

The Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

NEW SERIES.
Vol. XXVI., No. 40.

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Wednesday, October 5, 1881.

WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XLV., No. 40.

Poetry.

Autumn.

Here and there yellow leaves,
Among the stubble yellow sheaves,
And the nodding grain
Welcomes the coming wain;
No longer through empty barns, swift
swallows fly;
The bays and the scaffolds are built
broad and high,
With the sweet scented hay,
For each cold Winter day.

Here and there o'er the mead,
Cows graze the after feed:
And the orchard trees,
Sing to the passing breeze,
Of ripening fruit, proudly borne, filling
their arms,
From hill sides and valleys of neighbor-
ing farms,
Come sounds of harvest time,
And the year's golden prime.

'Tis my life's golden prime—
And my heart's harvest time,
Stooks of wisdom stand,
In my mind's stubble land.
No longer through empty brain youth's
fancies fly:
Its bays and its scaffold are built broad
and high,
With the rich harvest brought,
From the wide fields of thought.

This be O heart thy rhyme,
When comes thine Autumn time,
Sept. 10th, 1881. E. S. C.

Religious.

God made the Sea.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

It is not often that you find a sea-faring man who is an atheist. Addison tells us of a time when he was on board ship, and there was a passenger on deck who was an infidel. He was reported to the captain as an atheist, and neither he nor the sailors could make out what sort of a strange fish that might be, and asked him what he meant. They were told that he did not believe in God. A storm coming on, the men proposed that they should pitch him overboard, seeing he did not believe in God Almighty; but he was soon cured of his unbelief, for, when things looked threatening, the first person who was down on his knees, crying for mercy in great terror, was the precious atheist, who soon got rid of his atheism when he felt in danger of his life.

God made the sea; you can mark his wisdom there. Philosophers tell us there is just as much water in the sea as there ought to be, and no more. That the sea is salt, and therefore does not corrupt, that it is moved with tides and currents, and therefore does not stagnate, that it evaporates, and therefore does not increase so as to drown the earth, are all instances of divine wisdom. If its waters were more or less salt than they are many fishes would die, and the floating power of the ocean would change: The more we study the sea, the more shall we say, "Thy way, O Lord, is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters."

And certainly no man can deny the power which thunders across the billows. What tremendous force is there displayed! "The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods have lifted up their waves." The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea. When one has seen the damage the sea has wrought upon our coasts, the way in which the hardest rock has been worn away; when one has sadly watched a huge barque tossed to and fro like a plaything, and when one has heard how the hugest vessels are caught in a cyclone and whirled away like feathers, one bows upon his face before the Almighty Lord who rules the sea.

And yet God's goodness is there as well. The sea is a great benefactor. Where were the clouds, and where the rains, and where our harvests, if it were not for the ocean? The sea feeds myriads with its fish, and enriches many

more by its commerce. It was once thought to divide nations, but now it has become the highway by which they communicate, a silver belt by which all lands are bound to one another. England, above all nations, has reason to see the goodness of God in the sea. Perhaps we had not even remained a nation if the silver streak had not separated us from the continent. Most probably we had not been a free nation or a Protestant nation if the Lord had not hidden the waters encompass us.

Every attribute of God shines in the sea, although the more spiritual and precious are but dimly seen, these being reserved to be manifested in Christ Jesus the Lord, before whose feet the sea crouched in reverence. Perhaps even those attributes will be discovered to be there in some degree when our eyes shall be strengthened to see the glory of the Lord in all his works. Till then we will listen to the sea and think of it as an

"Impassioned orator with lips sublime,
Whose waves are arguments which prove a God."

Rev. E. M. Saunders' Closing Sermon.

We had a brief notice two weeks since of the sermon preached by Rev. E. M. Saunders on his retirement from the pastorate of Granville Street Baptist Church. The following somewhat more extended and very fair report—made by a member of the congregation—appeared in the columns of the *Evening Mail* of Sept. 19th. We have been requested to insert this in our columns, and have much pleasure in complying with the request:

In the early part of last Spring, the Rev. E. M. Saunders of the Granville Street Baptist Church in this city, tendered his resignation of the pastorate; and in accepting the resignation the Church sent the rev. gentleman an address of sympathy and esteem which was published at the time in the *Mail*. The recipient of the address stated that he would reply to it on the occasion of preaching his closing sermon, which he did, pursuant to announcement, yesterday morning, before a large congregation. His text was chosen from Hebrews xiii 25, "Grace be with you all. Amen"—a passage which was found, in substance, the preacher remarked, at the close of 12 of the 21 epistles, and as a salutation at the beginning of 15, thus marking it as a sentence containing an important and precious sentiment of God's Word.

THE VARIOUS WAYS IN WHICH GOD'S FAVOR WAS BESTOWED UPON MAN.

were illustrated, and an earnest desire expressed that on each and all the members of the church and congregation might rest, for time and eternity, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ in all its rich and abounding fulness. Looking back to the occasion when, fourteen years and three days ago, he first occupied Granville Street Church as pastor, he described the congregation that was photographed on his mind, and touchingly referred to some of the number—from the infant to the saint ripe with age—who had been called home to continually share God's favor before the throne. Referring to the address alluded to Mr. Saunders thanked the church for their expressions of tender sympathy and thoughtful regard toward him and his; and could only wish that he had been more worthy of such invaluable expressions. He trusted that in the future he should be no less worthy than in the past. He spoke of the happy relations which had been ever sustained with the several superintendents of the Sabbath school and all the teachers, as a source of no ordinary comfort to him, and prayed that the benedictions of the text might fall upon superintendents, teachers and scholars. From the larger part of his hearers—the congregation—he had received no formal address; but this he was sure arose, not from any lack of sympathy on the part

of the large number attending his ministry whose names are not on the church roll, but from the simple fact that it was not the custom of Baptists to ask the congregation to join them in such expressions to ministers coming in or going out of churches. He had the very best of grounds for these assumptions, or he would not dare to refer to them. He could not call up during all those fourteen years, one unkind word or act towards him from a single member of the congregation, whose doors had always stood open to him and whose kindness had never ceased to flow. His heart's desire for them was that they might find in the church their happy home in this world, and that Heaven might be their eternal home in the world to come.

THESE REFERENCES TO THE CONGREGATION

carried his mind to a larger sphere—the city—in which he had such a happy home. He found the best of reasons for loving this city in the kindness and attention he had received from so many of its citizens. Being called upon to unite with other bodies in the religious and charitable labors of the city, he had made extensive and intimate acquaintance with ministers and members of other denominations, and had found them uniformly kind and friendly. He desired the benediction of the text to rest upon his fellow-citizens.

FROM ALL CLASSES AND ALL DENOMINATIONS

the expressions of kindness had come, although he had always been plain and firm in holding and advocating his views on religion, education, and all other matters of public interest. For seven or eight of the fourteen years past the city of Halifax had suffered in trade and business to a degree unparalleled in all its previous history; its operations had been arrested and its establishments pulled down, until an apparent gloom had settled down upon the public mind which was in striking contrast to the hope and cheerfulness that reigned fourteen years ago. Houses of business, old and young, great and small, went down in such rapid succession that oppressive uncertainty reigned, and none knew what the end would be. These general disasters fell heavily upon the Granville Street Church and congregation.

EARTHLY POSSESSIONS WERE SWEET AWAY

by thousands, by tens of thousands, and perhaps by hundreds of thousands; and many were compelled to leave the city to seek business employment elsewhere. But notwithstanding this, there had been no diminution in the benevolence of the church. The pastor's salary had been increased; missions, in the heathen and home fields, had been fostered as largely as in the days of greater prosperity. Acadia College had shared more largely than ever before in the contributions of the church and congregation, which had put into the treasury of that institution during the past year not less than \$600 in cash, exclusive of \$500 more subscribed to its Endowments in the same time. In addition to this the pastor had raised, in the holidays given him by the church during the past summer, \$2,500 towards the current expenses of the college, and more than \$1,000 towards the Endowment, without any expense to the institution. During the past fourteen years

HE HAD ALSO RAISED MORE THAN \$20,000 FOR THE ENDOWMENT OF ACADIA COLLEGE.

In the same time more than \$2,000 had been expended in repairs on the building in which the church now worshipped, and about \$9,000 on the grounds and building on Spring Garden Road. In addition to these outlays various charities had been participated in by the steady benevolence of the church and congregation. The greatest amount given for benevolent objects in any year of the fourteen previous to his coming to this church was \$347, whereas last year the church gave nearly \$400; and from 1873—the commencement of the hard times—

will the present, the average yearly contributions to the benevolent objects of the denomination, outside of immediate church work, had been \$335. The preacher then referred to

THE SPIRITUAL PROSPERITY OF THE CHURCH

during his pastorate, stating that revival influences had again and again visited the church, the most extensive of which began with the visit of the Evangelist Mr. Earle, whose labors none who enjoyed would ever forget. At the beginning of the fourteen years preceding his pastorate the church numbered 180 members. At the end of that time, during which it had three pastors, it had decreased to 173. He found the church with these 173 members and was leaving it with 199. The great depression of trade and business had sent away 72 members during his stay, while only 38 went away during the previous fourteen years. In each of the two periods 84 members were received by letter. In the former period 40 were added to the church by baptism—while the number which had come into the church through that ordinance during his pastorate was 116. It thus appeared that

IN EVERY RESPECT THERE HAD BEEN AN INCREASE IN THE PROSPERITY OF THE CHURCH.

He referred to these facts (knowing that words contrary to this had at times been in free circulation) not to take credit to himself, nor to praise the church unduly, but to record his gratitude to God for such a result, which would bear comparison with the results of a similar period of time preceding; and with a desire to give to Him all the glory. The rev. gentleman then made a few remarks more immediately in connection with closing his labors with the Church; and referring to the opening sentence of the address from the Church, as to the "circumstances that had arisen causing him to tender his resignation," he proceeded to give the reasons that had existed in the minds of others why the change should take place, previously explaining that

HE WAS ON TERMS OF KINDLY FRIENDSHIP WITH EVERY ONE.

without a solitary exception. The state of his health had been an element in the consideration, but that alone would not have led him to the conclusion which he had reached. The main reason had been this:—It had, he was told, been believed for some time past by a number of members of the Church—how large or small a number he could not say—that the vacation of the pastoral office would be for the greater prosperity of the Church. The object sought was a desirable one, and every member of the church should, in prayerful and devoted labors, do his utmost to secure it. He then spoke of the sacrifices he was making in retiring, not knowing what work was arranged for him by his Saviour, whose servant he was, but confident that the Lord who guided Abraham and led Elijah would, if they proved faithful to Him, direct him and his family, and supply all their wants. He referred to the heavy religious responsibility resting on those who had felt sanguine about the result of this change, and said the responsibility must not rest on the shoulders of a few, but that every member should unite in one general effort to sustain the incoming pastor, and unitedly with him seek the salvation of the lost, and the glory of Christ in the upbuilding of His Church.

Morality, taken as apart from religion is but another name for decency in sin. It is just that negative species of virtue which consists in not doing what is scandalously depraved and wicked. But there is no heart of holy principle in it, any more than there is in the grosser sins.—*Dr. Bushnell.*

In four provinces of South Ceylon there are 150 Wesleyan congregations with 5,000 worshippers, who contribute upwards of \$20,000. In North Ceylon the contributions have reached an average of \$2.75 per member.

Luthardt's Apologetical Discourses on the Fundamental Truths of Christianity.

(Translated from the German by Prof. D. M. Welton.)

SEVENTH DISCOURSE. Revelation.

I might still bring forward the numberless followers of Jesus, who have sealed their faith with their death, as witness for Jesus Christ. We must read the accounts of the martyrs in order to be convinced: here is nothing of fanaticism or dogmatism or proud scorn, but the calmest assurance and joyfulness of faith which, in death as well as in life, praises Him to whom the love of the heart belongs. But not simply the church of the martyrs, the entire church of all times is a witness for Christ. The existence of the church itself, which, as Lessing says, stands for us in the place of all other miracles, the fact of its existence, the spirit that lives in it, the effects that proceed from it, the spiritual force that rules in it and discovers to us its high origin—all this is evidence of the revelation of God in Christ Jesus. For it rests upon him. But also the adversaries of Jesus, their opposition to Christianity, the summoning of all their forces against it, but in vain,—all this bears witness. And above all, that people is a witness for him, who go about among us, who have their home among strangers, the people of the dispersion, the people of an old unexpiated crime, this most wonderful of all people. Wonderful in the time of their blame, and wonderful still in the time of their misery. As that prince who once asked his court preacher to give him a proof in favor of Christianity, but to do it in few words, as he had very little time to listen, and the preacher replied: the Jews, your majesty!

But we have still another witness which must be added to those already brought forward and one which impresses its seal upon them—and that is the witness within us, which is double: our conscience and the spirit of Jesus Christ. This is the witness of the truth itself. And this is always the highest witness; the witness with which the truth itself testifies.

When the word of Jesus Christ meets us and enters our heart, it awakens a voice within us, the voice of our conscience, which says: yes, that is the truth thou seekest, which thou hast so long sought without finding. It awakens all the slumbering thoughts, all the emotions of desire, all the longing of the heart after peace and reconciliation within us and says to us: yes, that is what we desired and asked for and sought without becoming acquainted with it. Man is a question—the word of Jesus Christ is the answer to this question. Man is an enigma—the word of revelation is the solution of this enigma. Man is a contradiction with himself, a coil of contradictions—revelation is the disentanglement of the same. Just as when I express a mathematical equation with three known quantities and one unknown, an x , and I find this x and the proof shows me that the solution is right, for the ascertained number agrees with the others; so also here. The word of Christ agrees with the equation of our being, it is the finding of the x , the unknown quantity within us. Our nature reveals to us the necessity, but revelation shows us how it must be met, and the congruity of the two shows us that the revelation is the truth.

And in proportion as we take in the word of revelation, we experience its suitability to our needs, and become inwardly assured that it is the truth. The Spirit witnesses with our spirit that it is the truth. This inner attestation to the truth is its highest evidence, the evidence of life and of experience. For it is ever the highest proof of the truth, that it proves itself. The lame man, says Lessing who has experienced the salutary effect of electricity, will be little concerned in the various opinions and doubts of the learned concerning electricity, but he will stand by this: