

# The Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

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WHOLE SERIES.  
Vol. XLV., No. 9.

## Poetry.

One Day at a Time.  
(Matt. vi. 34.)

One day at a time, O Christian soul,  
Is more than enough for thy control;  
Even in that thou needest the grace  
Of God for every step of the race.

No anxious thought about to-morrow,  
Its joys or cares thou mayst not borrow;  
Provision is hid with Christ in store:  
Say, trembling Christian, what wouldst thou more?

Sure is the promise thy God hath made,  
Strong foundation in Jesus hath laid;  
Tremble not, fear not, doubt not ever,  
For his faithfulness faileth never.

What is his promise spoken to thee?  
"As are thy days, so thy strength shall be."  
Strength for labor, for suffering, for strife,  
Through all the days of thy mortal life.

Leave anxious doubting, from care be free,  
For has He not said "I'll provide for thee"?

What'er thou doubtest, of this be sure,  
His promise stands fast for evermore.

Then cheerfully say "On God I wait,  
For He will provide my daily rate  
Of needed patience, or grace, or bread,  
And cleanse me from sin in Christ's blood shed."

## Biographical.

Thomas Carlyle.

All the newspapers have given their readers a pen picture of this great English writer more or less in detail, and with varying degrees of correctness. The following brief notice is from one of our English exchanges:

He was born within half a mile of the little village of Ecclefechan, Dumfriesshire, on December 4, 1795, about eight months before Robert Burns died. His father, in the later years of his life, was a religious man. He was fond of reading. Old John Owen was his favourite author. His mother is reported to have possessed considerable beauty both of body and mind. After attending the parish school for several years—a place of instruction where high and low, in accordance with Scottish custom, occupied the same form—Thomas Carlyle was sent to the Grammar-school at Annan, where his father had once been a pupil, and it was in this town that the young student first made the acquaintance of Edward Irving, subsequently the famous minister of Regent-square Presbyterian church, London. His parents were anxious he should enter the Church, and with this object he became a student at the University of Edinburgh, where he studied under Dr. Thomas Brown, Professor Playfair, Professor Leslie, and other well known lecturers. There is some tradition that matters had gone so far that it had been arranged in what Church Carlyle should appear as a "probationer." Now that I had gained man's estate," to quote his own account of this crisis in his life, "I was not sure that I believed the doctrines of my father's kirk; and it was needless I should now settle it. And so I entered my chamber and closed the door, and around me there came a trooping throng of phantasms dire from the abyssal depths of nethermost perdition; doubt, fear, unbelief, mockery, and scoffing were there; and I wrestled with them in agony of spirit." The result was, he declined the profession. He became a teacher of mathematics at the Burgh school of Annan. The ability and industry of the young scholar had attracted the attention of Sir David Brewster, and at his request Carlyle contributed sixteen articles to the "Edinburgh Encyclopædia," which Sir David was then editing.

Carlyle's bold and original style has rendered him conspicuous, and has been in many respects imitated by other authors. He is supposed to represent the age in its demand for plain speaking. His rugged expressions are taken as evidence of his honesty and his bluntness for an antipathy to sham and hypocrisy. His use of strong expressions and striking figures and unusual illustrations gives to his writing an originality not to be found in other

men's productions. His contempt of other men has given him a sort of bearishness in the estimation of his contemporaries that cannot be easily thrown off. His long life perhaps it was, that gave to his later productions a sort of crabbedness and fault-finding spirit, that cannot be separated from him in many minds.

His antipathy to American institutions has laid him open to hostile criticism on this side of the Atlantic, which he does not receive in Great Britain. "Keypoints" in the *Examiner* quotes from Carlyle the remark:

"Democracy is despair of finding any heroes to govern," and asks, where is the American, however, whose thin skin does not feel dreadfully exposed in such a blast as this: "Our American cousins—what have they done? They have produced beyond recorded example 38,000,000 of the greatest bores ever seen in this world before! That hitherto is their feat in history!"

This reminds me of a very recent Carlyle incident. It is very recent. The story goes that Mr. Emerson puts a letter of introduction to Carlyle into the hands of an eminent New-Englander, and in due course of post receives from the volcano an eruption somewhat to this effect: "Dear Sir—Take back your old squash. Yours truly, T. CARLYLE."

Harriet Martineau attributes his ferocity, curiously enough, to his "affections." They were "too much for him." We shall probably have any amount of this sort of analysis now. It is unintelligible enough to pass for metaphysical criticism. Affection of the digestive apparatus, I should say, and I wonder Miss Martineau does not say so, for she immediately adds: "When I knew him, he rarely slept, was woefully dyspeptic, and as variable as possible in mood." Now that is something like analysis. Here is another reason for not making a philosopher, or a teacher, or a leader, or a guide of any kind, out of the volcano. It was one of the many instances of the mind working under the stimulus of physical torture. Carlyle was as bilious as a Bengal tiger. Hence his rhetorical resemblance to one. We are indebted to a torpid liver for an active mind, to dyspepsia for some of the grandest English in English literature.

### HIS RELIGIOUS RHETORIC.

And the most remarkable thing about his biliousness was that it never colored his religious rhetoric. His "scornful laughter" dies away as he approaches the themes of the soul and its destiny. "An irreverent knowledge is no knowledge," he says. "It may be a development of the logical, or other handicraft faculty, but it is no culture of the soul of a man." Whatever Thomas Carlyle the man was, Thomas Carlyle the Rhetorician or thinker was no atheist or agnostic, or even skeptic.

"Unhappy he who feels not ineradicably in his heart that a God made this universe, and a demon not." Religious literature, strictly so-called, contains no more touching strokes of pathetic humility, than some that may be found on the lurid and tumultuous pages of Thomas Carlyle. "Let that vain struggle to read the mystery of the infinite cease to harass us. Here on this earth we are as soldiers fighting in a foreign land, that understand not the plan of the campaign and have no need to understand it. Seeing well what is at our hand to be done, let us do it like soldiers, with submission, with courage, with an heroic joy."

He had no patience with a religion "that has become through every fibre conscious of itself," that "listens to itself," and "asks itself with torturing anxiety, Shall I be saved, or shall I be damned?" "At the utmost, by incessant nursing it can only keep itself alive." He makes a distinction between loving religion and making love to it—a distinction worth thinking of. He poured out his derision, too, upon religion as "a wise, prudential feeling grounded on mere calculation whereby some smaller quantum of earthly en-

joyment may be exchanged for a larger quantum of celestial enjoyment. Not reverence, but vulgar hope and fear." He raved no less at the mention of hypocrisy than at the appearance of shams and chicanery. "What is incredible to thee thou shalt not, at thy soul's peril attempt to believe. Go to perdition if thou must, but not with a lie in thy mouth!"

With all his savagery and grumbling there is no despair in his rhetoric, or even despondency, with reference to society, or the future of the Christian faith. "The Christian Religion once here cannot again pass away. In one form or another it will endure through all time. As in the Scripture, so in the heart of man, it is written the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Were the memory of this Faith never so obscured—as indeed the coarse passions do all but obliterate it in the hearts of men—yet in every Poet and Wise Man it finds a new missionary, a new martyr, till the great volume of universal history is finally closed, and man's destinies are fulfilled in this earth."

The following incident from another source presents, we doubt not, more of the true inwardness of Carlyle. It displays more of his heart than would be seen in much of his published writings.

### MRS. CARLYLE'S GRAVE.

A New York editor travelling in England made a visit to the old Haddington cathedral, and with this interesting and pathetic result: With pride the sexton showed the effigies, showing also other titled names that decorate the spot. "And there," said he, while moving along, as he pointed out a flagpost bearing two names, one of which was a few years old, "there is Mrs. Carlyle's grave."

"The wife of Thomas Carlyle?" I inquired.

"Ay," said he, "ay, ay." And I saw that it was, and that this was the tombstone glorified by that immortal epitaph, the finest tribute ever paid to wife or woman, in which the illustrious literary giant—

Mightiest Titan of ruggedest mind  
Frowning majestic on feeble mankind—  
after referring to her long years of wise and helpful companionship, says that, by her death, the light of his life is clean gone out.

"And Mr. Carlyle," said the sexton "comes here from London now and then to see this grave. He is a gaunt shaggy, weird kind of old man, looking very old the last time he was here."

"He is eighty-six, now," said I.

"Ay," he repeated, "eighty-six and comes here to this grave all the way from London." And I told the sexton that Carlyle was a great man, the greatest man of the age in books, and that his name was known all over the world; but the sexton thought there were other great men lying near at hand, though I told him their fame did not reach beyond the graveyard, and brought him back to speak of Carlyle.

"Mr. Carlyle himself," said the grave-digger softly, "is to be brought here to be buried with his wife; ay."

"He comes here lonesome and alone," continued the grave-digger; "when he visits the wife's grave, his niece keeps him company to the gate, but he leaves her there, and she stays there for him. The last time he was here, I got a sight of him, and he was bowed down under his white hairs, and he took his way up by that ruined wall of the old cathedral, and round there and in here by the gateway, and he tottered up here to this spot."

Softly spake the grave-digger and paused. Softer still, in the broad dialect of the Lothians, he proceeded: "And he stood here awhile in the grass, and then knelt down and stayed on his knees at the grave; then he bent over and I saw him kiss the ground—ay, he kissed it again and again, and he kept kneeling, and it was a long time before he rose and tottered out of the cathedral and wandered through the graveyard to the

gate where his niece stood waiting for him."

Dean Stanley proposed that the remains of Mr. Carlyle should be interred in Westminster Abbey. The offer was however, declined by the relatives of the deceased, on the ground that he had expressed a decided wish that his body should be laid beside that of his wife in the old Cathedral of Haddington.

Dean Stanley, when preaching in Westminster Abbey on Sunday, the 6th inst., from the text, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field," alluded to the seed sown by Mr. Carlyle, whom he styled "the Prophet of Chelsea," and said: "He is at rest. He is at last delivered from that burden of the flesh against which he chafed and fretted. He is at rest: in his own words, 'Babylon with its deafening inanity rages on, but to him innocuous, unheeded for ever.' From the silence of the Eternities of which he so often spoke there still sounds, and will long sound, the tones of that marvellous voice. Let us take one tender expression, written but three or four years ago—one plaintive yet manful thought—that has not yet reached the public eye 'Three nights ago, stepping out after midnight and looking up at the stars, which were clear and numerous, it struck me with a strange new kind of feeling. 'In a little while I shall have seen you also for the last time. God Almighty's own Theatre of Immensity, the Infinite made palpable and visible to me. That also will be closed, and I shall never behold it any more.' The thought of this eternal deprivation, even of this, though this is such a nothing in comparison, was sad and painful to me. And then a second feeling rose in me: What if Omnipotence, that has developed in me those pieties, those reverences, and infinite affections, should actually have said, 'Yes, poor mortals, such of you as have gone so far shall be permitted to go further. Hope; despair not. God's will, God's will, not ours, be done.'"

The London Daily Chronicle mentions a curious fact in connection with Carlyle's principal work "Sartor Resartus."—Carlyle lent the manuscript of the greater part of it to the late John Stuart Mill at the earnest request of the noted logician. It was subsequently taken by Mill to Mrs. Taylor, his particular friend, in order that she might have the privilege of looking at it, and she left it on the table whence it fell to the floor. A servant supposing it to be waste paper, used it for lighting the fires. Fortunately the rough draft which Carlyle had preserved enabled him to re-write what had been thus heedlessly placed at the disposal of a housemaid.

### The Hon. Mr. Lot, of Sodom.

Now if we let the Lord choose for us, he will choose better than we can for ourselves. But Lot wanted to choose for himself. I will venture to say, when he left Abraham, if you had talked to him about going to Sodom he would have said: "O, no! Go down to Sodom! Do you think I would take my wife into Sodom? Do you think I would take my children down into Sodom—into that great city with all its temptations? Not I!" But he pitched his tent toward Sodom—he looked toward the city—and it was not long before his business took him there. He went down there perhaps to sell his cattle, and found a good market. Some of the leading men wanted him to go down there. He could make a great deal of money—could make it faster. When a man pitches his tent before Sodom, and looks in, it won't be long before he gets in there, tent and all.

His business took him there: "Business must be attended to—a man must attend to his business, you know."

"But then it will be ruin to your family." "O, well! I am going to get out of it. When I get enough to retire, I will move back, and live on the plains of Abraham. But I must attend to my business first." Many a man

puts business before his family. Business must be attended to, let the consequences be what they will.

In the sight of the world, Lot was one of the most successful business men of all Sodom. If you had gone in there a little while before destruction came upon it, and inquired about the place and its leading men, they would have told you that Lot, the nephew of Abraham, was one of the most successful men in all Sodom. He held office. We find him sitting at the gate, and that is the sign that he was an officer. Perhaps they made him a Judge—a good, high sounding name, "Judge Lot."

It is a good title. The world honored him—Sodom honored him; they liked him very well. Then he would have reasoned in this way: "Don't you see I have got an influence by coming down here." He was a man of great influence in the sight of the world—immense influence. They would have told you that he was one of the most influential men in all Sodom. He owned, perhaps, the best corner lots, and he may have had his name on them. If they had had a Congress in those days he would have been a very popular man to send to Congress. He would have been "The Hon. Mr. Lot, of Sodom."

He was a man the world delighted to honor; for it delights to honor that kind of a man—a man of great influence. But I want to call your attention to one thing—he was there twenty years and never got a convert. This is a man of "influence!" Look around, and see where the worldly Christians are. How many souls are they winning to Jesus Christ? Are they the men that are building up Christ's kingdom? I tell you, those men are doing more to tear it down than any other class.—*Mr. D. L. Moody.*

### Three Classes of Sermons.

There are three generic classes of sermons: the topical, expository, and textual. A topical sermon is one in which a single leading idea is exclusively discussed. There may be more than one doctrinal or practical idea in the text; but one is chosen and made the special and exclusive topic of the discourse. Such a discourse may be an oration rounded and finished by the arts and rules of rhetoric. In a rhetorical point of view, the topical is the model sermon. The expository sermon is one in which a section of Scripture—a chapter or a large part of a chapter—is expounded. It is exegetical, and unfolds the meaning of the words, clauses, and verses in their relations to one another. Of course, such a sermon cannot be a rhetorical oration. Midway between these two, and partaking of the nature of both, the textual sermon has its place. A given passage, a verse or a paragraph, is made the text, and the sermon is a full and faithful exposition of the very truth, and the whole truth, of that portion of divine inspiration. The text itself is broken up into its subordinate ideas by its clauses or emphatic words, and thus made to furnish the divisions for the discourse. It is expository because it is an exposition of the text; it is topical, because the main idea of the text is the general topic of the discussion; and it is textual because it brings out the whole truth of the text in its textual connections. Its nature can be better shown by example than by words, Take Romans xii. 11: "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." The leading idea here is: Industry in business is a Christian duty. Every Christian should have a business, a vocation, a life-work. 1. "Not slothful in business." The Christian should never be slothful, indolent, or negligent in his life-work. 2. "Fervent in spirit." The Christian should enter into his life-work with spirit, and also with fervor of spirit; with enthusiasm and zeal. 3. "Serving the Lord." The Christian's life-work should be a godly vocation, and should be pursued as a part of his every-day religious life as service unto the Lord; and thus his daily honest work will be a part of his hearty worship from day to day.—*Dr. Ous.*