

Christian Messenger.

A REPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL & GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

"Not slothful in business : fervent in spirit."

NEW SERIES.
Vol. XL. No. 50.

HALIFAX, N. S., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1866.

WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XXX. No. 50.

Religious.

Recollections of Miss Mary Lyon.

Every one will say, that Miss Fidelia Fisk, the devoted missionary teacher of Persia, was a most fit and worthy biographer of Miss Mary Lyon. Standing together first as pupil and teacher, and afterwards as associate teachers, Miss Fisk had rare opportunities for knowing Miss Lyon thoroughly. But it is not opportunity alone that gives insight and the power to write on such a theme. It is the possession of a kindred spirit. Their souls were in harmony, in great thoughts and purposes. Familiar as the community is with the general story of Miss Mary Lyon, and the living monument of her energy and devotion, the famous school at South Hadley, these fresh reminiscences will have a peculiar value. For this work is not a copy of what has been already written, but it is in the full sense original and native to the writer. She opens the book with the following brief sentence from Miss Lyon's writings: "I am more indebted to my mother than to all others except my Maker."

The following beautiful passage is quoted from one of Miss Lyon's addresses to her class and we give it here, not only as preparatory of what follows, but also as a fine comprehensive thought expressed in a most happy way:—

"When God has a great work for any one to do in the world, he usually gives him a peculiar training for it; and that training is just what no earthly friend would choose for him, and sometimes it is so long continued that there seems to us to be but little time left for him to work. We should not have led Moses into Midian to prepare him to guide a nation, and certainly we should not have left him there forty years. But God knew that the life of the humble shepherd, and in the desert too, would best fit him to lead his people like a flock, that he needed to be in that school no less than forty years to be the truly meek Moses. He who was to bring water out of the rock for all Israel, must first humble himself to draw, and perhaps many times, water for the sheep of the daughters of Jethro. He who was to receive offerings for the tabernacle till he should say, 'Let neither man nor woman make any offering,' must needs know what some of these cost, by seeing the daughters of Midian spin and dye with their own hands. He must have long years of quiet, under the shadow of Sinai, for meditation on the character of God before he could meet that God on the top of the mount, and there receive the lively oracles to give unto us."

It is not likely that Miss Lyon thought of herself, and of her own early life and discipline when she was thus instructing her pupils, and teaching them how God had raised up the great men of ancient times from humble places and lowly occupations, but Miss Fisk sees the analogy and turns it to account as follows:—

"We can hardly feel less interest in Mary Lyon's early home, where Conway, Ashfield, and Buckland made the 'Three Corners,' than in Moses' dwelling in the desert. Her twenty years in that 'Mountain home' were as surely the Lord's preparation for guiding the thousands of the daughters of America as were Moses' forty years in the wilderness, a preparation for his leading the thousands of Israel. In that pure mountain air, among hills and streams and the rocks and the trees, she acquired that physical strength which enabled her to bear a pressure and care in after life that might have carried others to an early grave. And there, in the care of a mother, who, she tells us, 'was a sort of presiding angel of good works in all that neighborhood,' and whose cheerful spirit helped not a little to make her brow as noble and as lofty at forty as on her bridal day, she learned to love all, and to have so much of cheerfulness in her heart, that Dr. Hitchcock could say, after thirty years' acquaintance: 'Never did I see a cloud on her countenance.'"

"That 'wild, romantic, little farm, made more to feast the soul than to feed the body, on which was that little mountain home, yielded so abundantly, under the widowed mother's care, that none of her seven children ever thought of being dependent or depressed,' least of all the sunny-faced Mary."

Miss Lyon was first employed as a teacher, at Shelburne Falls, when she was only seventeen years of age, when she had 75 cents a week for her services, and, according to a custom then common, "boarded round," in the different families sending pupils to the school. Up to this time she herself had never attended any other than the simple district school. At the age of 20, she entered Sanderson's Academy, in Ashfield, paying for her board by labor. Here she greatly distinguished herself as a scholar, and began to give promise of what she was afterwards to become. She was also for a time at Amherst Academy. At the age of 24, she found her way to Byfield Academy, then under the care of that celebrated teacher Rev. Joseph Emerson. She was always ready to acknowledge her great indebtedness for the influence here exerted upon her. After remaining here for a season, she returned to Sanderson's Academy as an assistant. At the age of 27, she became associated with Miss Grant, also of noble memory, in the instruction of Adams Female Academy at Derry, N. H. She remained here but a short time when she returned to Buckland and had charge of a class of twenty-five young ladies. Her life in all these years seems changing. She was at Derry, Ashfield, Ipswich, and Buckland. Her stay at Ipswich, however, where she was again associated with Miss Grant was longer, continuing for four years.

But we have now reached the time when the thought of founding a Female Seminary, of a different order, and on a more comprehensive plan, began to engross her thoughts, day and night. The following extract will show the depth of her earnestness and consecration to this work:—

"Miss Lyon saw very great difficulties to be overcome in founding such an institution, but she said: 'I do believe such a work will be effected at some future day, perhaps some twenty or fifty years from this time.' As she withdrew from Ipswich, in the autumn of 1834 to give herself wholly to the noble cause she said: 'I never had a prospect of engaging in any labor which seemed so directly the work of the Lord as this. It is very sweet, in the midst of darkness and doubt, to commit the whole to his guidance.'"

"But she adds: 'I am about to embark in a frail boat on a boisterous sea. I know not whither I shall be driven, or how I shall be directed.' It is true that she was in a frail bark, on an unexplored, as well as boisterous, sea; for as yet there was no such seminary as she proposed in our land or world. But the cause was committed to One who knew every shoal, breaker, and circling eddy of that sea. On Oct. 3rd, 1836, when friends came together and laid the corner-stone of Mr. Holyoke Seminary, Miss Lyon wrote: 'I have indeed lived to see the time when a body of gentlemen have ventured to lay the corner-stone of an edifice which will cost about \$15,000, and will be an institution for the education of females.' Upon that corner-stone she stooped down and wrote: 'The Lord hath remembered our low estate,' and felt that another stone in the foundation of our great system of benevolent operations, which are destined, in the hand of God, to convert the world, had been laid."

"She said of the prospective seminary:—'Had I a thousand lives, I could sacrifice them all in suffering and hardship for its sake. Did I possess the greatest fortune, I could readily relinquish it all, and become poor and more than poor, if its prosperity should demand it.' She thanked God for the privilege of doing, saying: 'The feeble efforts which I am permitted to put forth in co-operating with others in laying the foundation of this new seminary will probably do more for the cause of Christ, after I am laid in my grave, than all I have done in my life before.'—*Montreal Witness.*"

Noah's Carpenters.

Two persons were walking one night in an American city where one was a resident and the other a guest. The elder of the two was actively engaged in a work of benevolence, in the blessings of which the people of N— and the students of— College mutually shared. The work was too heavy for him, and he had invited his young friend, an impenitent lad, of whom we will speak as Henry, to aid him.

Together they had spent many a weary day in supplying the Christian laborers, as they crowded the depository of truth. Exhausted by their toils, they were now returning for a night's repose. Hitherto, not a word had been addressed to the obliging lad about his soul. The opportunity seemed to have arrived. A quaint but fitting manner was chosen.

"Henry," asked the elder of the two, "do you know what became of Noah's carpenters?"

"Noah's carpenters!" exclaimed Henry; "I didn't know that Noah had any carpenters."

"Certainly he must have had help in building one of the largest and best-proportioned ships ever put upon the stocks. There must have been many ship-carpenters at work for a long time to have constructed such a vessel in such an age. What became of them, think you, when all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened?"

"What do you mean by such a queer question?" Henry replied.

"No matter what, just now. Please answer the inquiry. And you may also tell me, if you will, what you would have done in that dreadful hour, when the storm came in its fury, and Noah's prophesies were all fulfilled, and all but the family of the preacher of righteousness were ready to be engulfed in those black waters?"

"I don't know," said Henry, in a half-thoughtful half-trifling manner; "perhaps I should have got on the rudder."

"This is human nature exactly, Henry. It would 'climb up some other way, rather than enter the fold by the only door.' It would 'get on the rudder,' in its pride and shortsightedness, rather than go into the ark of safety. It would 'save itself,' by hanging on at the hazard of being swept away into the gulf of despair, instead of being saved by the provision of infinite love."

"But I'll tell you plainly what I mean, Henry, by Noah's carpenters. You have kindly and generously given me your aid, day after day, in building an ark in N—, by which many, I trust will be saved. I feel grateful for your help; but I greatly fear that while others will be rejoicing in the fruit of our labors, you will be swept away in the storm of wrath which will, by-and-by, beat on the heads of those who enter not the ark of Jesus Christ. No human device will avail for you. 'Getting on the rudder' will not answer; you must be in Christ, or you are lost. Remember Noah's carpenters, and flee to the ark without delay."

They reached the house and parted. The winter came. The lad was placed at a boarding school. He visited home during the vacation, and presented himself to the church for admission to its communion. He then stated that the conversation detailed above had never passed from his memory. It led him to serious reflections, and ultimately, we trust, to the ark of safety. He is now entering a career of widespread public usefulness. He will never forget Noah's carpenters.

Though Noah's carpenters were all drowned there are a great many of the same stock now alive; of those who contribute to the spiritual good of others and aid in the rebuilding of the Redeemer's kingdom, but who personally neglect the "great salvation."—*R. S. Cook.*

The Future of British America.

We copy the following article from the *London Mining Journal* of the 24th ult.

In last week's journal we directed public attention to this subject. We offer no apology to the reader for again referring to a topic of so much moment as the mineral wealth of one of the richest sections of that great continent in the western hemisphere, which stretches from the Arctic to the Antarctic circle. We believe that we are fully justified in representing the British possessions of North America as not inferior to any portion of the United States. Canada is destined to become, ere long, the granary, not merely of British America, but of a large portion of the United States as well. And when communication is opened up, as we trust it shortly will be, with the Red River country and the great valley of the Saskatchewan, British America is not unlikely to become the granary of a large portion of the world. Into the vast domain that lies awaiting the presence of the husbandman there

as fast as facilities are afforded for settling it by the construction of the Intercolonial Railway from Halifax to Quebec, the widening and deepening of the Canadian canals, and the removal of obstructions from the passes and rivers, and lakes beyond, a tide of immigration is certain to set in that will yet make all that rich valley, stretching away east from the foot of the Rocky Mountains towards the rising sun, blossom as the rose. The coal mines of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, the portion of this territory lying nearest Europe, are all but inexhaustible. Already as previously intimated, the coal seams of Nova Scotia are being largely worked, and the products supply the United States markets. Since our last publication, we have ascertained that although not to so great an extent, yet capital in New Brunswick is being successfully invested in developing the resources of that fine province also. At Albert, in particular, most valuable oil coal and oil shale is produced, and the mineral is said to be among the richest and most productive in the world. It is exported in considerable quantities, and is in high demand. In other parts of New Brunswick coal is also obtained and coming into use.

In Canada coal oil is becoming a larger item of export, rapidly rivaling the Pennsylvania oil wells in its production and economic properties. It is in reference to these fine provinces, and with a view of consolidating them into one compact whole, that there are at this moment in England representatives charged with the responsible duty of settling among themselves, and with the British Government, the terms of an Act of the Imperial Parliament having that object in view. To witness a young nation springing, as it were, out of the loins of another, all the kindly relations of parent and offspring preserved and in full operation, is a sight the world has, perhaps, never before been privileged to behold. The old thirteen colonies left us chafed, angry, and, after a violent struggle, the remnant of the group clinging to the fatherland with filial affection, and, while assuming national proportions and quasi-national burdens, still refuse to listen to any propositions, no matter how plausibly put, which contemplate even proximate independence. Mr. Goldwin Smith, the able Oxford professor, drew down upon himself from all the colonies the strongest animadversions, because he foreshadowed an early future of that character as their manifest destiny. It may be, probably is, a great experiment, but the people of England are evidently prepared to furnish the colonies all the legislation they can desire to carry out their grand confederation scheme. As Sir Stafford Northcote announced recently at Liverpool they are prepared "to meet them half-way—say, more than half-way," meaning as we interpret it, that every reasonable aid shall be furnished consistent with the resources and dignity of the empire. The Fenians have inflicted upon these provinces great injuries and serious losses by their recent raids, and their threats of future invasion. Manfully have the colonies resisted, nor have they refused to accept a gage, and fight battles they never provoked. It is, therefore, alike the duty and the interest of the empire to give these provinces all the reasonable support they may from time to time require to maintain themselves as integral portions of the empire, requiring only in return that they, too, shall contribute as British Colonial subjects to the common cause according to their respective means.

Not willing to be mean.

A gentleman of wealth who had been much addicted to frolic and sports, was converted and became a member of one of our congregations. This congregation had adopted the *ad valorem* principle, as a means of defraying its expenses. In a few months after this gentleman's conversion, the deacons waited on him in order to make their assessment; and knowing that he was rich, and that his proportions of the expenses would amount to a pretty handsome sum, they feared that he would not be willing to bear it, and their demand might give him serious offence, and prove an injury to him. Hence they approached their business with some trepidation and great caution. At first he was at