

The Christian Messenger.

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WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XLVII., No. 1.

Take heart again, Brother.

A SONG FOR THE NEW YEAR.

"Wait on the Lord, and be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart: wait, I say, on the Lord." Psalm xxvii. 14.

Take heart again, brother,
Thy sun, above
The cloud still shining,
Forbids repining:
Rest in God's Love.

Take heart again, brother;
To bleeding hearts
Comes healing balm,
Through storms the calm
Which peace imparts.

Take heart again, brother;
Through sorrow's plaint
Comes grace all healing,
Love's gentle sooting:
Do thou not faint!

Take heart again, brother;
Through failures, skill
Comes forth to brighten;
Love's work they heighten;
Wait and be still.

Take heart again, brother;
All through the way,
Behold, the Saviour
Marks thy behaviour:
Do thou obey.

Take heart again, brother;
Life's discords bring
Sweet hymns of gladness,
Dispelling sadness;—
Songs from the King.

Take heart again, brother;
Through bitter, sweets,
Our darkness brightens,
Our burdens lightens,
Love strangely greets!

Take heart again, brother,
Do not despair;
Things giving sorrow
May help thee to-morrow,
Loosen thy care.

Take heart again, brother;
Thy bleeding feet
No path can tread
Like His who bled,
His bitter's sweet.

Take heart again, brother;
Though it is night,
Yet comes the morning;
Lo! its light dawning,
Breaks on thy sight.

Brighton. W. POOLB BALVERN.

Sensitiveness to the approach of evil is well worthy of cultivation. It would be an excellent guard from danger. Miss Longworth describes as having seen in her travels a dwarf sensitive plant, at Singapore, "whose blossom closes its delicate bosom as a footstep draws near." Niebuhr speaks of an Indian mimosa that droops its branches whenever anyone approaches it, seeming as if it saluted them. "Virtue," said Isaac Taylor, "should be guarded at a greater distance than where she wrestles hand to hand with opposite vices."

Cetewayo signed the conditions for the resettlement of Zululand at Government House, Cape Town, on the 11th ult. He expects to leave early in January, and a man-of-war will convey him to Port Durford direct. The British Resident, with a military escort, will receive him, and accompany him to Ulundi, where he will be installed King over that portion of Zululand which is to be restored to his rule.

Faith is the nail which fastens the soul to Christ, and love is that grace which drives it to the head. Faith takes hold of him and love helps to keep the grip. Christ dwells in the heart by faith, and He burns in the heart by love, like a fire melting the heart. Faith casts the knot and love draws it fast.—Ralph Erskine.

The way to preserve the peace of the church is to preserve the purity of it.—M. Henry.

Extravagant prices are often paid for old coins. A week or two since a half cent of 1802, scarcely marked by circulation, brought \$4.50 at auction in Philadelphia. An uncirculated chain cent of 1793 was bought for the Mint at \$84.

Three missionaries for Central Africa sailed from Liverpool two or three weeks since. Revs. G. Grenfill and W. H. Duke will proceed to Stanley Pool on the Congo River. They had with them, the steam launch *Peace* which we have mentioned in former issues. It is so constructed that it can be taken to pieces and made up in packages of about 1 cwt. each, so that it can be conveyed on the heads of native carriers round the rapids and cataracts which would otherwise make the Congo impassable. Mr. Duke for the last few months has been busily engaged in acquiring a knowledge of mechanical details and engineering, so as to manage the little craft under all circumstances. The other missionary was Rev. T. Richardson, who goes to Bakondai, Cameroons, and is accompanied by his wife.

The Lebanon Cemetery at Philadelphia has been rifled of a large portion of the dead bodies of the colored people buried there. On the night of Dec. 4th, four men were arrested in the act of robbing the graves. On further investigation it was found hundreds of bodies have been taken from this cemetery and sold to the Jefferson Medical College during past years. In one lot, where there should have been sixty bodies buried according to the records of the cemetery, scarce a body remained. In other portions, but about a half remained. As this was a graveyard for the colored population, that portion of the community have been particularly excited over the discovery. If these things had occurred with people of other nationalities there would have been a riot and probably bloodshed.

"A commonplace life," we say, and we sigh; But why should we sigh as we say? The commonplace sun in the commonplace sky,
Makes up the commonplace day;
The moon and the stars are commonplace things,
And the flower that blooms and the bird that sings;
But dark were the world and sad our lot
If the flowers failed and the sun shone not;
And God who studies each separate soul,
Out of commonplace lives makes his beautiful whole.

Susan Coolidge.

Like most garments, everything in life has a right and a wrong side. You can take any joy, and by turning it around, find troubles on the other side; or you may take the greatest trouble, and by turning it around, find joys on the other side. The gloomiest mountain never casts a shadow on both sides at once.

Homes are like harps, of which one is finely carved and bright with gilding, but ill-tuned, and jarring the air with its discords; while another is old and plain and worn, but from its chords float strains that are a feast of music.

Joseph Cook, in writing of America, says: "I regard this country as the hope of civilization. The present spiritual death in American churches is appalling. It is enough to make the statues of the fathers leap from their pedestals. This country has blessed Europe with lots of good merchandise, but the best thing it ever gave Europe was D. L. Moody."

Hand in hand with angels,
Through the world we go;
Brighter eyes are on us
Than we blind ones know;
Tender voices cheer us
Though we deaf will own;
Now, walking heavenward,
Can we walk alone.

Lucy Larcom.

The Passing Years.

BY REV. J. R. MILLER.

Old age is the harvest of all the years that have gone before. It is a barn into which all the sheaves are gathered. It is a sea into which all the rills and rivers of life flow from their springs in the hills and valleys of youth and manhood. We are each building a house in which we shall have to live when we grow old. We may make it a prison or a palace. We may make it very beautiful, adorning it with taste and filling it with objects which shall minister to our pleasure and comfort and power. We may cover the walls with lovely pictures. We may spread luxurious couches of ease on which to rest. We may store away great supplies of provision to lead upon in the days of hunger and feebleness, or we may cover the walls with hideous images and ghastly spectres and horrid pictures, which shall look down upon us and haunt us, filling our souls with terror, when we are sitting in the gloom of life's nightfall. We may plant roses to bloom about our doors, and fragrant gardens to pour their perfumes about us, or we may sow weeds and briars to flaunt themselves in our faces as we sit in our doorways.

All old age is not beautiful. All old people are not happy. Some are very wretched, with hollow, sepulchral lives. Many an ancient palace was built over a dark dungeon. There were the marble walls that shone with dazzling splendour in the sunshine. There were the wide gilded chambers with their magnificent frescoes and their splendid adornments. There were the gaily and music and the revelry. But deep down beneath all this luxurious splendour and dazzling display was the dismal dungeon, filled with its unhappy victims, and up through the iron gratings came evermore the sad groans, and shivering moanings of despair, echoing and reverberating through the gilded halls and ceiled chambers. And there is many an old age that is just like that. It may have many comforts, and much that tells of prosperity in an outward sense; but it is only a palace built over a gloomy dungeon of memory up from whose dark recesses come evermore voices of remorse and despair to sadden and embitter every hour, and to cast shadows over every dark scene.

It is possible to live so as to make old age very sad. And then it is possible to live so as to make it very beautiful. The other day, in going my rounds from house to house, I came to one door where my ears were greeted with a great chorus of bird-songs. There were birds everywhere—in parlour, and dining-room, and chamber, and hall, and all the house was filled with their joyful music. So may old age be. So it is for those who have lived right. It is full of music. The sweet bird-notes of heavenly peace sing everywhere, and the last days are the happiest days.

The important practical question is, How can we live so that our old age when it comes, shall be beautiful and happy? We must live a useful life. Nothing good ever comes out of idleness or out of selfishness. The standing water stagnates and breeds decay and death. It is the running stream that keeps pure and healthy. The fruit of an idle life is never joy and peace. The happiest people in the world, are the busiest. And then again, to be happy we must forget ourselves, and live for others. Sweet are the memories of good deeds done and sacrifices made. Their incense, like heavenly perfume, comes floating up from the fields of toil, and fills old age with sweet peace. Then when one has lived to bless others, one has many friends when the days of feebleness come. I see people who do not seem

to want to make friends. They are unsocial, unsympathetic, cold, distant, disobliging, selfish. Even in a worldly sense mere shrewd policy would dictate the reverse of this. The time will come to all of us when we shall need friends. Let us make them now by a life of kindness, sympathy, and helpfulness. Let us bind men to us and win a way into their hearts.

Never was there a brighter or more beautiful old age than Dr. Guthrie's, and his motto in life was—
"I live for those who love me,
The good, the kind, the true,
For the heaven that smiles above me
And waits my coming too;
For the cause that lacks assistance,
For the wrongs that need resistance,
For the future in the distance,
For the good that I can do."

We must live a pure and holy life. An old man, very unhappy, wanted to change his home. He was always miserable, and he thought his neighbors were to blame for it. But some one, with more truth than gentleness, suggested that it would not be any use, for he could not get away from himself. Everyone carries in himself the elements of his happiness or wretchedness. Circumstances have very little to do with our inner experiences. It is self after all that gives the colour to our skies, and the tone to the music we hear. The old man, like the snail, carries his house on his back. He may change neighbors, or homes, or scenes, or companions, but he cannot get away from himself. Sin puts thorns in our pillows. Conscience violated beeps up sorrow for old age. Sin may seem pleasant at the moment, but you must not forget now it will look when you get past it, and turn to look back on it, and especially how it will look from old age, from a dying pillow. Norman McLeod said somewhere that "nothing makes a man so contented as an experience gathered from a well-watched past." We are hanging up pictures every day about the chamber walls of our hearts, that we shall have to look at when we sit in the shadows. Then, summing all up, only Christ can make any life, young or old, truly beautiful or truly happy. Only He can cure the heart's restless fever, and give calmness and quietness. Only He can purify that sinful fountain within us, our corrupt nature, and make us holy. Would you have a beautiful and happy old age? Would you look back from amid the shadows with sweet satisfaction, and forward with glorious hope? You must begin your walk with Christ in the golden days of youth. Then the decay, and wasting and infirmities of old age will be, as dear Dr. Guthrie called these systems of his own approaching death, only "the hand-birds lighting on the shrouds, telling the weary mariner that he is nearing the desired haven."

Eight Golden Rules.

1. Stick to the truth; simply and sincerely do what is right.
2. Never join in anything in which you cannot look up and say, "Bless me in this, O my Heavenly Father!"
3. Try to be kind and forgiving, both to friends and foes.
4. Speak no evil of others, under any circumstances.
5. Watch against anger.
6. Deny yourself indulgence, especially in laziness.
7. Keep down pride; allow none but humble thoughts of self.
8. Pray. Pray every day, for in prayer is your greatest safety.—L. Richmond.

If the Church would have her face shine she must go up into the Mount and be alone with God. If she would have her courts of worship resound with eucharistic praises, she must open her eyes and see humanity lying lame at the temple gates, and heal it in the miraculous name of Jesus.—J. H. Hunt.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.
From India.

FROM MRS. CHURCHILL TO THE SECRETARY OF THE N. S. C. B. OF W. M. A. SOCIETY.

CHICAGO, Nov. 8th, 1882.

My dear Mrs. Selden,—

I was glad as usual to receive your kind letter, and to hear particulars of the Convention. I am very glad and thankful you had such a pleasant and peaceful session. We were indeed rejoiced to hear of another missionary being appointed, and hoped ere this that he would have been on his way to join us; but our joy is being turned to anxiety by last accounts from home. We hear that there is now doubts of his coming, and if he does not come I suppose no other will come out this year.

We are amazed at the seeming indifference of young men and ministers in regard to our mission work in India, and cannot help enquiring why it is, that no one feels strongly enough the great and perishing need of these dying heathen, to press forward and overcome some difficulties in order to do their part in helping to save them. The country is teeming with people who have never heard of the true way of salvation. The missionaries are fainting under their burdens, and crying out unceasingly, "Come over and help us," and yet no one seems to be stirred, no response comes, except letters of sympathy from the Board, and a few faithful ones outside of it, who cannot come themselves. Seeing the necessity of more workers as we see it, we cannot understand this apathy among our people who have undertaken this great and noble work for the Lord. We would expect that many more earnest men and women would be offering themselves for this work than our people could send or support. We are only comforted when we remember that this Foreign Missionary work is the Lord's own work, and He has it under His special care and in His own time difficulties and apathy, here and at home will be overcome.

I received your card telling of the two donations towards the aid of the tent for Bobbili, they are received with gratitude, and hope many prayers may accompany them, and may follow the tent and its occupants as it shelters and forms a home for the missionary as he goes round from village to village, sowing the good seed of the kingdom. I may say the tent has been ordered and we hear from Bro. Sanford that it is now in his godum, waiting for Mrs. C. to send for it, having come to Bimbi by the last steamer from Calcutta. We at Chicacole could not refrain from an expression of our joy when we heard of its arrival.

For the Christian Messenger.
Letter from China.

A VISIT TO A CHINESE HEATHEN TEMPLE.

This evening as my Bible woman and I were on our way to the chapel, in passing a temple devoted to the worship of the *Ah Ma* or "Goddess of Heaven," we saw the doors standing open, and some idolatrous service going on. Curiosity prompted me to enter, and passing into the recess where the wooden image of the goddess sat among her tawdry decorations, with an altar loaded with incense sticks, offerings of paper money, fruits, &c., before her, I witnessed a forcible illustration of the senseless worship of this heathen people. Around a table before the altar were four persons arranged as follows:—On the left, a priest droning incantations, on the right a scribe occasionally jotting down a word, in front a man apparently in a trance, his eyes rolling, his body swaying to and fro, his head adorned with a red silk scarf, beating with his outspread hands the table so made as to give out a hollow sound, and now and then drawing out a word. By his side knelt a woman whose eyes were fixed on him in agonizing appeal. The whole lighted only by the burning incense sticks presented a scene weird in the extreme. After watching the performance about ten minutes I ventured to ask the Bible woman what it all meant. In a low tone she told me that the woman had come on behalf of her sick son to learn from the goddess what medicines would insure his recovery.

The man going through those frightful contortions was a spirit medium and was supposed at this present time to be possessed by the spirit of the goddess, and to be unconscious of what he was doing or saying. The priest was reciting incantations to assist the goddess in making out the prescription which was given through the medium in detached words at regular intervals, accompanied by a peculiar motion of the hand.

The above explanation was barely finished when the medium giving a groan, fell back as if dead into the arms of the priest. The spirit of the goddess was leaving him. Just at this time a bundle of "spirit money" made of paper, was carefully burned in a large iron vessel already partly filled with the ashes of other similar offerings to the *Ah Ma*. By this time the medium had come to himself and we left him going through a series of prostrations before the altar. The poor woman, having paid the necessary fee, had received her paper of written directions, and had returned to her home to carry them out. Poor soul! What a disappointment when she finds they do not avail. But she will not be discouraged. She will seek some other shrine, and be none the less sure of the power of her wooden gods to help her.

As I see such sights, I ask myself if it be possible for the light to enter such darkened understandings, and for answer have but to look at our little bands of Christians scattered here and there throughout the land. Only a few years ago they were practicing and trusting in just such senseless superstitions as the one above described, and now many of them are being very useful in spreading the knowledge of the true God.

What a glorious day it will be for China and for India when not a heathen temple is found within their borders. Who would not covet the opportunity of hastening that time! And yet there is not a Christian in America who cannot have this opportunity. Those who cannot themselves come to these heathen lands may help to send those who can, and all can give their prayers, and "prayer moves the arm that moves the world."

SOPHIA A. NORWOOD,
Swatow, China, Nov. 15, 1882.

For the Christian Messenger.

A Silver Wedding.

On the evening of the 15th inst., Bro. Wm. Bishop and his esteemed lady, celebrated the 25th anniversary of their wedding day, at their home at Williamston, Annapolis Co. Scarcely had the shades of evening begun fall before the friends began to assemble. Lights shone out from every window, and glared upon the snow-wrapped earth beneath. All around the air was musical with the tinkling of merry sleigh bells. Bright fires and beaming countenances greeted the visitors as they crossed the threshold. It is calculated that some 70 or 80 friends were present. After a short season of pleasant, social intercourse, the guests partook of a most abundant repast served up in excellent style. Then came music and singing. Congratulatory addresses were made by the Rev. J. Clark, Avard Longley Esq., and Dea. W. Shalner. Bro. Bishop suitably responded. Various silver presents, both elegant and useful, literally covered one of the tables, and will long be treasured as memorials of the occasion and mementoes of friendly regard. Altogether it was one of the pleasantest evenings we ever remember to have spent.

The Italian journal, *Piccolo Messaggero*, tells of a public crier having made an announcement of a coming fair in this fashion, "That motion will be sold there at a remarkably cheap rate, and that the Protestant books being prohibited, those purchasing them will be excommunicated." Two evangelists followed him and secured a counter announcement, "That the books sold by the evangelists are said not to be true Bibles, they offer 500 francs to any priest that shall prove them to be false."

It is reported that one of the gentlemen recently knighted, observed to a friend who, the day before, said to him "that the morrow would be a glorious day to him," "that it would be succeeded, alas, by an everlasting night." (Knight.)