averaging, I am told, about a dollar and a half a member, making his salary about \$4,200. If he were not a very good man, he would soon be rich, but he is only comfortably off. He is rich for a colored man, for he owns a fine farm, drives a magnificent horse, and loans several thousands a year. He would soon "get big rich" if he did not give away a great deal of his money. He told me he gave it to his "poor members," and loaned it to them sometimes, and not being able to pay it back, he would give them the debt. His fame is not for all this, but from his method of discipline for some years after the war. When his members did not live righteously, and would not "hear the church," he would take two or three of his deacons with him, while Father Warren would whip him until he was willing to reform. Of late years he has not resorted to this measure so far as I know, except in one instance last year.

The strange part of it is that he has retained his pastoral influence and the love of his brethren through all the years of such discipline. He is moderator of the Fowl Town Association, and I wish my time and your space would let me give you an account of a session of that body I attended last year. Warren's parliamentary practice would be rich reading. Be it known, however, that his Association is in good standing, regularly organized, and contributes to all our denominational work.

R. T. H.  
—*Ex. & Chron.*

Everything falls and is effaced. A few feet under the ground reigns so profound a silence, and yet so much tumult on the surface!

### Missions in 1800 and 1880.

To America belongs the honour of originating a missionary convention of students from theological colleges of all denominations. The idea is a capital one, and ought to be as practical in Great Britain as in the United States, especially as here the distances are less and facilities for travelling if possible greater than on the other side of the Atlantic. The place of meeting was New Brunswick, in the State of New Jersey, and the time devoted to the gathering was from the 21st to the 24th of October. Among the speeches made was one by Dr. Pearson, of Detroit, and the address was full of encouragement. Detail after detail of success was cited. The following are samples: In Japan there are 1,800 Christians; in 1865 there was one Christian in that country. Thirty-five years ago there were but six native Christians in China; to-day there are 12,000.

In 1828 Burmah yielded but one convert to Christ; in 1878 the Christians there numbered 20,000. A carefully compiled table, however, gives a summary of the work done during the present century, and we are confident our readers will thank us for reproducing it in our columns:—

	1800.	1880.
Number of Translations of Bibles.....	50	250
Missionary Societies.....	7	70
Missionaries.....	170	2,500
Contributions.....	£50,000	£1,250,000
Bibles distributed.....	5,000,000	150,000,000
Converts.....	50,000	1,800,000
Schools.....	70	12,000

These facts ought to encourage the friends of missions. We call attention to one fact especially. The increase in the number of converts is greater than the increase in missionary societies or missionaries or contributions or Bibles in circulation. Therein we rejoice. The work goes on, and all "the signs of the times" point onward to complete success and final triumph. But meanwhile souls are perishing—are lost—for lack of knowledge, the knowledge of the only true God and of Jesus Christ His Son—a knowledge which should be forthwith communicated to every man under heaven.

### A True Incident.

On board the ill-fated steamer *Seawanhaka* was one of the Fisk University singers. Before leaving the burning steamer and committing himself to the merciless waves, he carefully fastened upon himself and wife life-preservers. Some one cruelly dragged away that of the wife, leaving her without hope except as she could cling to her husband. This she did, placing her hands firmly on his shoulder and resting there until her strength becoming exhausted, she said, "I can hold on no longer!" "Try a little longer," was the response of the wearied and agonized husband, "let us sing 'Rock of Ages.'" And as the sweet strain floated over those troubled waters reaching the ears of the sinking and dying, little did they know, those sweet singers of Israel, whom they comforted.

But, lo! as they sang, one after another of those exhausted ones were seen raising their heads above the overwhelming waves, joining with a last effort in this sweet, dying, pleading prayer:

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.

With the song seemed to come strength; another and yet another was encouraged to renewed effort. Soon in the distance a boat was seen approaching! Singing still, they tried, and soon with superhuman strength laid hold of the life-boat, upon which they were borne in safety to land. This is no fiction; it was related by the singer himself, who said he "believed Toplady's sweet 'Rock of Ages' saved many another beside himself and wife."—*Western.*

If happiness could be prolonged from love into marriage, we should have Paradise on earth.—*J. Rousseau.*

### It is Curious who Give.

"It's curious who give. There's Squire Wood, he's put down \$2; his farm's worth \$10,000, and he's money at interest. And there's Mrs. Brown, she's put down \$5; I don't believe she's had a new gown in two years, and her bonnet ain't none of the newest, and she's them three grandchildren to support since her son was killed in the army; and she's nothing but her pension to live on. Well, she'll have to scrimp on butter and tea for a while, but she'll pay it. She just loves the cause; that's why she gives."

These were the utterances of Deacon Daniel after we got home from church the day pledges were taken for contributions to foreign missions. He was reading them off, and I was taking down the items, to find the aggregate. (The deacon said he had so much more confidence in my knowledge of arithmetic than he had in his own.) He went on: "There's Maria Hill, she's put down \$5; she teaches in the North District, and don't have but \$20 a month, and pays her board; and she has to help support her mother. But when she told her experience the time she joined the church, I knew the Lord had done a work in her soul; and where he works, you'll generally see the fruit in giving. And there's John Baker. He's put down one dollar, and he'll chew more'n that worth of tobacco in a fortnit. Cyrrus Dunning, \$4. Well, he'll have to do some extra painting with that crippled hand, but he'll do it, and sing the Lord's songs while he's at work. C. Williams, \$10. Good for him. He said the other night to prayer meeting that he'd been reading his Bible more than usual lately. Maybe he read about the rich young man who went away sorrowful, and didn't want to be in his company."

So the deacon went on making his comments to the end of the list. Now, I wouldn't have you think for a moment that the good deacon was finding fault with his neighbors, or was too critical in his remarks; for I assure you that he had the most Christlike spirit of any one I ever knew. But he was jealous for the Lord's cause in every department of it, and very shrewd in noting inconsistencies in giving. He wouldn't have spoken so freely to every one; but I was in the family, and I am not sure but he intended to give me a lesson.

Lest some of my readers, after all I have said, should get a wrong impression of the deacon, I will tell you more of him and his acts. He was not only interested in the Boo-ree gals of Africa, or the Choo-hing-Foos of China, but his heart went out toward every cause that had for its object the advancement of Christ's kingdom. He delighted in having those give who possessed very small means, and he had a very peculiar way of helping them without making them feel as if under obligation to him. Mrs. Brown was known to be an excellent bread-maker, and he occasionally sent her a sack of flour to test its quality, before he felt sure that he could ship the product of his mill as the best grade. He suddenly discovered, too, that some of his buildings needed new paint, and it was curious that this always occurred just as Mr. Dunning was out of work.

The deacon, as you have discovered, was not an educated man. He knew nothing of grammar "to speak of," he used to say, and when he conducted the prayer-meeting, as he sometimes did in the absence of the pastor, he mispronounced words in the reading of the hymns, and one evening when he said, at the beginning of the meeting, "We will read for our instruction the 25th chapter of Psalm," a smile passed over some faces; but when he prayed, every one was awed; for he prayed as one who talked face to face with God, and we knew a blessing would come to the meeting.

Once, when asked after the welfare of his family, he said his wife "enjoyed very poor health," but if any one could enjoy poor health, I think she must; for his kind, tender ministra-