The Christian Watchman

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Original Contributions

For the Christian Watchman.

HORTON SKETCHES.

NO. 9.

BY GAMMA.

Years passed away, and the little band was scattered. Its members separated and went to different lands. But the blessed influence which had passed in their souls from this place, lived anew in them, and wrought again the same effects on others. For the spirit of God is a flame which passeth from one to another, and still on to another, to burn in each with undiminished brilliancy.

Marshall was called to be pastor over the church at that place which was the source of so many sacred memories; and had the happiness to be placed by duty in the very spot which was the dearest on earth to him. Blessings have attended his ministry to cheer his heart, and he has seen the clouds of affliction dispelled by the smile of God's countenance.

Edward Vincent, also, after passing through the necessary preparations, entered into the ministry, and laboured zealously in the cause of his Redeemer. His labours have been abundantly blessed, and the seals which have been given to his ministry, are sufficient to encourage greatly one who is even yet but a young man.

Tracy also remained faithful to his call, and now occupies a prominent position among the ministers of the place where he resides. He too, has been blessed in his labors, and possesses the affectionate admiration of a noble church. Each succeeding year widens for him the field of labor, and enlarges the prospect of usefulness.

John Vincent was early severed from them. Worn out by too severe study, he returned to his home to die. But the approach of death could not weaken the love which he felt for the birthplace of his soul, and the gloom of the grave only showed how bright was the heavenly faith within him, and hope—full of immortality. As sweetly as a child sinks into slumber, so he passed away, and in his latest moments his fond memories of the College mingled with his prospects of Heaven. He left behind him all the little savings of his lifetime to be given to Acadia College, as the only proof which he could show of his deep love for his dear Alma Mater.

But one scene more, and then I will close these sketches.

It is a cheerless autumnal day in Boston Harbor. The wind is raw and cold, the skies cloudy and threatening. Upon the quarter-deck of a ship a little knot of people is gathered whose sadness and silence are remarkable. The ship is going on a long and stormy voyage, and the little knot of people are the friends of Alfred Cummings who have come to bid him farewell.

For he is going as a missionary to Burmah.—The lofty thought had entered into his mind at the time of his conversion at Horton, and proved more than a fleeting fancy. It ripened into a fixed purpose, which grew stronger every year, and drew to itself all the energy of his nature. His wife is with him—a worthy companion in this enterprize. She too had been converted at the great revival, and was baptized at the same hour with the students. Her religion is strong enough to sustain her in this seperation from friends, and voluntary exile to far distant lands.

There is singing and prayer. It is a solemn occasion, for it is felt that this parting is for life. All are affected. There is an oppressive silence, only broken by mournful words.

At last comes the separation, and the word of farewell is given. The friends step over to another ship and stand looking from that, while the ship of Alfred Cummings moves slowly from the wharf. He stands waving his hand, his wife beside him, and the mute interchange of farewells continue till the signals are no longer seen.

Far up in the rigging of the ship at the wharf, George Cummings has climbed, and stands looking out at Alfred. The two brothers gaze earnestly at one another. Wider the space between them grew, which would become a boundless ocean to separate them on earth forever. The grief of this separation is too much even for the strong-hearted George Cummings. He yields to its force, and looking up at him, we see his form convulsed with emotion, and his eyes streaming with tears.

Thus Alfred Cummings went to the heathen. Eight years have passed away since then.

His voice has risen in Burmah and has proclaimed that gospel which is so dear to him. He labors there and blessings descend upon his efforts. He is a workman of whom we need not be ashamed, whose name gives glory to that College which through God, has made him what he is.

Here let these sketches come to a close. The period to which they refer was one of signal blessedness, but the outpouring of heavenly favor which then descended, was but one among many others which occurred from year to year and made Acadia College a monument of the faithfulness of God.

The old forms and faces have departed from the scene, the old teachers frequent the lecture rooms no longer, but they have left to their successors the same spirit that animated them, and the sacrifice of prayer is offered up as before. That Heavenly influence which has wrought such wonders here still lingers round the place and time does not lessen the humble confidence with which a revival is expected on each succeeding year.

For the Christian Watchman.

DIVINE AND HUMAN THOUGHTS.

No. I.

A true friend will not flatter us to our present injury, nor deceive us to our future ruin, but will speak the truth in love. Thus the inspired writers—the best benefactors of our race—everywhere, carefully divide the word of truth, and give each one his portion in due season. The Bible has a distinguished excellence above all human compositions, in that it speaks of human character and human actions as they really are. It calls things by their right names without the least flattery or disguise. It discovers to us the vanity of the world, and the fading nature of all its glories. It makes repeated discoveries of the nature of that eternity into which the learning and philosophy of the world has ever been unable to penetrate. It becomes then, every minister of this word, to weigh carefully the characters of men in the balances of truth, without courting the favour, or fearing the frowns of the world. The text, Isaiah LV. 8; asserts that our thoughts and ways differ widely from the thoughts and ways of God. But though the assertion of the text may in many respects be of universal application, (for even the children of God must necessarily view things in a vastly feebler light than they are seen in the mind of the Creator,) yet it was mainly designed to apply to the impenitent. For the children of God, in so far as they can become acquainted with the character and will of the Redeemer, delight to think the same thoughts and do the same things. And sometimes even the adversaries of religion when constrained to witness the splendors of its triumphs, find their understanding and their consciences to be on the side of truth, and are compelled to yield a kind of involuntary homage to the doctrines of the cross. From this state of mind, however, they generally soon recover themselves, and stand out again with prevailing resistance to the truth. They see things not in the same light in which they are viewed by the Creator of the world. They take their observation of things from the low grounds which they have selected, and view every object through a very distorted and imperfect medium. God's observation is taken from the throne of the universe, where the uncreated glories of heaven burn and dazzle around him with insufferable brightness. Nothing, however minute its formation, or remote in its location, can escape his vigilant and all-piercing eye. He sees all things distinctly in their real light. With one comprehensive glance he looks through immensity, and encompasses the great circle of eternity. All his works are perfectly known unto him from the beginning. Man's condition is in the dust. Here we are loaded with temptations, fettered with infirmities, and pressed down with iniquities, which bias our decisions, and cast a shade over our most exalted faculties. But in nothing do we so unhappily differ from the great Author of light, as in our estimate of the value of earthly things, and of that moral excellence which constitutes a soul fit for the heavenly felicity.—May I venture to solicit your attention to a subsequent article in which I propose to particularize several things in which this difference seems to consist.

Sigma.

EDINBURGH CORRESPONDENCE.

Edinburgh, Thursday Evg. March 7th 1861.

Dear Watchman:—

I have received several numbers of your paper, for which accept my warmest thanks. I should be happy to comply with your request, but Edinburgh, you know, is not the place for a newspaper correspondent. Though called in geographies the capital of Scotland, it is after all but a provincial town. A correspondent ought to reside in London if he wishes to write letters at all interesting. I will try, however, and do what I can for you.

I like the "Watchman" very much—feel proud that the Denomination in N. B. can publish such a paper. The old "Visitor" was a complete nonentity, and, as far as my experience goes, was entirely destitute of actual readers—now we have a periodical devoted to our interests superior in many respects to any other religious journal in the Provinces. I allude especially to the great amount, variety, and excellence of your original matter. Every old son of "Acadia" must like your paper also for the the way it stands up for Alma Mater. All the Hortonions here say—"Success to the Watchman."

A residence in Edinburgh is pleasant on the whole, though after one has exhausted the "lions"—has "done" Holyroad, and the Castle, and St. Giles—has walked with eager step up the corkscrew staircase in Nelson's column, has solemnly gazed at the royal statues in George St., admired Sir Walter Scott's monument in Prince's St., and wonders no longer at the two storied houses in High St., there remains little for him to do but settle down quietly at his work. He gradually gets into a dull routine, forms methodical habits, and leads a life somewhat monotonous.

I suppose New Brunswick still sleeps under its snowy blankets. Here spring has already begun. We have had an unusually stormy winter they say, but it was mild compared with those we have at home, and the season is never so pleasant. None of the splendid skating grounds; none of the jolly jingle of the sleigh bells is known here. To be sure there are any quantity of curling clubs, but I never could understand how sensible people can take such interest in so excessively stupid an employment.

Something more in accordance with my taste is a walk up Arthur's Seat, round the Salisbury Crags. What a glorious view is here presented to the eye. Below lies "Auld Reekie" sending up on either side its towns and stately palaces; beyond stretches the wide firth, and towering up afar in the distance rise the snowy summits of the Grampians. Surely this must be the finest scene in Britain. I do not wonder at Sir Walter Scott's passionate admiration of it. I had almost said it was alone worth a trip across the Atlantic.

Mr. and Mrs. Reave and Spurgeon have been visiting Edinburgh. The latter has been making a tour for the purpose of collecting funds in aid of his new Tabernacle at London. I have just returned from hearing him. He preached twice to day at the Music Hall. Tickets were one and two shillings each. Multitudes attended on both occasions.

I had formed a sort of idea that Mr. Spurgeon's powers had been too highly praised; and that his great celebrity was owing rather to a peculiarity of manner than to any extraordinary ability, but I was very much and very agreeably disappointed. His text this evening was from 2d. Corinthians 7: 5th. "For when we were come unto Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings; within were fears." I should like to give you a sketch of this fine discourse, but my time will not permit; and then when one has heard from the lips of such a man the fervent language of a heart warmed with deep enthusiasm, poured forth in tones of unequalled grace and sublimity, such trains of thought are aroused in his mind, such feelings animate his breast, that were he to attempt a description he must fail. As they say you must *see* Niagara or St. Peters to form any true conception of their grandeur, so one has to hear Spurgeon before he can rightly estimate the power of his eloquence. I can say only one thing,—all which has been said in his praise is perfectly correct. His features are admirably depicted in the portraits of him published in one of the American editions of his sermons. His gestures are few but very significant. In his voice, however, lies the secret of his success. I thought while listening to this magnificent oratory, of Garrick's wish to say "Oh!" as Whitefield said it.—of the reply Demosthenes gave to the three querries of a disciple.

All the newspapers have been filled with reports of the famous Yelverton case. Every one rejoices at the result of the trial. I should like to have been at Dublin when the people assembled in front of the heroine's house and heard her broken sentences of gratitude, to see their frantic enthusiasm, and share in their wild expressions of joy. You will see the account of the trial in the English journals, of course, so I shall only say in regard to this case that throughout the three kingdoms but one sentiment prevails, deep abhorrence of the brutality, hypocrisy, and villainy of Major Yelverton, and sympathy for the unmerited wrongs of her whom he wished to cast off forever. How painful to know that such men can be found among the proudest ranks of the proudest nation on earth. A fact that adds to the detestation in which Yelverton is held is that after abandoning his wife he contracted marriage a second time, thus placing another estimable lady in a horrible position. It is said he will be immediately expelled from his rank in the army, as he already has been from society.

A. P. J.

REVIEW.

We have received from Mr. Hall, of Colonial Book Store, "The Life of Trust," by John Mullar. This book has been favourably noticed, and its sentiments generally endorsed by the religious press, though many of the views advanced by Muller, find no expression in the creeds of the churches, and are not in harmony with the understood sentiments of Christians of any sect.

This book no doubt will accomplish much good in directing attention to themes which are not sufficiently considered, and in dispelling many unworthy or erroneous views respecting the operations of the Diety. The prevailing influences of this age are towards materialism. Nature is set up against Revelation. Natural science moulds our modern theology, and the teachings of Scripture are only cordially received when they exactly harmonize with the teachings of nature. Revelations respecting the nature, character, operations, and laws of God, are received with hesitation no doubt, unless proved to be true by other evidence than the word of God.—Even professing Christians are slow to believe God, unless fully warranted in doing so by their knowldge of his mode of dealing with men as regards their temporal affairs. Muller in his book protests against the imperfect and erroneous ideas respecting the laws and operations of the Diety which are so prevalent; he rebukes the selfishness and unbelief which professing Christians exhibit in their daily lives, and even in their efforts to extend religion. He believes and teaches that God is still the living God, the actual Governor of the universe, the Father of his people, a being on whom all in spite of appearances to the contrary, may safely rely for the supply of their temporal as well as their spiritual wants.

Muller is undoubtedly a remarkably pious man, his faith is sincere and strong; he is actuated by a desire to glorify God, and would not do a wrong or even doubtful act for any end however desirable. The example of such a man was greatly needed, and will no doubt exert a beneficial influence over all sincere christians who may read his book.

The result of his labors proves how much may be accomplished through a sincere desire to glorify God and a willingness to trust in him for success. Mr. Muller has during the last twenty five years preached the gospel with great success, circulated many thousand copies of the Holy Scriptures, and millions of pages of tracts. He has furnished large sums of money for poor saints at home, and for missionaries abroad. But his great work has been the erection of two Orphan Asylums, sufficiently large for the accomodation of a thousand orphans, and the maintainance of these unfortunates until of an age to provide for themselves.

But while we admire the character of the man and ascribe to the Divine blessing, the marvellous results which crowned his labors and progress, we are far from endorsing his peculiar sentiments. His character is evidently tinged with enthusiasm, and many of those views which he advances most earnestly are evidently erroneous.

His peculiar views sometimes prompted him to rashness in his conduct, and also produced a stoicism, which differed very materially from Christian resignation and submission.

His theory of communion with God, implies that the Deity apart from intimations given in his word or by his providence, conveys immediately into the mind directions as to duty, and knowledge of his will. These Divine communications can be distinguished from the ideas which unaided reason forms. Muller professes to be guided by these communications.

These views are unscriptural, and wherever they have prevailed have resulted in neglect of the Scriptures, and in pride, error, and fanaticism. The doctrine of Muller would authorize a claim to inspiration by each believer, as real and almost as extensive, as that which was made by prophets and apostles.

But the great object which Mr. Muller had in view in publishing his book, was to inform the world, that God had, (through him) given a convincing sign that he was the *living* God, the being whom all should trust for the supply of their wants. Mr. Muller affirms that such a sign has been presented in his Orphan Asylums, which have been erected and maintained without application to any one for money—but solely through faith in the living God.

Now we do not believe that any such sign is needed. We believe that the day is gone by when miracles were required to convince man of the truth of Christianity or any of his doctrines. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." The acknowledgement of the necessity of a new sign implies that God had not previously given sufficient evidence of the truthfulness of Christianity, and would justify selfishness and unbelief in all those who see nothing miraculous in the erection or maintainance of these Orphan Asylums.

But granting that Mr. Muller be correct in supposing that a sign was needed, we do not acknowledge that the Orphan Asylums are such a sign. They are no more evidences that God hears prayer, and watches over human affairs, than Acadia College or Sackville Academy, or any other institution which has been the object of sincere prayer. It is true that Mr. Muller has not availed himself of the ordinary means employed for the collection of funds, yet the information given respecting his plans, and the reports which were circulated respecting the extent and importance of his operations, were all admirably adapted to create confidence in his benevolence and intregity, and to call forth money from all who took an interest in the objects presented.—A few years ago in our own Province, Mr. Earl collected considerable sums of money without asking any individual for a farthing, but this could be accounted for, without supposing that a miracle had been wrought.

The Deity can of course accomplish his purpose without the use of means, but he has rarely chosen to do so. In the days of the Apostles he could have fed the poor saints in Jerusalem, as he fed Elijah in the wilderness, so also he could have supplied the wants of Paul, but instead of doing so, he caused the apostle of the gentiles to use appropriate means for the collection of money for the poor, and suffered him to labor with his own hands for the supply of his wants. It is for us to use every means which God has sanctioned, and when we have done all this, we will still feel the necessity of relying upon God for success. When our prayers have been offered, and appropriate means earnestly employed, and the end arrived at gained, we can without difficulty ascribe to God alone all the glory.

His doctrine on prayer is also erroneous. He teaches that our petitions will inevitably be answered, *if we only believe that they will be answered.* Now we are taught in the Scriptures that *submission to the will of the All Wise and infinitely Good God*, is an essential element in prayer; how then in harmony with such submission can we confidently believe that our special requests will all be answered, unless we have some conclusive evidence that they are in harmony with the infinitely wise purposes of Jehovah? This evidence we can only have by revelation through his word—or by special revelation to the individual spirit. When we ask for blessings which Scripture teaches us God can consistently grant, then we are to believe that our petition will be granted, but as respects blessings not specified in the word of God, we can only believe that God will grant them *if he sees fit to do so.*

For the Christian Watchman.

HOW SOON FORGOTTON.

Only a few years since, and some of the best friends we ever had were with us. It seemed as if it were almost impossible to exist and enjoy life without them. To mingle in their society, to be encouraged by their expressions of approbation, to be guided by their judgment, or to follow their example, afforded pleasure. But they have passed away, their place is filled by others. In the lonely grave yard they rest. Their name is seldom mentioned, and they are seldom thought of. And so it will be with ourselves, now active and energetic, full of life and vigor, hopes high, and expectations bright and pleasing. But the cloud lowers, the storm gathers, and the darkness of death does its work and we are no more, "The dead forgotton lie." But our Saviour still remembers us; he never forgets. The resurrection power of Jesus recalls to life and vigor, and it is a delightful thought that the dead in Christ will rise first. This mortal shall put on immortality, and death shall be swallowed up in life. K.

The Revival in the Orphan Asylum of Elberfeld.

The following letter dated Feb. 21st. from Mr. William Graham, to the London Patriot gives an account of the wonderful revival which has recently taken place in Elberfeld in Rhenish Prussia.

"I was informed by letter, a few days ago, that a wonderful work of revival had commenced in Elberfeld, among the Orphans in the Orphan House. I therefore determined to visit the place, and see for myself. I got the following facts from Mr. Grafe, Mr. Klugh, Pastor Krafft, and others. The movement began visibly on January 28 by a little girl weeping over her sins and longing for salvation; two others soon joined her, and the three went secretly into the clothes room for prayer; they were so sad, they said—so very sad because of their sins—and they wanted to come to Jesus, the friend of sinners. Four others soon joined them, and these seven formed the first prayer-meeting among the orphans. They were about twelve years of age, and one of them was a Roman Catholic. Soon after this four boys were found on the stairs that led down to the cellar, in great agony of mind, and one of them, in the bitterest agony lying on the stairs, and crying loudly to Jesus for pardon. They were thus arrested on their way to the cellar in order to find a quiet place for prayer. When they got to the cellar, they found four there before them, lying on their faces, on their knees, crying to the Lord for mercy. Their overseer came to them, and they altogether spent the entire night in prayer. This was the first prayer-meeting among the boys. They then asked for a room to meet in, where they might not be disturbed, which was granted to them. The next meeting numbered, not eight, but sixteen boys, and when they came into the room set apart for them they all simultaneously fell down on their knees, and began to cry out with awful vehemence and floods of tears for pardon, 'Lord, have mercy on me! Jesus, O Jesus, forgive my sins!' There was no order, no leader, in this strange meeting; but each, with incredible ardor, and as if he were alone, confessed his sins, and cried for mercy. This made a great noise, and the overseer heard it in a distant part of the house. He came directly, feeling somewhat irritated at such disorder, intending at once to put a stop to it. He entered,—but there his interference ended! He was astonished—he was overwhelmed with awe and wonder. He had never seen such earnestness, such agony, depicted on the human countenance. He felt he could do nothing, and that God alone could still the tumults of the terrified conscience. He remained, however, and gradually the tempest calmed; but not till they had made a full confession of all their sins even the most secret. This they did in the sight of God, unmasked, and as if no ear but God heard them, and it is not unlikely that this was really the case. Each was too earnest for himself to to think of the confessions of others. However this may be, these confessions of sin form one of the most extraordinary features of this strange movement. They appointed another meeting for prayer. When the time came round one of the awakened said to his companion, Boller, 'Won't you come with us to the meeting?' 'No, I won't,' said Boller, 'I don't wish to be saved! go you, if you like, but I shall go to bed!' And to bed he did go, but he became uneasy and restless, and when he heard the sound of prayer in the distance he rose and crept away to the meeting. As he entered they were just praying for him by name. This acted like electricity upon him, and he fell to the earth as if struck with a thunderbolt, in terrible agonies and also frightful convulsions. He remained speechless for many days; his face was dark and diabolical; his fingers bent together, his arms smote the ground with frightful vehemence, and his entire body writhed as if in mortal agonies. After five or six days he obtained perfect peace, and the full conviction of the Saviour's love.

"This case of Boller made a prodigious impression on the inmates of the Orphan House. It wrought like electricity on the whole of the 300 orphans; the prayer-meetings became full, and now came the marvellous power of God among them in such strength and vehemence, that in one night twenty-eight boys were carried into one room where they lay in the most awful bodily and mental agonies. They were all for a time perfectly speechless; they were stricken down to the ground by some invisible power; they were all crying out for pardon of their sins as long as voice remained with them. They all made the fullest confession of their sins, even the most secret, as if none but God were present; and finally, in all their agonies and dumbness they were perfectly conscious of what was going on about them. Many of them signed for slates, and wrote their wishes on them while unable to speak. While all this took place among the boys the girls rushed up to the great sleeping apartment and fell down in the agonies of conviction,—some in their beds, some before their beds, some flat on their faces on the floor, some in the corners of the room, but all with many tears and bitter cries, confessing their sins and crying to Jesus for mercy. It was a night of wonders! There was, indeed, much searching of hearts, and many precious souls were brought to the Lord. The whole house rang with strange voices, and the whole 300 were bent before the presence of the Lord like the trees of the forest before the storm.

"They knelt for prayer in the secret corners and under the stairs; they formed themselves into groups in the halls and alleys to sing Psalms. Some wept with joy over sin forgiven, and some roared in agony under the terrors of the wrath of God: the faces of the orphans, according to their states of mind and body, assumed all varieties of color and expression, some were dark and fallen; some awfully contorted as if in deadly pain; some overflowing with bitter tears; some changing gradually into calm repose; some showing the dawning smile of immortal hope, and not a few beaming with ecstacy of in-dwelling peace and joy. It is said of Stephen that the people looked upon his face as if it had been the face of an angel,' and certainly some of these orphan faces might, without much straining of the fancy, suggest the peace and brightness and the beauty of angels.

For the Christian Watchman.

AMONG THE DUTCHMEN.

Continued.

I remember a story I once heard of a traveller who, dining at a wayside Inn on the coast of Nova Scotia, and complaining of the want of cleanliness in the "cuisine" of the establishment, was answered by his indignant hostess,—"Humph, you need'nt complain of a trifle; every one must eat his peck of dirt before he dies." "Yes," said the traveller. "I know that very well, but I do not want to eat my peck all at once." Had I been so fortunate as to possess a knowledge of the Dutch tongue I might have made some such remark to mine host of the Hotel Oldewelt, Haarlemmer Straat, Amsterdam. Nevertheless I would on the present occasion take this opportunity to advise any future sojourner in the Northern Venice, should he be ignorant of Dutch, should he have any absurd fancy for reasonable cookery and reasonable cleanliness, combined with reasonable civility and a reasonable bill, to look not, save with the eye of horror, upon the aforesaid Inn.

What makes Amsterdam a more unpleasant place to visit than Rotterdam, the Hague, or any of the Southern towns, is that in the latter a knowledge of English or French is almost universal, whereas in the former city unless one is an adept in the language of signs he gets along with difficulty.

Amsterdam is built at the head of the Zuyder Zee, on a branch of the Amstel called by the Natives the IJ, by foreigners the Y, and pronounced, I believe, like our personal pronoun, first person singular and nominative case. It is eight or nine miles in circumferance, contains a quarter of a million people, has a vast trade, and formerly was but is'nt now the capital. It is well fortified. Walls surround the whole city, on every angle of which is placed a gigantic windmill. In this is seen the industrious nature of the people. In their vast hive there must be no drones. Mills are placed in the midst of their fortifications. Even the wind has to pay for the privilege of blowing.

This town is said to resemble the London of two hundred years ago. The houses are built with their gables facing the street. Their beams can also be seen between the rows of brick, and give the buildings a peculiar appearance. Unlike houses in other cities they may be said to be here constructed downwards. When a vacancy occurs, rafters are stretched across and fastened