

Sunday Reading.

Thankfulness.

My God, I thank thee who hast made The earth so bright; So full of splendor and of joy, Beauty and light; So many glorious things are here, Noble and right! I thank thee, too, that thou hast made Joy to abound; So many gentle thoughts and deeds Circling us round, That in the darkest spot of earth Some love is found. I thank thee more that all our joy Is touched with pain; That shadows fall on brightest hours; That thorns remain; So that earth's bliss may be our guide, And not our chain. For thou who knowest, Lord, how soon Our weak heart clings, Hast given us joys, tender and true, Yet all with wings, So that we see gleaming on high, Diviner things! I thank thee, Lord, that thou hast kept The best in store; We have enough, yet not too much To long for more; A yearning for a deeper peace, Not known before. I thank thee, Lord, that here our souls, Though amply blest, Can never find, although they seek, A perfect rest— Nor ever shall, until they lean On Jesus' breast. —Adelaide Anne Procter.

The Might of Gentleness.

BY P. S. HENSON, D. D.

"Thy gentleness hath made me great," was the testimony of David in the day when he reviewed God's mercies, and gratefully considered how he had been delivered out of the hand of all his enemies. God's uttermost might is the might of his mercy. And this is not obscurely intimated in that wonderful transaction on the side of Horeb, when God drew nigh to Elijah in the day that he had fled from the wrath of Jezebel. And it was said to him; "Go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And behold the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice." And God was in that, and Elijah felt it; and so it was that when Elijah heard it, he reverently covered his face with his mantle, and stood to hear what the Lord would say. Elijah was pre-eminently the prophet of storm, and tempest, and earthquake, and fire. He needed to learn that there were some things mightier, though softer and silenter, than these. He needed to know that something more was needed to move men, and mould them, and lift them up into genuine nobility, than startling sights and terrifying sounds. And similarly God taught his servant Moses, when, after he had prayed with almost presumptuous earnestness: "O Lord, I beseech thee, show me thy glory," the Lord said in reply, "I will make all my goodness to pass before thee." And yet he saw but little of it; for the Lord said: "Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock; and it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by; and I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen." But God has reserved some better things for us, and so we read in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness and darkness, and tempest, and the voice of words, which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken unto them any more . . . but ye are come unto Mount Zion . . . and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Even so Mount Calvary, though it

be but the place of a skull, overtops, in moral sublimity and conquering might, the awful mountain in the wilderness, with all its terrific pomp. And now we behold not the "back parts" of the Lord; but "he who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ." And now, "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." "The law came by Moses; but grace and truth by Jesus Christ," and "what the law could not do because it was weak"—and weak in spite of all its terrors—weak, in some sense, because of its terrors—the Gospel does by the marvellous might of the mercy it uncovers; and this it is that not only breaks men's hearts, but melts them. And so it comes to pass that, lifted up by the sweet, attractive power of the cross, each one of us can gratefully join with David, as he cries: "Thy gentleness hath made me great." This is God's method of dealing with men; of growing great men and this is the method it becomes us to follow, especially in dealing with the young immortals that cluster about us in our classes and our homes. Benjamin West tells us "that the kiss of his mother made him a painter."

We are more and more persuaded that what our children need to make them realize the largest possibilities of being, is not berating, and belittling, and rough, hard usage, but words of cheer and hope, and love, winning confidence and awakening aspiration. It is possible, by trampling, to make the road-bed as hard as granite even though a while ago it was as generously susceptible as any soil that ever drank in the sunlight and the dew.

It cuts us to the heart to see a child being hammered into insensibility, by those who possibly mean well, but have utterly mistaken God's method. If there be any such incorrigible handers of the hammer anywhere round the church, let them be sent to the rolling mill to hammer all the week—it won't hurt the iron—but by all means keep them out of the Bible school on Sunday, unless it be to listen and learn—Baptist Teacher.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Concerning some of our Birds. BUFFALO, N. Y., July 23, 1884.

Dear Sir,— I inclose a few of the advanced sheets of my book about to appear, on the birds of Eastern North America, entitled "Our Birds in their Haunts." If they fare of any service to your pages, you are welcome to them. As the two birds noted are somewhat peculiar to Nova Scotia, and my finding the nest of Bicknell's Thrush on Seal Island was a discovery, it may be of interest to your readers to see the facts in your paper.

The article I enclose on Bricknell's Thrush, recently appeared in the Auk, printed at Cambridge, Mass.

I have been for some years pastor of the Emmanuel Baptist Church in this city.

Yours most truly, J. H. LANGILLE.

BICKNELL'S THRUSH.

Off the southwest end of Nova Scotia, opposite Yarmouth and Shelburne counties, are a large number of islands—one for every day in the year, they say. On leaving the harbor of the city of Yarmouth, off to the westward and well out to sea, are Green Island and Gannet Rock. Then come the Tusket Islands, many in number, and of varied size, form and appearance, some being partly cultivated, some wholly wooded, and the outermost almost as smooth as a lawn; these last are called the Bold Tusquets. Farthest out at sea, and very nearly on an extended line between the two counties mentioned, are the Mud Islands and Seal Island. These are almost entirely covered with a low growth of evergreens—black spruce and balsam fir. Except the Robin, the Song Sparrow, the Snow-bird, and a few Redstarts and winter Wrens, almost the only small land-birds breeding here are the Black-poll Warbler and Bicknell's Thrush—the last two being very abundant.

This Thrush was wholly new to me. My attention was first arrested by its call, or alarm note, which sounded like

cree-e-e-cep, or quee-a, or cree-e-e, on a rather high, fine key. It had some resemblance to the call of Wilson's Thrush, but was unmistakably different; and as Mr. Brewster has noted (in Vol viii, p. 12, Nuttall Bulletin), is very particularly different from the sharp liquid "pip, or peep" of the typical Olive-back. The song *tsidrea, tsidrea*, sometimes *tsidrea, rea, tsidrea*, or some other modulation of the same theme, is similar in tone to that of Wilson's Thrush, but more slender and wiry, and therefore not nearly so grand and musical. In the solitude of the evergreen islands, however, it is by no means an inferior song, the sibilant strokes of the voice being finely relieved by the more prolonged liquid vibrations. A careful examination satisfied me that the bird was Bicknell's Thrush (*Turdus alicia bicknelli*), lately identified in the Catskills and in the White Mountains, and named in honor of its discoverer. It was so abundant, and not particularly shy, for a Thrush, that I had the most ample opportunity for the study of its habits; and several specimens were secured and retained. Next to its lesser size, in structural peculiarity, is its slender depressed and finely carved bill, compared with which that of the typical Olive-back seems thick and clumsy. While singing which occurred throughout the day, but more especially in the evening twilight and early morning, the bird delighted to perch in the top of the evergreens, often on the very tip, where its bright brown figure with elevated head was quite conspicuous. On the ground, and in taking its food, its habits were precisely like those of other Thrushes.

To find the nest of this species was my great desideratum; and, though the birds were very numerous, it was by no means an easy task. Many an hour did I tread my way through almost impenetrable evergreen thickets, every step muffled on a dense carpet of moss, before I could secure my object. At last my search was rewarded by nests in considerable numbers, and all as nearly alike in location, structure and materials as it is possible for nests to be. A few feet from the ground and against the trunk of an evergreen tree, it was composed, externally, of various kinds of mosses, including a few fine sticks, weed-stems, and rootlets, and was lined with fine grasses well bleached; so that, outside, the nest was as green as a bunch of fresh mosses, and the inside was light-brown. The eggs, some 87x63, are light bluish-green, speckled with brown. About the Mud and Seal Islands, dense fogs prevail almost continually throughout the summer. This excessive moisture, so productive of mosses, causes the moss in the walls of the Thrushes' nests to grow; hence, the nests of previous years, well protected from the weather by the dense evergreens, become elegant moss-baskets, finely ornamented within and without with the living cryptogams. I saw a number of such, which looked as if they had grown *in situ* on the trees.

Some 700 or a little less in length, Bicknell's Thrush, as above found, is uniform deep olive-brown above; the sides of the white under parts being ashy-gray, and the sides of the neck and the upper part of the breast but slightly tinged with buff; while the neck and breast-spots are not so large as in the typical swainsons. To my eye the bird does not appear so large as the rest of the Thrushes.

THE HERMIT THRUSH.

One of the most charming items to a naturalist, visiting Northern New England or the Maritime Provinces in spring, is the song of the Hermit Thrush (*Turdus pallasi*). I reached Paradise, in the Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia, during the night, and, early the next morning climbed the South Mountain to listen to the birds. It was the beautiful morning of the second of June, 1883. As I passed through a swampy tract of alders, on nearing the foot of the mountain, I was greeted with the divine song of the Hermit. It had been familiar to me in the days of childhood and I had often recalled the unutterably sacred feelings it used to awaken; but never during the many years of my ornithological studies had I heard it, though I was quite familiar with the bird in its migrations. Stimulated by anticipation, and with a vague conception formed from the descriptions of authors, and the analogous songs of other Thrushes, I was prepared for the happiest impression. It was a moment never to be forgotten. The song begins with a note not unlike the vowel *O*, passing through several intervals of the musical scale in a smooth, upward slide and in a tone of indescribable melodiousness, and continues in a shake which gradually softens into silence, thus giving a most pleasing diminuendo. Put into syllables, it is well represented by Mr. Burroughs's phrase, "O-o-o, holy-holy, holy-holy." and I sometimes thought I heard it say, "O-o-o, seraph-seraph-seraph-seraph." Again I could discover no suggestion of articulate language, but only that soul-language of pure melody, which speaks directly to the heart without the ruder incumbrance of speech. With short pauses, this diminuendo is repeated any number

of times, but always on a different key and with a different modulation. Now it is on the main chords, now on the intermediates, and now on the most delicately chosen and inspiring chromatics. When pitched high, the shake is through a shorter interval, and in a weaker tone. The lower-toned modulations are always the sweetest. Sometimes the tones are so soft as to sound far away, though the bird is quite near; and again the notes are very penetrating and may be heard for quite a distance, especially when aided by the enchanting echoes of tall, dense forests. The tone of the melody is neither of flute, nor hautboy nor vox-humana, but something of inimitable sweetness, and never heard away from the fragrant arcades of the forest. "Spiritual serenity," or a refined, poetic, religious devotion, is indeed the sentiment of the song. He whose troubled spirit cannot be soothed or comforted, or whose religious feelings cannot be awakened by this song in twilight, must lack the full sense of hearing, or that inner sense of the soul which catches nature's most significant voices. It is a voice which should always direct us heavenward.

Notwithstanding its retiring habits and its celestial song, this bird is decidedly lowly and humble in its nidification. The nest is not placed in a bush or small tree, as is the case with the Wood Thrush and the Olive-back and its allies, nor on a pile of brush or dried leaves near the ground, after the manner of the Wilson; but it is sunken into the ground, among the forest plants or ferns, the rim being about level with the surface. It is somewhat bulky, and quite substantially built of dried weeds and grasses, slightly intermixed with moss. The lining is of similar but finer material, sometimes brightened with the glossy red or black capsule-stems of mosses. The eggs, of a clear bluish-green are about .85-.90x.62-.65.

The alarm-note, or breeding-call of this species, is a soft, *quee e-e-e-eh*, somewhat resembling the call of the Vireos. All in all, this is about the most boreal of the Thrushes, wintering in the Southern—and occasionally, it would seem, even in the Middle—States, it breeds from Northern New England far to the north. The variety *nanus* seems peculiar to the southern Rocky Mountains, as is *auduboni* to the regions beyond. The Hermit breeds in the high altitudes of the above mountains, even as far south as Colorado.

Early in April, the russet form of this Thrush is seen, frequently on the ground, among the faded leaves of our forests in Western New York, on its way to the north; and again in October, or perhaps as late as November, when the first snow falls, it appears again, quite commonly, on its way south. Like the rest of the Thrushes, it feeds on the ground, running briskly, and often dropping down from the branches, between the strains of its song, to pick up some favorite morsel, spied in the distance by those large, dark eyes, so common to the family.

For the Christian Messenger.

From Florida.

Dear Brother Editor,—

In travelling from Canning, Nova Scotia, to this place we passed over about two thousand miles of land and water, and find ourselves about sixteen degrees of latitude further south. We see here some things which are familiar and many things which are entirely new. Instead of wintry winds, and snow and ice, we here have the balmy air of June, with peach trees and roses blooming. The grape has been gathered, and the fig tree has cast its leaves, but the orange, the tangerine, the grape fruit and the lemon are flourishing in all their glory. The forests of pine, and oak and hickory are fast giving way to the orange grove. What the apple is among the fruits of the North, that the orange is among the fruits of the South. The orange is the great specialty here. But while some are making fortunes from the orange grove, others are coming to grief. It costs a good deal to complete a grove. To buy the land for from ten to one hundred dollars an acre, to clear it for twenty to forty dollars an acre, to plant it with trees costing from one to six dollars apiece, and then to wait till the returns come in, and live meanwhile out of pocket requires either a full purse or very skillful management in order to come out safe. Many fail in their calculations and have to sell at a great loss. But he who is able to buy a grove in these circumstances, or to plant one and wait for it to bear fruit, is also able to pocket the gain.

But many come here seeking health. This was our object. The attainment of this requires much caution. Some parts are full of malaria. But other parts are free from fever, have good water, a bracing atmosphere, and are healthy even to Northern constitutions, especially in the winter season. As to ourselves we cannot speak confidently as we have been here only a few days. But we can speak with regard to the

kindness we have experienced among the people here. We were sorry to leave the dear people of our ten congregations, most of whom must be destitute of preaching during our absence. But we find ourselves among kind friends here. Last Sabbath, by invitation, we visited the town of Starke, about forty miles north of this place. Here we found some old acquaintances from Queens County, Nova Scotia.—Brother Joseph Thomas and family. About seven years ago, I think, he came to this place for health. He found health. More than this, he has realized a competency; and better than all, Brother Thomas and family have been a blessing to the place where they live. He became the successful superintendent of the Union Sabbath School, formed at that time. Now he presides with marked efficiency over the Sabbath School of the Baptist Church, of which he and his family are members. He also enjoys the confidence of the whole community where he lives. His excellent wife is the daughter of Rev. Thomas Delong, of sainted memory, by whom the writer was baptized forty-two years ago, into the church in Kempt, Queens County. Mrs. F. and I will always cherish a pleasing and grateful remembrance of our visit to the kind friends in Starke. Bro. Thomas, some time since, stated in the *Christian Messenger* that the Baptist Church in Starke needed a pastor. This statement and others brought applications from a large number of ministers, and among them one from a distinguished D. D. in the Maritime Provinces. All these the good people of Starke would be glad to have residing among them, and they would there find a grand field of labor, and one of the healthiest spots in Florida, to live in. But the church has accepted the Rev. Dr. Talbert, of the West, to be their pastor. The Baptist cause has no doubt a bright future in this rising town, as also in every part of this flowery land.

Please direct my paper the next five months to Citra, Marion County, Florida, and oblige,

Yours truly, D. FREEMAN.

Nov. 20, 1884.

For the Christian Messenger. Patrons of Husbandry.

As I sit down to pen notes of a trip to a neighboring county, doubts arise as to whether what I saw, or engaged in, learned or thought, would be of interest to, or might possibly instruct, the readers of the *Messenger*. Saying, "Let the editor judge and be my conscience," I resolve to write.

Progress upon a W. & A. "passenger and freight train" is not excessively rapid it must be admitted, but two reflections serve to turn impatience into complacency—the longer time on the road the less to wait at the Junction—and we who have travelled in the good old coaching days should not grumble as we enjoy the comparative ease and comfort of a modern railway carriage.

Even the long dreary waiting at Windsor Junction come to an end. The distant whistle of "our train" terminates the trite jokes about the captain who never got out sight of land till he came here, Noah's ark ballast, etc., that belong to the place as much as do the boulders, and the goats, and the apple girls—put an end to schemes for whiling away time, that have taxed our inventive powers to the utmost, and by the time luggage and wraps are collected, the train is at the platform, in another moment we are "all aboard" and off.

On the way to Truro I get into conversation with a teacher and Normal School graduate, who purposes attending the Normal School again during the winter term. We talk about the responsibility resting upon the teaching profession, as being that which moulds the future nation. I have had reason to believe that our Normal School is at least as worthy to be called a teaching school. I mention this conviction, and that in my opinion such institutions should give all their attention to the theory and practice of education. My companion expresses agreement, and informs me that only one hour is devoted each day to purely "Normal," or Didactical instruction, the rest of the time to teaching.

On the platform of the Truro station the Executive Committee of the Maritime Provincial Grange exchange greetings, and hold their first session—rather a merry one—and proceed together to Pictou town. At the ferry station we are met by two members of the Executive Committee of Pictou Division Grange, who take us to the "Eureka," where, if we sought solid comfort, first-class catering and attendance, we might have well said "it is found." At 7.30 next morning we start in two double teams for Hodson, where we arrive after a drive of two hours and a half, and are taken to lunch at the residence of a

worthy brother and zealous patron' A further drive of two miles and a half and we are at Hodson Grange Hall, formerly a dwelling house, one room of which is fitted up for Grange meetings, and contains a huge old-fashioned fire place, in which, in rare old time style, a cheerful fire burns, not the least of the many enjoyable features of our session and visit, nor the least attractive of the decorations that adorn the room.

Many subjects demand our attention. Some affecting the interests of farmers and farming at large, others more or less exclusively pertain to the interests and welfare of Patrons and the Order of the Patrons of Husbandry in the Provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

Last Winter a bill having for its object the equitable adjustment of Municipal taxation in the Province of Nova Scotia was prepared by a committee of the Provincial Grange, submitted to and discussed at its session in Halifax, and also submitted to members of the Local Government and Legislature. As was of course to be expected, this bill was not quite satisfactory in some of its provisions, and was recommitted to be brought before the Grange at its next session. The matter has excited the Patrons of Pictou County in an especial manner, and "Pictou" Division Grange has prepared and published a draught of a bill based upon the principle of an income tax, and of requiring all assessable persons to submit annually a statement, duly attested upon oath, of property and income derived therefrom, which statements should form the basis of an equitable assessment.

After hearing from the Worthy Secretary, Hon. A. McQueen, formerly a member of the New Brunswick Government, an admirable synopsis of the assessment law of that province, the Executive Committee made arrangements for having the various proposals for assessment reform submitted to Division Granges in the jurisdiction, prior to final discussion by the Provincial Grange.

The advisability was discussed of so altering the Constitution as to render clergymen, school teachers, or professional educationists, editors and physicians eligible to membership, even if not in any sense or degree agriculturalists, provided that such persons have no interest conflicting with the objects or interests of the Order. While these classes have no legitimate interests at variance with the "Declaration of Principles" of the Order, to which its members are pledged, they have the education, the prestige, and the sphere of action and influence that render them peculiarly adapted for the dissemination of these principles.

The proposed amendment was placed upon the programme for discussion by the Provincial Grange.

Other Constitutional alterations were discussed which would affect the internal economy of the Order only.

It was decided to hold the next session of the Provincial Grange at Halifax during the month of February.

Plans and proposals for the extension of the Order and resuscitation of dormant Granges in the jurisdiction were carefully considered, and arrangements were made which it was hoped would accomplish these desirable objects.

Worthy Dominion Deputy, Brother George Creed, who is regarded as the "Father of the Order" in the Maritime Provinces, having organized over eighty subordinate granges, was highly eulogised by members of the committee and visitors present for his zeal, ability and success as an organizer.

Besides the members of the Executive Committee, there were present at its session, representatives from eight subordinate granges of Pictou County, who, by invitation, joined in the deliberations.

After passing a vote of thanks to the Patrons of Pictou County for kindly and profuse hospitality, the Committee adjourned *sine die*, and partook of a sumptuous repast prepared in the grange store room.

In the Evening "Hodson" Grange invited Bro. C. B. Black, Master of the Provincial Grange, to occupy the Master's office, and after the Grange was opened with the usual fourth degree ceremony, a most agreeable and profitable evening was spent with speeches, recitations, songs and readings.

Dr. E. S. Creed was first called upon, and spoke for nearly an hour on the subject of Agricultural Education:

- 1. Its economic importance and bearing upon agricultural production.
2. Rudimentary agricultural education in country district schools. Acquaintance with theory; the causes of effects in connection with occupation, and the reasons for and advantages of recommended operations and methods creates an interest in and love for farming which will keep our sons on the farm and make them successful farmers.
3. Admitting the great importance of