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## Harvest Lessons.

BY REV. T. R. STEVENSON.

"Thrust in thy sickle, and reap."—Revela-  
tion xiv. 15.

In the parable of the tares and the  
wheat our Master says, "Let both  
grow together until the harvest." On  
what account? Why not separate them  
before? Because mistakes may be made.  
Wait until the time of reaping, for it is  
a time of revelation. How true this is!  
Harvests are homilies. Each shock of  
corn is a pulpit whence impressive ser-  
mons are preached. Fields of wheat  
are full of wisdom. Let us try to gather  
some of their teachings.

Much that seems to perish still lives.  
It is not so with the corn? Judging by  
sight, we should suppose that it had  
passed away. A savage or an inhabit-  
ant of another world would be certain  
to come to this conclusion. But we  
know better. The seed has a resurrection.

Thus it is with us. Evils that we hoped  
were dead too often prove themselves  
to be existent. There is wonderful  
accuracy in St. Paul's language, "When  
the law came, sin revived, and I died."  
As though he had said, 'I thought sin  
was no more. I fondly believed that I  
had slain it. Alas it had only swooned,  
and, when temptation appeared, it re-  
covered.' Depraved tendencies lurk  
within, and unless we obtain Divine  
aid they will eventually crystallise into  
action.

Blessed be God, the same may be  
affirmed of good. We do more than  
we are aware of. "Thou knowest not  
which shall prosper"—one or other  
will, but "which" thou canst not tell.  
Much usefulness is invisible. As you  
stand on the Hoe at Plymouth the fam-  
ous breakwater looks disappointing, a  
mere ridge of stone above the water.  
But if you enquire you will find that  
beneath the sea there are three million  
tons of material, and that sixty years  
were consumed in the great undertaking.  
The influence of noble character and  
philanthropic effort reaches farther than  
he who yields it ever imagines. "It  
is at once a solace and an impulse to a  
teacher," writes a suggestive author,  
'to know that so far as his words em-  
body the message of God, they will do  
their beneficent work far beyond the  
limits of his personal knowledge. They  
will start up untold upon the view  
of a doubter, and make him firm in the  
presence of a great temptation. They  
will come like a fresh breeze over the  
spirit of a man of God when ready to  
faint under the world's conflicts. They  
may be handed over by parents to their  
children, and by them to other genera-  
tions, until the multitude be such as no  
man can number, in whom the message  
delivered in weakness, in fear, and in  
much trembling shall be "a well of  
water springing up unto everlasting  
life." Longfellow's sweet poem is  
quite to the point here. He sings of an  
archer who shot an arrow, lost it, sought

it, could not discover it; but many days  
after he "found it again in the heart  
of an oak." He sings too, of a poem  
which he breathed into the air, then  
thought it was altogether forgotten,  
whereas it was "found again in the  
heart of a friend." Learn the lesson,  
draw the inference, Christian labourer  
and return to your benevolent enter-  
prise with new zeal. Only work faith-  
fully, and God will bless your efforts.  
Do not judge of your success by what  
you see. Nothing can be more mis-  
leading. We are to "walk by faith  
not by sight," faith in the promise, "In  
due season ye shall reap."

Natural results are appropriate. The  
harvest exactly tallies with the sowing.  
One can be prognosticated from the  
other. Grass seed does not yield wheat  
nor vice versa. Wheat produces wheat,  
and grass produces grass. If among  
the yellow corn you behold the scarlet  
poppy, you know that it did not spring  
from corn grain. No; it grew from the  
little round black poppy seed. "Do  
men gather grapes from thorns, or figs  
of thistles?"

Like from like is a principle which  
obtains in all things. Sin begets sin.  
Poisonous exhalations from the graves  
of burial places in cities and towns  
cause death. The grave-yard brought  
many to the grave-yard. Nor is it  
otherwise with wickedness, which is  
moral death. Transgressions are greg-  
arious. Evil thoughts and deeds are  
fond of comrades. "That man perished  
not alone in his iniquity." Holiness,  
also, is productive. A true child of  
God is certain to do good. His conduct  
and his character alike benefit men.  
The measure of our devotion to God is  
the measure of our aid to the world.  
As we sow we shall reap. My brother  
if you would save others, first be saved.  
Do you wish to bless your fellows?  
Get God's blessing yourself. No mat-  
ter how clever, educated, eloquent a  
preacher may be, he will fail to achieve  
spiritual success unless he is earnest,  
devout, and disinterested.

What is true of the present is equally  
true of the future. Heaven and hell  
are the fitting outcome of life here.  
"We receive the due reward of our  
deeds." Salvation begins now, perdi-  
tion projects its dark shadow upon this  
world. Scripture and science agree in  
maintaining that solidarity roles right  
through the whole of the Divine domains.  
Its most solemn illustration is visible in  
the region of things moral and spiritual.  
Eternity bears the impress of time.  
Think of the terms which the Bible and  
we ourselves apply to death? they all  
involve this idea. It is called a sleep.  
Well, as a man falls asleep so he awakes.  
Slumber does not make the fool a  
scholar, nor the pauper a peer, nor  
the criminal a saint. We call it an  
exodus; "He spake of His exodus  
which He should accomplish at Jerusa-  
lem." An exodus, a going from this  
place to that, fails to alter us. If you  
travel from Glasgow to London your  
opinions, wishes, purposes suffer no  
violent transformation on the road.  
Thus it is with our immortal state.  
"This life is not the play, it is only the  
rehearsal": so wrote Jean Paul Rich-  
ter, and nothing can be more accurate.  
The play is commonly superior to the  
rehearsal, but it partakes of its nature.  
The thought is awe-inspiring. Oh  
that men would duly ponder it!  
Thoroughly realised, it would render  
foolish and godless life next to impossible.  
How stands the matter with us? Are  
you spending your days in unbelief and  
sin? Heaven cannot be yours. If ad-  
mission to it were granted, you would  
infallibly be unhappy. A coward on a  
field of battle, a drunkard at a temper-  
ance demonstration, or a profligate in  
church were not more out of his element  
than an unconverted person in the pres-  
ence of saints and angels. Milton  
finely describes Mammon in the New  
Jerusalem as always looking down at

the pavement of gold, caring nothing  
for aught holy or Divine. Do you  
want to reach Paradise? Prepare for  
it? prepare early; yea prepare now!

God's work is vastly greater than  
man's. What can the farmer do?  
Plough and expose the soil to air and  
rain. What else? Sow the seed. What  
besides? Nothing; nothing more. He  
has to wait for Apother. "God giveth  
it a body." Moreover suitable weather  
is necessary. If when the grain comes  
up, there is a severe frost, or if, when  
the harvest should be carried on, there  
is continuous rain, alas for the crops.  
But, observe the weather is in God's  
hands. No human being is Jupiter  
Pluvius. Yet further: man only  
operates occasionally. He scatters the  
grain, and then leaves it until autumn;  
weeks and months elapse between the  
one and the other. It is not so with  
the Creator: He is always giving the  
influences of heat, air, and soil.

Thus it is spiritually. "Our suffi-  
ciency is of God." He forestalls our  
needs. "We love Him because He  
first loved us." "While we were with-  
out strength, Christ died for the un-  
godly." He sustains us right through  
our course. Have you not noticed in  
our Lord's beautiful parable of the lost  
sheep that the shepherd not only found  
the wanderer but afterwards carried it?  
And were there not something answer-  
ing to this in our experience we should  
be in a pitiable case. Ask any one  
who is pure, benevolent and self-  
abnegating the explanation of his con-  
dition, and he will promptly reply, "By  
the grace of God I am what I am."

What we do of and by ourselves is little  
compared with what the Most High  
does for us. All the heroisms of the  
Church have had their origin above.

How came it men of faith, to pass  
That ye were mighty handed?  
How break ye down the gates of brass  
When few of ye were banded?  
It was that through your open soul  
God like a tide did onward roll  
And left no vessel stranded.

How was it, lovers of your kind,  
When ye were mocked and hated,  
That ye, with pure and open mind,  
Thrust ye holy doctrine ated?  
In God, as in an ark, ye kept,  
Around, and not above ye, swept  
The storm till it abated.

Gain may be the final issue of loss.  
You throw away the seed. It is buried  
in the furrows. Lost, is it? Even so,  
but only for a time. As you fling it  
into the soil it seems to cry, "When I  
come again I will repay thee. Yes; I  
shall return by and by, and I will re-  
compence thee with a splendid increase."  
Loss is grandly recouped. Tennyson  
speaks of "the happy autumn fields,"  
and one source of the happiness is—  
gain from loss.

In all departments of life we find  
something answering to this. A sculp-  
tor buys a block of marble, he chips and  
hammers at it until a good part of it is  
gone. There is loss most certainly but  
gain, too, for look! he has chiselled a  
noble statue. Threshing takes away  
husks, but thereby prepares the wheat  
for grinding into flour. A physician  
will sometimes deprive a plethoric or an  
apoplectic patient of stimulants and  
dainty fare, but the result is health.  
Is it not thus with the Great Physician?  
Be sure of it, He does not remove  
strength or friends or property because  
He likes to vex and depress. Nay:  
He does it for our welfare. He has  
regard to our conscience, heart and  
mind. Many a time have we gained  
in character through earthly loss. God's  
fires destroy dross, but thereby purify  
gold.

Finally, be it remembered that there  
is one loss which cannot result in gain.  
It is loss pure and simple, absolute and  
unmitigated. We mean the loss of the  
soul. Nothing can compensate that!

"What shall it profit a man if he shall  
gain the whole world and lose his own  
soul?" Let not this dreadful doom be  
yours. Seek pardon. Make the Lord  
your salvation. "Turn ye, turn ye, for  
why will ye die?"

## Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.  
Permanency of the Deity.

BY REV. JOHN ROWE.

AN ESSAY DELIVERED AT PORT LORNE,  
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ference.

God is the object of eternal felicity  
to all pure spiritual beings, it is true  
He will always be incomprehensible  
from the very nature of his existence.  
Nor will the endless advancement of  
men or angels in their inconceivable  
attainments, ever enable them to read  
the infinite depths of Deity. This in-  
comprehensibility arises from the limi-  
tations of all created beings. That  
which is infinite can never be explored  
by what is finite. This inconceivable  
contrast between the creature, and the  
Creator, in relation to the superior  
existence of God above all created  
beings, will eternally remain. It is  
essential for the well-being of all that  
such should be the case.

He that had no beginning will always  
be infinitely superior to all that has a  
beginning. As all other beings had  
their origin through the will of God,  
and exist by his permission, it is  
therefore, impossible that any changes  
in these created beings, can in any way  
affect the permanent existence of the  
Deity. By the immediate energy of  
God, every being, animate and inani-  
mate could be blotted out of existence,  
in a moment of time. The complete  
control of the Deity over all beings—  
proves the infinite glory of his nature,  
as being unapproachable by any being  
in the universe, and therefore will al-  
ways retain the permanency of his  
being through whatever changes may  
possibly occur. This permanency of  
his being, is the glory of all.

The stability of his throne is estab-  
lished on the stability of his nature.  
As he is perfect, so will his government  
be. His laws are the product of infinite  
wisdom, therefore they are like himself  
unchangeable. Indeed everything com-  
ing from God will be perfect, and per-  
fectly adapted for the end intended.  
All creation is a standing proof of this  
statement. Every beam of light eman-  
ating from the sun, unfolds the good-  
ness and wisdom of the Deity: Crea-  
tion is a book that reveals the wonders  
of his power, and the glory of his wis-  
dom. Our comprehension of the Deity  
is extremely limited. Could we reach  
deeper into the knowledge of God, we  
would be amazed at our ignorance. The  
great Dr. W. Hamilton says, that "all  
philosophy is nothing more than learned  
ignorance." There is so much that is  
not known beyond.

As all things, beings and events  
are under his immediate control, and  
exist by his permission, they can in  
no way affect the permanency of his  
glorious nature, or in any way hinder  
the fulfillment of his merciful designs  
toward ruined humanity. It is perfect-  
ly absurd to think otherwise, because  
the opposite thought would imply that  
God could not carry forward into com-  
pletion his designs of mercy to man.  
Whereas the Bible assures us he will.  
"As the rain cometh down and the  
snow from heaven and returneth not  
thither, but watereth the earth, and  
maketh it bring forth and bud, that it  
may give seed to the sower and bread  
to the eater, so shall my word be that  
goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall  
not return unto me void but it shall  
accomplish that which I please, and  
shall prosper in the thing whereto I  
sent it." Isa. lv. 10, 11.

This element of permanency, in  
the nature of the Deity is essential,  
to the existence and stability of all  
things he has made. Any change in  
the nature of the Deity, would sweep  
away, with one dash the whole fabric  
of existence. If the foundations of a  
building are removed, the whole fabric  
must fall into ruin. So God is the  
foundation of all existence if any thing  
could affect the stability of his glorious  
nature, all must go overboard. Blessed  
and sweet is the thought, that his  
glorious absolute infinite nature, will  
remain permanent in all its splendors

forever. Like the majestic sun around  
which are suspended all the worlds of  
the solar system, held by an influence,  
from which they can never remove, and  
little storms on their surface, can never  
affect the great orb of day. So all the  
changes of the universe can never affect  
the stability of God's throne. The in-  
variable harmony of the universe, so  
clearly exhibited in the concentration  
and combination of its laws working  
out the most desirable results; in the  
abundant supplies necessary for the  
existence and happiness of all its in-  
habitants, is a standing proof of the  
stability and perfection of the Deity.  
All thy works praise thee, "the heavens  
declare the glory of God and the firm-  
ament showeth his handy work." On the  
wisdom and unchangeability of God de-  
pend all the prospects of the present  
and future happiness of intelligent  
beings. He is, and always will be the  
fountain from whence all blessings flow.  
As all the streams which fertilize our  
world flow from the exhaustless foun-  
tain the sea. So God is the eternal ex-  
haustless fountain of life; from whence  
flow the living streams of eternal life,  
that enriches, beautifies and exalts all  
the happy spirits, that bathes their souls  
in seas of endless bliss, and not a wave  
of trouble rolls across their peaceful  
breasts. The nearer we approach the  
Sun, the more brilliant he appears, the  
nearer we approach the Deity, the more  
glorious he appears. So the angels veil  
their faces before him.

Again the position the Deity oc-  
cupies in the universe, is one of abso-  
lute independence. The glory of his  
eternal existence is in no way depend-  
ant, on created beings. Inasmuch as  
his nature existed in all its perfection,  
before a created being was formed to  
admire it: Creation can add nothing to  
that being who was eternally perfect—  
His nature is, yea infinitely exalted  
above all the created beings of the uni-  
verse. Nevertheless it appears to be  
the great design of God, to reveal the  
glory of his nature to intelligent beings:  
as far as they can comprehend it. To  
accomplish that most desirable end, he  
has made the human soul capable of a  
constantly expansive power—advancing  
in greater attainments of knowledge  
forever. So that its happy powers will  
dip deeper into the blessed nature of  
the Deity forever. The goodness of the  
Deity, will be always manifesting itself  
in opening up of new treasures to the  
expanding mind of the redeemed spirit,  
that will create increasing pleasures, as  
the discoveries shed their beams of  
glory and light upon many of those  
things that appeared so dark and mys-  
terious to us in this life. One of the  
great designs of the Deity is evidently  
to unfold the glory of his nature to his  
intelligent creatures. Inasmuch as this  
revelation of himself will constitute the  
chief element of their happiness and  
progress. The knowledge of the Deity  
is the most ennobling, the most enriching  
that the human mind can conceive, all  
the elements of purity, majesty, and  
glory, find their centre here. Every-  
thing extraneous to this knowledge,  
falls into the shade and sinks into in-  
significance compared with it.

The self existence of the Deity from  
eternity, clearly proves his independ-  
ency. Nothing can affect the existence  
of a being, that gives existence to all  
other beings, and on whose will they  
depend for the continuation of their  
existence. The universal and effective  
energy of God sustains all the beings in  
the universe. If this energy were with-  
drawn, every thing and created being  
would pass into annihilation. Conse-  
quently all creation with all its incon-  
ceivable glory are the products of his  
power and wisdom. His throne is in-  
finitely exalted above the universe, and  
will forever shed its beams of glory on  
the surrounding worlds that move in  
majestic grandeur around their burning  
centres of light. In silent grandeur  
they speak his praise and proclaim his  
power and wisdom to all intelligent  
beings, within the range of their glow-  
ing luster and sparkling beauty.

The permanency and absolute inde-  
pendency of the Deity, in connection  
with His absolute control of all beings  
and events secures the fulfilment of all  
His designs, and gives inflexible stabili-  
ty to the government of His Kingdom.  
How delightful to the righteous to know

that his most loving Father sits at the  
head of the universe, steering the whole  
machinery of events, and guiding the  
Gospel ship through the rough broken  
waves of sin, to the haven of endless  
rest, landing her on the mount of glory,  
with all her redeemed passengers in the  
harbor of peace. The fog of infidelity  
will be brushed away by the breezes of  
Gospel truth that will come sweeping  
from the throne of light, so that triumph  
and glory await the landing of the re-  
deemed family on the shores of immor-  
tality. Angels are looking forward to  
its grand accomplishment. On the  
stability of His nature and the wisdom  
of His designs rest the hopes of all pure  
intelligent beings. The history of the  
past, in Gospel triumphs, are sure  
pledges of future blessings. The Gospel  
carries its victories wherever it finds a  
lodgment. Its divinity shines forth  
wherever it enters. It most effectively  
dislodges the guilt of the heart, reno-  
vates all the moral powers of our na-  
ture, and re-establishes the reign of  
truth. It is the invisible energy of God,  
that gives life to all religious exercises.  
As the rays of light beaming from the  
solar orb give vitality and beauty to the  
lovely flower, so this effective influence  
from God gives new life to the languid  
energies of the soul, lifting from the  
mind all these clouds of darkness that  
sometimes deeply depress the spirits of  
the good. To this invisible, mighty in-  
fluence, the whole life of Christianity is  
sustained, while the subtle, fascinating  
influence of sin is held at bay in the  
heart of that man who fears God. But  
here we see through a glass darkly but  
when the clearer light of heaven de-  
scends into the purified spirit, unfolding  
higher conceptions of the Deity, more  
extended views of the mysteries of  
Creation, deeper insight into the plans  
of a loving God, then shall our hearts  
burst out in praise at the wonders of  
the manifold wisdom and goodness of  
God, "For in Thy light we shall see  
light." Then shall we see the glory of  
God unfolding itself in new forms of  
attractive beauty, developing new won-  
ders to our raptured vision. Then shall  
the expanding mind grasp deeper,  
clearer views of the glories of a future  
life, where every faculty of the human  
mind will be sweetly employed in the  
rapid advancement of that knowledge  
which brings new impulses of joy to  
the soaring spirit, as it dips deeper into  
the mysteries of human redemption.

## Immortal till his work is done.

General Gordon, remarks the Pres-  
byterian, belongs to this class, and his  
continued existence in the midst of  
perils is the evidence thereof. The  
hearts of good men and women have  
been distressed lest the delay of the  
English government to send succor  
would give the life of this grand old  
Christian hero to the dogs. But the  
latest intelligence assures us that up to  
the date of its departure from Khar-  
toum, he still lives. But so long a  
time must intervene between him and  
his tardy deliverers that we shall still  
be restless. There is no comfortable  
assurance in the ingratitude and tardi-  
ness of the British government, that  
God cares for His own while He has  
anything in the world for them to do.

We are glad that the last intelligence  
is but the repetition of the great feature,  
of his life, that he can hold his own  
against frightful odds, and that numbers  
before him are not synonymous with  
strength. He believes in that Book  
which declares that "one shall chase a  
thousand and two put ten thousand to  
flight." The prayers of Christians  
will be sent up both for his own sake  
and for what is greater than even his  
life—the cause of humanity, that he will  
be able to hold out until all the red  
tape may be exhausted in the British  
government and its army.

How shall we dare to behold the  
holy face that brought salvation to us,  
and we turned away and fell in love  
with death, and kissed deformity and  
sin?—Jeremy Taylor.