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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

We are passing away.

We are passing away,
Like the sunset clouds at the close of day,
Like the stars that shine on the brow of night,
Like the silvery beams of the soft moon light,
Like the changing hues of the dawning grey,
We are passing away.

We are passing away,
To the solemn hours of the judgment day,
Shall we, in the kingdom of bliss untold,
With immortal fingers touch harps of gold?
Ah! we may not know—and we can but say,
We are passing away.

We are passing away,
Like the loved ones gone up the shining way;
The lips we have kissed have lost their bloom,
The forms we have pressed, through the dreary tomb
Have entered the portals of endless day,
They have passed away.

We are passing away,
And where we are passing, O, who can say?
To a realm of glory, or world of woe?
To chant the songs which the angels know,
Or to mingle our voice with despairing cries,
Where no star of Hope on our gloom can rise?
To a night of darkness, or glorious day,
We are passing away.

SARAH LIZZIE HOLMES.

Selections.

[From the Canadian Baptist.]

Stray Leaves.—No. 2.

A CYPRESS LEAF.

"We all do fade as a leaf." Yes! Death is certain. There is nothing surer—all must die. That lovely infant in its mother's arms, with innocence stamped on its beautiful form, who now, by its joyous carolling, makes its mother's heart throb with pleasure—that darling one must die. That fair maiden, in the first blush of womanhood, with elasticity in her step, brightness in her eye, gladness on her countenance, whose anticipations are bright and joyous—she, too, must die. That stalwart youth, with ruddy cheek, who glories in his muscular power, feels strong enough to grapple with the world's stormy elements, must yield the palm of strength to the gaunt enemy—and die. The kind matron, the energetic man, the loving mother, the tender father—must die. The sunny curl and the hoary hair must lie in the tomb. The smooth, fair brow of youth, and the wrinkled one of age, the straight and agile figure, and the bent and decrepit form, must equally embrace the dust. And what then? A question of import. The Apostle resolves it—"After this, the judgment."

Are you, my reader, prepared to meet these solemn issues—death and judgment? If you are a Christian, you will answer, "Yes! through Christ that died and rose again for our justification—He will carry me safely through." If you are not a Christian, you are probably a procrastinator, for I apprehend that few others than Christians, and those who intend at sometime or other to be Christians, read the *Baptist*. Well, now, my procrastinating friend, let me have a word with you. The hour of death will positively come. It may come soon. What will you do then without mercy? You have listened repeatedly to the earnest entreaties and solemn warnings enunciated from the sacred desk—you have shed tears under the sound of the gospel—your friends hoped they were tears of contrition—you have quailed under the denunciatory threatenings of God's truth—you have promised again and again that you would delay no longer, and yet you are undecided, still halting, still quieting your conscience with promises. Go with me to the chamber of death. On the bed lies an emaciated figure, once beautiful, once gay, once of fair promise, but her spirit has fled—her weeping friends stand round her cold corpse and mourn. She, in her lifetime, regularly attended the house of God—often wept while the minister spoke of righteousness and coming judgment—often promised she would seek the Lord; but, alas! her goodness was like the morning cloud, and the early dew,

it soon passed away, and now, having neglected all the precious seasons given her, she is dead. She died exclaiming, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved."

But, I am called to see a sick person. Go with me, and on the way I will tell you who and what he is. His name is Charles H—. He is a man doing a large business, and is apparently well off for this world. I wonder what is the matter with him. He has always been a very healthy man. I feel very much interested in him, for he has been one of my most attentive hearers, and has been very kind to me personally. The only thing that troubles me in his case is the fact that he is a procrastinator. Poor Charles, I hope he will not put off preparation till it is too late. But here we are at his house. We enter. His wife tells us, with tears, that his disease is congestion of the lungs, and desires me to inform him that the Doctor gives no hope of recovery. "How do you feel to-day, Charles?" "Badly," he gasps. "Do you feel prepared for death, my friend?" "Death! No, Sir! Oh that I was, but I'll attend to it as soon as I get better; I'll put it off no longer than that, but I can't think of anything else now than my pain." "But, alas! Charles, it is my painful duty to tell you that you cannot live—you will not recover." He starts up in bed, and wildly exclaims, "Die! die! I can't die—I must not die—I am not ready to die! This is a painful scene, we will withdraw. Poor Charles H—, he was an attentive hearer, a friend to his minister, and intended to give his heart to God, but he died, I fear, without hope. I never think of him without being sad."

But let us visit one other place. It is the humble cot of a poor disciple. In early life he gave himself to God, and then to his church, according to his word. He has had to struggle hard with poverty and affliction; he has drank many bitter draughts, but he remembered who it was that held the cup. He has taken many nauseous doses, but he knew who was the Compounder. He has been a kind husband, a good father, and a devoted Christian. Regular at prayer-meeting and active in it—not a mere talker either—but a worker—a doer, zealous, full of faith, and deeply anxious for the welfare of Zion and the conversion of souls around him. But the time is come for his departure; we gather around his bed, in company with his loved ones, and hear him bid his farewell. His face beams with delight, as he exclaims:—"My weeping relations, my brethren, my friends, whose souls are entwined with my own, Adieu! for the present, my spirit ascends. Where friendship immortal is known."

"Jesus waits—I come. I come!" He falls asleep. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." "May my last end be like his."

Reader, my procrastinating friend, these scenes are from actual life. Be warned by them. I exhort you—

"Be wise to-day; 'tis madness to defer:
Next day the fatal precedent will plead;
Thus on, till wisdom is pushed out of life.
Procrastination is the thief of time;
Year after year it steals, till all are fled,
And to the mercies of a moment leaves
The vast concerns of an eternal scene."

CORSE.

Crooked things in our Churches.

I fear, as some ministers say, that I shall "weary your patience," if I do not hasten along more rapidly with my description of "crooked things," which have prevented prosperity in many of our churches. I find that I have notes, sketching the character of two more deacons, but I shall not attempt to furnish anything from those notes at present. It is proper to say, however, that one of them was called deacon Slack, and his name was an index to his character. And he was slack about everything. He managed affairs for the church, just as he managed his own affairs, and that was poorly enough. Yes, indeed, it was, as a half score of ministers can testify. Being the senior deacon, and withal a little jealous of his rights, he had many things committed to him, some which he never performed, and others were performed at so late a period, and in so slack a manner, that they might as well have been left undone. The

church suffered, and the minister suffered, and the minister's family suffered, in consequence of the unpardonable slackness of deacon Slack. And the last I heard was that the minister had left, the meeting-house was closed, and even the prayer-meetings were almost entirely given up.

Now, if it was not such a very delicate subject, I should say something about some wives of deacons, whose conduct has been a little crooked, and, in several instances, hindered the prosperity of the churches to which they belonged. But I must pass very lightly and carefully here, as I did when I spoke of ministers' wives. I did not say half I thought then, and do not suppose I shall now. For it is my settled purpose to get through the world, if possible, without having any quarrel with the female part of mankind. I hope, therefore, that I shall commit no offence, when I say that I have been acquainted with some deacons, whose wives were not a particle more lovely, or amiable, or discreet, or prudent, or quiet, or religious, than they ought to be. Beyond that, I am not going to commit myself at present, so far as my own observation extends. But I have been informed, on "reliable authority," that there have been in some of our churches, wives of deacons who have made matters very uncomfortable for ministers and their families. It has been told me that some of this class were "busybodies" in things which did not immediately concern them, that they assumed the right of determining some matters belonging to others, and were most indiscreet in their remarks about the affairs of the church and the members composing it, and kept up a kind of disturbance generally. I might be more particular in specifying individual cases, but as "the better part of valor is discretion," it may not be advisable. I shall, however, be excused for referring briefly to one or two. In a church located in a certain town in New England, there was, for many years, an usual degree of prosperity. The ministers and deacons were good men, and worked peaceably together for the advancement of the common cause. But in process of time they passed away, and others were elected to fill their places. The good men thus chosen were happily united, and the church confided in their judgment and piety. But it so happened that the wife of one of the deacons was disposed to believe that some things in connection with the church could be improved. She was a woman of unusual energy and strength of will, and not very highly "adorned with a meek and quiet spirit." For some reason, no matter what, she took a dislike to the minister and his family, and was determined that he should leave. Her husband was a kind and noble man, ready to coincide with the views of his wife, when convinced that she was right, but without such conviction he still held to his own opinions, though they might be in opposition to hers. In this case, he was a true friend to the minister, "esteemed him highly for his work's sake," and could see no good reason why all the tender relations between him and his people should be broken up. His wife, finding that she could not move him, sought to prejudice the mind of another deacon, and win him to the adoption of her views. By degrees she presented the subject as she had opportunity, making only insinuations at first, then drawing comparisons between their minister and another, then boldly avowing her opinions and grievances. This deacon, though a good man, either because he was of a more yielding disposition than the other, or because he did not fully understand the design of the attacks upon the pastor, listened to these insinuations and complaints. Ere long, the pastor noticed a little coldness and reserve on the part of that deacon. This became more and more apparent, until it was evident that the deacon was inclined to the opinion that the usefulness of the minister in that place was about at an end. In the meantime the visits of that determined woman to his house became more and more frequent:—they discussed the subject of the pastor's relation often, and gradually persuaded a few others to agree with them. A division arose the abused minister left; his friends were aggrieved; the church was dishonoured in the estimation of the community; the deacon's wife who originated the disturbance was hated and despised; the deacon who took sides with her

so, unreasonably, lost influence; and days of darkness succeeded, from which the church has not yet emerged, and will not, probably, during this generation. This is by no means a solitary case. But I cannot write more now, lest I "weary the patience" of your readers. See 1 Timothy iii. 11.

BUNYAN in *Zion's Advocate*.

"It is all my own."

A man of wealth, living a stranger to religion and its ordinances, was walking and holding this soliloquy: "What a happy man I am! I have an ample fortune, an affectionate wife, and everything to make me comfortable; and what is more, I am indebted to no one for it; I have made it myself; I am independent of every one; it is all my own. Many persons are under obligations here and there, but I am not. It is all my own." At that instant a sudden shower drove him to the nearest church. He went in, and just at that moment, the minister rose and read his text: "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." "What," said he to himself, "this is a strange doctrine. But it does not apply to me; I am my own, and all I have is my own." The course of the sermon exposed his obligations to God, and issued in totally revolutionizing his views and feelings.

God governs barns.

A wealthy capitalist, who had made the most of his own fortune, and what was harder, taken care of it, gives the following as the secret of his success: "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses burst forth with new wine." The philosophy of the matter is simply this, *God governs barns*. We are willing to allow that he governs nations, and guides parliaments, and directs battle-fields. But Solomon, moreover, knew that He presides over wheat-fields, stables, and wine-presses. We acknowledge that God is to be worshipped in churches with prayers and psalms; but Solomon will have it that He is to be praised also with thrashing implements and grain wagons. Reader, do you act as if you agreed with him?

Had to say it.

The late eloquent and learned Dr. Rice excelled in the fervor and unction of his prayers. In his congregation was an aged negro, very pious and very excitable, who would always shout "Amen!" when any petition was put up which touched his feelings. This at length became quite annoying to Dr. Rice, especially as Caesar's hearty amens not unfrequently filled the room. Finally, the Doctor told him that his shouts disturbed the congregation, who were not accustomed to them; and if he could restrain them it would be a great favor. The good negro was shocked to learn that he had disturbed any one, and faithfully promised silence in future. But it happened the very next Sunday that the Doctor was unusually earnest in his supplications to the throne of grace. He fairly "wrestled in prayer." In the gallery, as usual, sat Caesar, writhing sympathetically with the emotion which he could not repress and would not utter. More and more fervent waxed the prayer—deeper and deeper grew Caesar's emotions—more and more violent his struggles to avoid giving vocal utterance to them. Nature at last could hold out no longer. "Amen!" shouted Caesar. "Massa Rice, I had to say it or burst."

The tide of Intemperance.

That tide is flowing still. It surges up against the walls of prisons, carrying on each wave a hundred drowned bodies of what had once been men, and stranding them on the dungeon floor. It sounds the wail of its remorseless rush around our workhouses, and as each billow ebbs again, it leaves a freight of paupers high and dry upon the parish. It rolls up the hospital door, and flings its shoal of premature emaciated on an untimely bed.