

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL & GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business : fervent in spirit."

NEW SERIES.
Vol. IX. No. 37.

HALIFAX, N. S., WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1864.

WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XXVIII. No. 37.

Poetry.

GRADATIM.

Heaven is not reached at a single bound ;
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit, round by round.

I count this thing to be grandly true :
That a noble deed is a step toward God,—
Lifting the soul from the common sod
To a purer air and a broader view.

We rise by the things that are under feet ;
By what we have mastered of good and gain ;
By the pride deposed and the passion slain,
And the vanquished ill that we hourly meet.

We hope, we resolve, we aspire, we trust,
When the morning calls us to life and light,
But our hearts grow weary, and ere the night,
Our lives are trailing in sordid dust.

We hope, we resolve, we aspire, we pray,
And we think that we mount the air on wings
Beyond the recall of sensual things,
While our feet still cling to the heavy clay.

Wings for the angels, but feet for the men !
We may borrow the wings to find the way—
We may hope and resolve, and aspire and pray ;
But our feet must rise, or we fall again.

Only in dreams is a ladder thrown
From the weary earth to the sapphire walls ;
But the dreams depart, and the vision falls,
And the sleeper wakes on his pillow of stone.

Heaven is not reached at a single bound ;
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit round by round.

J. G. HOLLAND.

Miscellaneous.

The Sermon on Baptismal Regeneration by Rev. C. H. Spurgeon republished in our two last issues, has called forth from various parties in England, quite a number of what have professed to be replies. Some of these we have seen, but none of them touch the real point at issue—Are infants regenerated by baptism ? or, Does the Bible encourage any such belief ? One letter has however been published by the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel reproving Mr. Spurgeon for the harshness of his judgment upon evangelical clergymen. As we have placed their accusation before our readers we feel that it is but fair that we should also let them see this defence ; especially as it is from the pen of one who has sacrificed so much that he might leave their ranks, so as to enable him to act out his convictions on this very point.

THE HON. AND REV. BAPTIST NOEL ON MR. SPURGEON'S SERMON.

The following is the "Letter to the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon respecting his attack upon the Evangelical ministers of the church of England."

"My dear Friend,—In your sermon on baptismal regeneration you say, 'For clergymen to swear or say that they give their solemn assent and consent to what they do not believe, is one of the grossest pieces of immorality perpetrated in England ; and is pestilential in its influence, since it directly teaches men to lie whenever it seems necessary to do so, in order to get a living, &c. Those are honest Churchmen in this matter who, subscribing to the Prayer-book, believe in baptismal regeneration, and preach it plainly. If men believe baptism works regeneration, let them say so ; but if they do not so believe it in their hearts, and yet subscribe, and, yet more, get their livings by subscribing to words asserting it, let them find congenial associates among men who can equivocate and shuffle ; for honest men will neither ask or accept their friendship.'

"As a member of the Evangelical Alliance, you have agreed to the following resolution :—That when required by conscience to assert or defend any views or principles

wherein they differ from Christian brethren who agree with them in vital truths, the members of this Alliance will aim earnestly, by the help of the Holy Spirit, to avoid all rash and groundless insinuations, personal imputations, or irritating allusions ; and to maintain the meekness and gentleness of Christ, by speaking the truth only in love.' To me your 'personal imputations' appear to be a violation of that rule.

"But I rather ask you to consider whether they are consistent with the word and will of Christ. Those whom you condemn preach Him, and maintain His authority in the world. Their lives are generally regulated by the law of God ; in all their ordinary duties they are honourable and conscientious ; they manifest a brotherly feeling to us, for which they are condemned by many in their own body ; and, above all, their ministry is blessed by God the Spirit to the conversion of souls. To men of this character ought you to impute dishonesty, immorality, and falsehood, without very clear proof ? In the time of the Apostles God cut off Ananias for a solemn lie : does He now employ liars to extend the kingdom of His Son ? Were Paul here, would he not say to you, 'Who art thou that judgest another man's servant ? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Why dost thou judge thy brother ? For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.' Denunciations of Christian brethren may delight those who take pleasure in hearing other men abused ; but do they please God ? 'Love,' which is, in his view, better than all gifts, 'thinketh no evil,' 'believeth all things,' and 'hopeth all things.' Would Paul, if he were now among us, think so much evil of these brethren, and be so reluctant to admit their honesty and truth ?

"He did, indeed, blame Peter, but it was under very different circumstances. Of Peter's dissimulation there could be no doubt ; and its tendency was to overthrow essential truth. You, on the contrary, ascribe immorality to brethren whose lives disprove the charge, and who, instead of impugning the Gospel, are its strenuous defenders. In much that you say concerning the services themselves I concur ; but I greatly regret your harsh judgment of men who are shown by their fruits to be, as much as yourself, the children of God.

"When you spoke of Evangelical ministers of the Church of England as unworthy the friendship of honest men, did you remember that your words were blasting, as far as they were received the memory of some of the most excellent men who have ever lived ? Thomas Scott was eminently honest, conscientious, devout, and useful ; Henry Martyn, with talents of the highest order, relinquished all the objects of ordinary ambition that he might preach Christ among the heathen ; Charles Simeon bore bravely, for many years, the scorn of the ungodly at Cambridge ; John Newton was full of love to God and man ; few men have been as heavenly-minded as Fletcher of Madeley ; and John Venn, when dying, was so filled with joy at the thought of being speedily with Jesus, that for three days he could not die.

"All these, when on earth, belonged to that class which you denounce as unworthy of your friendship.

"Had you criticised the services, and said nothing of the men, you would have done more for the cause of truth. I shall not attempt to explain or to justify their views, but I may mention one obvious fact. According to the Articles which contain the recognised doctrines of the Establishment, persons are justified by faith through the call of God (Articles XI. and XVII.) ; those who are thus justified by faith become the sons of God by adoption (Article XVII.) ; and those who are adopted attain to everlasting felicity (Article XVII.) As, according to the doctrine of the Articles, all the regenerate are adopted, attain to everlasting felicity, it follows, according to their doctrine, that ungodly persons who live and die in sin never were adopted or regenerated. To these Articles the Evangelical ministers in the Establishment adhere, endeavouring to explain the Liturgy in harmony with them ; while their opponents, by teaching baptismal regeneration, contradict them. Let me, therefore, ask why you accuse of 'gross and pestilential immorality' those who maintain the Articles which they

have subscribed, while you compliment the honesty of those who subscribe and contradict them ?

"When, further, you charge those brethren with dishonesty, without hearing their defence, you violate your own rule : for in one page you say, 'I shall not judge the peculiar views of other men,' and in the next page you do judge them.

"Believing with you, that each congregation of faithful men is a Church of Christ, ought to be independent of State control in spiritual things, that they should elect their own pastors, exercise Church discipline, baptize believers only, and generally be self-governed, with no other spiritual authority over them than that of Christ, I regret all the more that you have judged so hastily and spoken so harshly of brethren who differ from us ; because you thereby not only discountenance union, but also hinder the progress of our opinions.

"I value the friendship of these Christian men, because I do not believe that they 'shuffle and equivocate' ; and if for this you account me 'dishonest,' I must appeal from your judgment to that of God. Calvin is reported to have said of the great Saxon reformer, 'If Luther call me a devil, I will own him to be an eminent servant of Christ.'

"In like manner if you brand me with an opprobrious epithet because I love the brethren, I shall not on that account forget that you are zealously serving God. Some day, perhaps, you will see that you have been rash and uncharitable, when you only intended to be faithful. Meanwhile, as I still desire the friendship of those whose friendship you say 'no honest man will accept,' I publish this letter, not so much to accuse you as to justify myself ; and beg you to believe that I remain,

"Your affectionate brother in Christ,
BAPTIST WRIGHTSLEY NOEL.
"36, Westbourne-terrace, July 30, 1864."

HOME AFTER CHILDREN HAVE GROWN UP.

Nothing on the earth grows as fast as children. It was yesterday, and that lad was playing with tops, a buoyant boy. He is a man, and gone now ! His foot is in the field, his hand is upon the sword. There is no more childhood for him or for us. Life has claimed him. When a beginning is made it is like a raveling stocking ; stitch by stitch gives way, till all are gone. The house has not a child in it. There is no more noise in the hall—boys rushing pell-mell—it is very orderly now. There are no more skates or sleds, bats, balls, or strings left scattered about.

Things are neat enough now. There is no delay of breakfast for sleepy folks ; there is no longer any task before you lie down of looking after anybody and tucking up the bedclothes. There are no disputes to settle, nobody to get off to school, no complaints, no importunities for impossible things, no rips to mend, no fingers to tie up, no faces to be washed, collars to be arranged ! There was never such peace in the house ! It would sound like music to have some feet clatter down the front stairs ! Oh, for some children's noise !

What used to all us that we were hushing their loud laugh, checking their noisy frolics, and reproving their slamming and banging the doors ? We wish our neighbors would only lend us an urchin or two to make a little noise in these premises. A house without children ! It is like a lantern and no candle ; a garden and no flowers ; a vine and no grapes ; a brook with no water gurgling and rushing in its channel. We want to be tired, to be vexed, to be run over, to hear child-life at work with all its varieties.

During the secular days this is enough marked. But it is Sunday that puts an American home to proof. That is the Christian family day. The intervals of public worship are long spaces of peace. The family seems made up on that day. The children are at home. You can lay your hand on their heads. They seem to recognize the greater and the less love—to God and to friends. The house is peaceful, but not still. There is a low and melodious trill of children in it. But Sunday comes too still now. There is silence that aches in the ear. There

is too much room at the table, too much at the hearth. The bedrooms are a world too orderly. There is too much leisure and too little care.

Alas ! what mean these things ? Is somebody growing old ? Are these signs and tokens ? Is life waning ?

"This do in remembrance of me."

THE GUESTS.

"Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples."—MATT. 26 : 26.

The only welcome guests at the Lord's table are true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Such as have been convinced of sin, are heartily sorry for sin, and who flee to Jesus to be saved from sin. It was sin that tortured, and put the Lord Jesus to death. It is his love to sinners that is commemorated in the supper. But who can commemorate that love aright, that does not mourn over sin ? And who is it that mourns over sin but true believers ? Faith is the root of evangelical repentance. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." If therefore we have not faith, we have no qualification for enjoying the Lord's supper. The faith required, supposes a knowledge of Christ, personal application to Christ, and confidence in Christ. Every believer, though his faith may be weak, though his fears may be many, though his heart exercises may be very distressing, yet every believer is invited by Jesus, and every believer should accept the invitation of Jesus. It is not my feelings, or my good works, that form my qualification, or give me a right to this feast of love ; it is my faith. The faith that leads me to think of Christ, to prefer Christ to all other, and that renders Christ precious to my soul, is that, alone, which warrants me to seek fellowship with Christ in this ordinance. Where there is faith in Christ, there will be love to Christ ; and where there is love to Christ, there will be pleasure in remembering Christ. As, therefore, we meet to remember Jesus, faith which worketh by love is a necessary qualification. Holy Spirit, quicken, strengthen, and increase my faith, that I may be strong in faith, giving glory to God. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me ; and that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." John 16 : 21.

JEWES IN PERSIA.

A letter from Eupatoria (Crimea) contains the following : "The Jewish community of the Caraimes at this place have just received a letter from Jerusalem, announcing that in Irak Arabi, the Sennaar of the Bible, in the south of Mesopotamia, near the site of ancient Babylon, seventy descendants of the Israelites of antiquity have recently been found, among whom is a descendant of Joachim, King of Judah, who was carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, about six hundred years before Christ. This person's lineage is said to be certified by authentic documents in his own possession. The other Jews belong to the tribe of Levi. These seventy persons live in the midst of different herds and tribes, who use threats and bribes to induce them to abjure their religion. In consequence of this persecution, the Jews have sent a deputation, to the Caraimes Institutur Abraham Fikrovitch, who is now at Jerusalem making archaeological researches, to solicit his intervention with his Caraimes co-religionists in order to obtain thirty thousand piastres (six thousand francs) to enable them to emigrate to Jerusalem and settle there. They state that no further aid would be required, as they are all, even the women, able to earn a livelihood, by making Persian carpets."

THE REST PRIEST.

Some years ago a young Catholic girl, Margaret F., was crossing the ocean from Ireland to this country. One night, when the ship in which she sailed was far out at sea, there was a violent storm. As the wind rose, and the vessel tossed like a mere bubble