

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

To the Comet.

Hail beautiful stranger! bursting on our view;
Mysterious unexpected visitant;
From realms of space, far, far beyond the reach
Of mortal sight, ceaseless, untiring, thou
Dost journey on, thy motion swifter far,
Than finite mind, incarnate, can conceive.
A more extensive traveller art thou,
Than planets, sun or stars that gem the sky.
They run their circling rounds in days, in years;
But centuries are thine. Worlds, countless worlds,
In swift succession thou dost pass upon
Thy way. And worlds, mayhap whose glorious days
Are made by brighter suns and cloudless nights
Illumined by far lovelier moons than ours,
Those suns and moons forever looking down
On radiant scenes as far superior
To earth's, as all her varied loveliness,
Her lights and shades, her towering mountains reet,
Sequestered lovely vales, broad rolling seas,
And all her deep, grand, solemnly sublime,
Her eye-attracting, soul inspiring scenes,
Are to the grains of sand on which we tread;
As we are travelling on the tide-washed shore.
And myriad bright, immortal eyes may gaze,
From those majestic orbs with wonder high,
Upon thee, stately stranger passing by.
Yes; eyes of piercing brilliancy may scan,
May penetrate thy structure; understand
Of what thou art composed, on tireless wing
From their ethereal homes may visit thee.
What art thou, wondrous wanderer? whose bright,
Celestial form, with august train we see
Reflected through your high, transparent dome.
Art thou a mass of living fire? or dark
And cold; except as thou receivest light
And heat from distant orbs of flame? and those
Receiving, is thy bosom warmed to life?
Do seasons roll round thy circumference vast?
Say hast thou Spring with youthful sweetness soft
Bright summer's matchless loveliness; Autumn's
Maturer grace; and Winter sternly cold?
Do storms convulse thy seas; sweep wildly on
Thy plains, or o'er thy mountains, with
Destructive force? Do thunders fiercely strike,
Or lightning scathe? Do flaming mountains shake
Thy structure with the tumult fiercely wild,
Which rages deep within; while seas of fire
Burst from their summits; rolling swiftly down;
Their course deep marking o'er the blooming vales
Below, with desolation wild and drear?
Do earthquakes terrible o'er rend thy plains;
And give whole cities with their priceless freight,
Of life, deep love, high hope, pure happiness,
And bright activity, one speedy, deep,
And awful burial? Answer but this,
Bright stranger! and the questions asked are solved.
Art thou inhabited by a depraved,
Rebellious race? If so, have angel bands
Been sent to thee, on messages of love,
From their Creator and exalted King?
Has he left his high throne, and robbed himself
In their mortality; then offered up
His life a willing, joyful sacrifice
For dark and fearful sin against himself?
Or art thou peopled by unnumbered crowds
Of holy beings? who know nought of sin,
Except dark rumours from this world of ours.
Then death has never entered thy domains,
To make their blissful number less. Our woes
On woes, and ills of every varied name,
Are all to them unknown. And thine are skies,
Where comes no shadow of a passing cloud;
Thy bloom is endless; flowers are fadeless; and
Thy landscapes swell before immortal eyes;
Like Eden fresh from its Creator's hand.
Thy scenes of beauty ever fresh and fair,
Are all one burst of harmony; with their
Melodious songs of "wonder, love and praise."
But one high theme we gladly hymn on earth
Those who have never sinned have never sung
That theme—redeeming love.

These questions asked,
I wait in vain, in silent majesty,
With spirit speed, not even a moment's pause
Thou journeyest on; thou art thy mystic train;
With splendour lighting our nocturnal sky,
And deign'st my curious spirit no reply.
We ask the science, noble and sublime,
Which searches far and wide the universe
Of God; which bringeth hidden things to light;
And deep philosophy, alike, in vain.

Where thou hast been, and where the limits of
Thy circuit; he alone who, marked thy course,
Whose power has given the mighty impulse, which
Has sent thee whirling through the voids of space;
With swift and inconceivable, to aught
Save high immortal powers; doth clearly know.
Since thou hast looked upon our earth before,
The myriad, eager, wondering eyes which then
With admiration gazed upon thy bright
And beautiful form; "have to the dust gone down."
A modern generation now to whom
Thou stranger art; gaze, wonder and inquire.
Ere thou dost reach the farthest limits of
Thy long ellipse, then com'st again within
Our visual range, the myriad beings who
O'er the broad surface of our changeful earth,
Are all arranged; their habitations planned;
And who with wondering eyes this year have gazed,
Upon thee, august pilgrim of the sky,
Will all have passed away, and myriads more
Will enter, not their part upon the stage
Of life; then bid farewell to earth and all
Its scenes; its lights and shades; its sorrows and
Its joys; its mould'ring wrapped in death's cold sleep;
And eyes, strange eyes who ne'er saw thee before,
Will gaze upon thee, wonder and adore.

Now passed from view hast thou no lesson given?
Yes, for in all around, above, are heard
Deep, earnest voices; when we pause to heed,
Our orbit marked, the blest moment given,
May we move swiftly in the path to heaven,
And steadily our onward, upward way

Pursue; lured from our course by no soft voice
Of syren pleasure, or of earthly gain,
Like thee obedient to our Maker's voice,
We would as strangers here, still journey on,
And feel this world no place of rest for us.
Attracted by the mighty force of that
All vivifying sun, which lights your sphere
Beyond conception bright, we hasten on
Through clouds and darkness; mists and vapors dense;
With gleams of sunshine ever and anon [gloom;
Bright bursting through the dark and threatening
Until we reach the goal. And there in rays
Of glory bask, in the deep splendours lost,
E'en thou no beauty or no glory owns,
But all, all his from whom our radiance came.

August 17th.

Miscellaneous.

A Sad Prayer-Meeting.

The prayer-meeting here referred to has not yet been held. It may be some time before it takes place. The account of it may be found in the sixth chapter of Revelation: "And they said to the mountains and rocks. Fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." This is the prayer that will be offered.

And there will be a great multitude at that meeting. Many prayer-meetings are very thin. Few are present. Not so the one before us; millions will be there. Distinguished persons will be present; those who usually have little or nothing to do with prayer-meetings. But they will come to this meeting. We have express mention of this, "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the mighty men, said, 'Fall on us,' &c. They may never have been in a meeting where there was prayer before. But they cannot stay away from this.

There will be great emotion in that prayer-meeting. It will not be dull, and drowsy, and formal. There will be the deepest feeling. Men must have the most terrible emotions, when they are led to ask the rocks and mountains to fall on them. There will be no stupidity in that meeting.

They will all pray. Some prayer-meetings have but two or three that take part in them. Not so in this meeting. Not only the great men shall pray, but "every bondman and every freeman." All will pray. And what a prayer! They so illy treated the blessed God here, that they now despair of any mercy. Hence the dreadful prayer before us, "Hide us from the face of him who sitteth on the throne." All who persist in treating Christ unworthily are on the way to this meeting. They restrain prayer now, but they will pray at this meeting.

Reader, if you have little to do with prayer in this world—if no domestic or secret altar is fragrant with the incense of your supplications, you are certainly on your way to this meeting. If you do not pray here, you assuredly will pray there.

Be persuaded to avoid that meeting. There will be enough there without you. Let the blessed duty of prayer be your joy here from day to day. Love it. Watch it. Persevere in it. In faith and humility carry it on. Let nothing but death stop you. Then, while others pray for the rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, you will sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that has redeemed me unto God by his blood."

How French Jesuits convert the Chinese.

We read in the *Siecle*:—"We have received No. 80 of vol. xiii. of the *Annales de la Sainte Enfance*. The association by which this work is published, has for its object the salvation of youthful Chinese, and from not more than 25 dioceses is obtained in the year 1860 the sum of 487,390 francs. Here is a specimen of the manner in which young Chinese are baptized without the knowledge of their parents:—Manual, one of the persons who baptized for me, was one day on the look-out for a favourable opportunity of exercising his office. A Pagan, perceiving him, said, 'You are a physician, come quickly, my child is dying.' Manual hastened to the house indicated; a child whose body was much swollen,

was shown to him. He examined the child, and put his hand on its forehead. 'There,' said he, 'is the seat of the malady. The forehead is much heated, and must be refreshed. Bring a little water! He touched the forehead again. 'Yes,' said he, 'a little water is required;' and he baptized the child without any one knowing what he was doing."

The head of the child is very feverish,' he said afterwards; 'the malady is grave, I will return to-morrow.' The next day he went to the house, but the little angel was already in heaven. Further on we read:—A couple of idolaters attending our schools had a child who learned some prayers, and heard speak of the virtue of the cross. One day the father having something the matter with his hand, the child made secretly the sign of the cross on it, and an almost instantaneous cure took place—an event which greatly excited the child's confidence in that adorable symbol. On another occasion, when his little sister, aged about four years, had an attack of fever, he resolved to cure her as he had done his father. He accordingly took her to a corner, made her recite the *Pater* and the *Ave*, accompanied by the sign of the cross, and the little girl was immediately cured! Is it not to be lamented that religious associations, whether authorized or not, should publish such tales? Is that manner becoming of administering the sacrament of baptism which is described?"

[What a pity the writer does not go to the Bible, to learn the true nature of Baptism, and its proper subjects and mode of administration.—E. C. M.]

Anecdotes of Stephen Girard.

Stephen Girard was the sole judge of his beneficence. If rightly approached, he would give largely; but if dictated to or treated rudely, he would not give at all. Samuel Coates, one of the old Friends, knew how to manage Girard, while many who sought aid from him were unsuccessful. Mr. Coates was one of the managers of the "Pennsylvania Hospital," which was then much in want of funds. He undertook to get a donation from Mr. Girard, and meeting him in the street, stated his object. Mr. Girard asked him to come to him the next morning. Mr. Coates, called, and found Girard at breakfast. He asked him to take some, which Mr. Coates did. After breakfast, Mr. Coates said, "Well, Mr. Girard, we will proceed to business." "Well, what have you come for, Samuel?" said Mr. Girard. "Just what thee pleases, Stephen," replied Mr. Coates. Girard drew a check for \$2,000, which Mr. Coates put in his pocket without looking at it. "What! you do not look at the check I gave you?" said Mr. Girard. "No, beggars must not be choosers, Stephen," said Mr. Coates. "Hand me back again the check I gave you," demanded Girard. "No, no, Stephen—a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," said Mr. Coates. Girard said, "you have caught me on the right footing." He then drew a check for \$5,000, and presented it to Mr. Coates, observing, "Will you now look at it?" "Well, to please thee, Stephen, I will," said Mr. Coates. "Now give me back the first check," demanded Mr. Girard—which was accordingly done.

An old Quaker related to me the following: A man who had just set up in the hardware business, and who had been a clerk where Girard had traded, applied to him for a share of his patronage. Girard bought of him, and when he brought in the bill, found fault, and marked down the prices. "Casks of nails," said he, "which I was offered so and so, and you must take it off." "I can't do it," said the young merchant. "You must do it," said Girard. "I cannot and will not," said the merchant. Girard bolted out of the door, apparently in a rage, but soon after sent a check for the whole bill. The young man began to relent, and say to himself, "Perhaps he was offered them at that price. But it is all over now; I am sorry I did not reduce the bill, and get it out of him on something else. His trade would have been worth a great deal to me." By and by Girard came again and gave him another job. The young man was very

courteous, and said, "I was almost sorry I did not reduce your former bill." "Reduce a bill!" said Girard, "had you done it, I would never have traded with you again. I meant to see if you had cheated me."

"THE PRECIOUS NAME."—A young brother said that in the whole course of his religious experience, which extended over a period of years, he never felt the name of Jesus more precious than now. It was the sweetest music to him, and while he was musing upon the theme, he thought of a verse of one of Wesley's hymns:

"Jesus, the name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrow cease,
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life and health and peace."

How many men, said he, do we meet who are living, but whose physical constitutions are diseased. There is a wide difference between life and health. Although a sinner when converted is reconciled to God, yet the work of grace has only commenced, or in other words, he is put in such a condition as that, by a diligent use of his privileges, he may become spiritually healthy, and have the seeds of sin entirely removed. It is the Christian's privilege to have spiritual vigor and vitality, and also to have the peace that passeth all understanding. Our Savior says, "My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." Those scientific men who have made the currents of the ocean their particular study, tell us that while waves are tossing about wildly and all is commotion on the surface, in the depths below there is a great calm. Just so it is with the Christian, who enjoys uninterrupted peace in the midst of the turmoil and confusion of the world.—*Words in the Prayer Meeting.*

A Pugnacious Minister.

We have never shared in the admiration felt by many for Peter Cartwright, the hardy Methodist pioneer in the western prairies. He believed in the use of carnal weapons of war, and when with rough characters would assert his mastery over them by simple physical strength and daring. The following incident, resting on good authority, is very like one told of a North Carolina pioneer, who "pommelled grace" into a profane and fighting blacksmith:

One day on approaching the ferry across the river Illinois, he heard the ferryman swearing terribly at the sermon of Peter Cartwright, and threatening that if ever he had to ferry the preacher across, and knew him, he would drown him in the river. Peter, unrecognized, said to the ferryman:

"Stranger, I want you to put me across."

"Wait till I am ready," said the ferryman, and pursued his conversation and strictures upon Peter Cartwright. Having finished, he turned to Peter and said:

"Now I'll put you across."

On reaching the middle of the stream, Peter threw his horse's bridle over a stake in the boat, and told the ferryman to let go his pole.

"What for," asked the ferryman.

"Well, you've just been using my name improperly like; and said if I came this way you would drown me. Now you've got a chance."

"Is your name Peter Cartwright?" asked the ferryman.

"My name is Peter Cartwright."

Instantly the ferryman seized the preacher, but he did not know Peter's strength; for Peter instantly seized the ferryman; one hand on the nape of his neck, and the other on the seat of his trousers, and plunged him in the water, saying: "I baptize thee (splash) in the name of the devil, whose thou art."

Then lifted him up, Peter added:

"Did you ever pray?"

"No."

"Then it is time you did."

"Never will," answered the ferryman.

Splash! splash! and the ferryman is in the depths again.

"Will you pray now?" asked Peter.

The gasping victim shouted: "I'll do anything you bid me."

"Then follow me; Our Father which art in