

Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

"Not slothful in business : fervent in spirit."

NEW SERIES.
Vol. XIII. No. 13.

HALIFAX, N. S., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 1868.

WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XXXII. No. 13.

Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Fountain.

Soft moonlight reigned, the still night dews were
falling;
But heavy pain my weary heart oppress:
My spirit longed to hear the Master calling,
His earth-child upward to the home of rest.

Long had I wandered over rugged mountains,
Where bright flowers spangled spots of smiling green
Had often drank of fresh and sparkling fountains,
Then journeyed on without the "golden mien."

I reached a fountain once, intensely thirsting;
But on its brink, the reeds were crisp and brown;
It's spring was dry; no crystal stream was bursting
Sadly I laid my empty pitcher down.

Silent and voiceless 'neath my weight of anguish,
By that dry cistern's brink for hours I lay,
The crowd with heartless smiles beheld me languish
Glad that my steps had left the "narrow way."

The brown reeds wailed like sounds of human sorrow
As the wild winds in surges o'er them swept;
Deep night passed o'er me, but a brighter morrow
Broke o'er my head as I in sadness wept.

For as I lay upon the flags despairing,
Like Hagar in her deep despondency,
Nervous and faithless, my heart-burden bearing,
Lo, a bright angel, smiling came to me.

Came as to sleeping Peter chained in prison;
Came as to Mary at her Master's grave,
With the glad tidings of a Saviour risen;
Thus, came the angel, even me to save.

My weary eyes received a touch, conveying
More healing virtue than Samaria's balm;
I raised my head, and saw a fountain playing
Limpid and clear beneath the shadowing palm.

Swift waves of strength were all my being thrilling,
As I arose and onward pressed once more,
The inmost channels of my spirit filling,
Until their soundless depths were running o'er.

I reached the fountain, rarest flowers were wreathing,
Around its crystal, cool and shadowy brink;
Their rich, perpetual incense ever breathing,
Of Health and Hope, I lowly knelt to drink.

A long, deep draught from that blest fount perennial
My spirit needs at length were satisfied.
And since that hour a blessed peace millennial,
Doth in my soul forevermore abide.

Religious.

For the Christian Messenger.

MISCELLANEA.

No. III.

Judging justly. A perfectly just and sound mind is a rare and invaluable gift.—But it is still much more unusual to see such a mind unbiased in all its workings. God has given this soundness of mind but to few; and a very small number of those few escape the bias of some predilection, perhaps habitually operating; and none are at all times and perfectly free. I once saw this subject forcibly illustrated. A watchmaker told me that a gentleman had put an exquisite watch into his hands, that went irregularly. It was as perfect a piece of work as was ever made. He took it to pieces and put it together again twenty times. No manner of defect could be discovered. At last it struck him that possibly the balance-wheel might have been near a magnet. On applying a needle to it, he found his suspicion true. Here was all the mischief. The steel work in the other parts of the watch had a perpetual influence on its motions; and the watch went as well as possible with a new wheel. If the soundest mind be magnetized by any predilection, it must act irregularly. *Rev. R. Cecil.*

Schwartz the missionary, and the Ball. Colonel Wood the President at Tangore, was about to give a ball, and Mr. Chambers was invited. He consulted Schwartz, who was his great friend, as to the propriety of accepting the invitation. "Come," said Schwartz, "let us sit down and ask St. Paul." He opened the Bible and read a portion of the Epistle to the Romans, which shews how

widely the pleasures of the world differ from the pleasures of the believer. Mr. Chambers decided at once, and declined the invitation. Colonel Wood and his lady were much offended, and meeting Schwartz soon after, reproached him with having kept back Mr. Chambers and spoiled their party. "I assure you, Sir, I assure you, madam," said Schwartz, "it was not my doing. I did not keep him back. It was not me. It was St. Paul. You must blame him."

What will save. Nothing will do in India but grace. Semi-Popery won't save; superstition won't save; all the Fathers won't save; Oxford tract-men won't save; church-servants won't save; cathedrals won't save.—Christ only, by his blood and atonement, and by the virtue of his spirit, can save ruined man.—And this power of grace is generally exerted most where the means are used with most humility, and man is trampled under foot. *Bishop Wilson.*

Scream no more. "My dear brother always take advice or reproof as a favor; it is the surest mark of love. I advised you once, and you took it as an affront; nevertheless I will do it once more. Scream no more at the peril of your soul. God now warns you by me whom he has set over you. Speak as earnestly as you can, but do not scream, speak with all your heart, but with a moderate voice. It was said of our Lord, 'He shall not cry'; the word properly means 'He shall not scream.' Herein be a follower of me, as I am of Christ. I often speak loud often vehemently; but I never scream. I never strain myself; I dare not, I know it would be a sin against God and my own soul. Perhaps one reason why that good man, Thomas Walsh, yea, and John Manners too, were in such grievous darkness before they died, was because they shortened their own lives. O John, pray for an advisable and teachable temper. By nature you are very far from it; you are stubborn and headstrong. Your last letter was written in a very wrong spirit. If you cannot take advice from others, surely you might take it from your affectionate brother, &c." *Letters from John Wesley to John Kingan itinerant preacher.*

Dr. Judson on Preaching. A short time before Dr. Judson left this country, he took considerable pains to visit my native village, and the church with which I first united, though I had long since removed my membership. As the house was small, he had consented to address the congregation; and this, although the day was rainy, brought together quite a crowd. After the usual sermon was over, he spoke for about fifteen minutes, and, as I thought, with touching pathos, of the "precious Saviour," what he has done for us and what we owe to him. As he sat down, however, it was evident, even to the most unobservant eye, that most of the listeners were disappointed. After the exercises were over, several persons inquired of me frankly why Dr. Judson had not talked of something else; why he had not told a story, &c.; while others signified their disappointment by not alluding to his having spoken at all. On the way home I mentioned the subject to him.

"Why, what did they want?" he inquired; "I presented the most interesting subject in the world, to the best of my ability."

"But they wanted something different—a story."

"Well—I am sure I gave them a story—the most thrilling one that can be conceived of."

"But they had heard it before. They wanted something new of a man who had just come from the antipodes."

"Then I am glad they have it to say, that a man coming from the antipodes had nothing better to tell than the wondrous story of Jesus' dying love. My business is to preach the gospel of Christ, and when I can speak at all I dare not trifle with my commission. When I looked upon these people to-day, and remembered where I should next meet them, how could I furnish food to vain curiosity, or tickle their fancies with amusing stories, however decently strung together on a thread of religion? That is not what Christ meant by preaching the gospel. And then, how could I hereafter meet the fearful charge, 'I gave you one opportunity to tell them of me, you spent it in describing your own adventures!'"

He used frequently to speak of the tendency

of cultivated people to visit the house of God in search of intellectual gratification, rather than for the purposes of worship, or the promotion of their spiritual good: and mentioned it as the most dangerous snare in the path of the rising ministry.

When once asked, in private, how he liked a sermon that had just been eliciting warm praises from a parlor circle, he answered, "It was very elegant; every word was chosen with great care and taste; and many of the thoughts were exceedingly beautiful. It delighted my ears so much that I quite forgot I had a heart, and I am afraid all the other hearers did the same."

At another time, when speaking in glowing terms of a sermon to which he had listened with evident interest, he suddenly broke off with, "But such are not the sermons to arouse a dead sinner, or to feed the sheep. No man could say there to-day, 'The poor have the gospel preached.'" *Mrs. E. C. Judson's "Anecdotes and Sketches of Dr. Judson."*

Cowper and Robert Robinson. We think there is an instance in the history of hymns and their authors, even more melancholy than that of Cowper. When one who has sung so joyfully of the fountain drawn from the veins of Immanuel loses all sense of the divine forgiveness and favor, and becomes possessed with the conviction that there can be no mercy for him it is indeed sad. But although this was Cowper's experience, we are assured that the resignation and patience with which he endured, honoured the name of the Redeemer, whom not seeing, he loved; and that by means of these sufferings the poet was made perfect for eternity. We feel differently, however, respecting the case of one who after composing some of the sweetest songs of praise to Christ, and after spending many years in the ministry of reconciliation, was tempted to deny the Lord who bought him, and by the preaching of another gospel, which yet was not another, to put him to an open shame.—This was the course of Robert Robinson, of Cambridge, England, who wrote "Come thou fount of every blessing," "Mighty God, while angels bless thee," "Nothing can surpass the evangelical excellence of these hymns; but alas, their author renounced his faith, and by his later teachings sought to diminish the influence of the cross of Christ. What a fall was this for one who had put upon paper such sublime verses as the following—

"From the highest throne of glory
To the cross of deepest woe,
All to ransom guilty captives,—
Flow my praise, forever flow.
Re-ascend, immortal Saviour,
Leave thy footstool, take thy throne;
Thence return and reign forever,
Be the kingdom all thine own."

Of course a man so changed could not be happy. His new views would not be likely to make him better satisfied with himself, with his fellow-men or with the government of God. A circumstance related by Dr. Belcher gives affecting confirmation of this. "In the latter part of his life, when Mr. Robinson seemed to have lost much of his devotional feeling, he was travelling in a stage coach with a lady who soon perceived that he was well acquainted with religion. She had just before been reading the hymn, 'Come thou fount of every blessing,' and asked his opinion of it, as she might properly do, since neither of them knew who the other was.—He waived the subject, and turned her attention to some other topic; but after a short period she contrived to return to it, and described the benefit she had often derived from the hymn, and her strong admiration of its sentiments. She observed that the gentleman was strongly agitated, but as he was not dressed in clerical garb, did not suspect the cause. At length entirely overcome by the power of his feelings, he burst into tears, and said: 'Madam, I am the poor, unhappy man who composed that hymn many years ago; I would give a thousand worlds, if I had them, to enjoy the feelings I then had.'" *Bibliotheca Sacra.*

The inspired writers—

"Whence but from heaven could men unskilled in arts,
In several ages born, in several parts,
Weave such agreeing truths? Or how or why,
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?
Unasked their pains, ungratefully their advice;
Starving their gains, and martyrdom their price." *Dryden.*

The right monument.

Small honor can be got with gaudy grave,
Nor it thy rotten name from death can save,
The fairer tomb, the fouler is thy name;
The greater pomp procuring greater shame.
Thy monument make thou thy living deeds;
No other tomb than that true virtue needs." *Bishop Hall.*

Singing in death. One of the agents of the American Tract Society, who visited the vicinity of Pittsburg Landing, immediately after the terrible battle there, relates the following:—"I found among the wounded a personal friend (a Baptist minister) who was lieutenant, and who also officiated as chaplain. When the alarm was given on the Sabbath morning, he was performing funeral rites over one of his men, and some of those present afterwards declared that they never heard a man pray as he prayed upon that occasion. He was severely wounded early in conflict, and as the rebels temporarily advanced, he lay within their lines for more than twenty-four hours, with his wounds undressed, and unable to procure a drop of water. During a portion of this time, the balls and shells were falling all around him; yet in the midst of the awful strife, and notwithstanding his sufferings, he told me that he there enjoyed some of the sweetest experiences of his life. He several times found himself unconsciously singing,

"When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes."

A day or two afterwards he safely reached his home."

Four impossible Things.

First, to escape trouble by running away from duty. Jonah once made the experiment, but soon found himself where all his imitators will in the end find themselves.—Therefore, manfully meet and overcome the difficulties and trials to which the post assigned you by God's providence exposes you.

Second, to become a Christian of strength and maturity without undergoing severe trials. What fire is to gold, that is affliction to the believer. It burns up the dross, and makes the gold shine forth with unalloyed lustre.

Third, to form an independent character except when thrown upon individual resources. The oak in the middle of the forest, if surrounded on every side by trees that shelter and shade it, runs up tall and sickly; put away from its protectors, and the first blast will overcome it. But the same tree, growing in the open field, which is continually beat upon by the tempest, becomes its own protector. So the man who is compelled to rely on his own resources forms an independence of character to which he could not otherwise have attained.

Fourth, to be a growing man when you look to your post for influence, instead of bringing influence to your post. Therefore, prefer to climb up hill with difficulty, than to roll down with inglorious ease.

The Silent Clerk.

A gentleman of high position and great wealth in the city of Pittsburgh was converted some years ago. He was a man of much earnestness of character and admirable social qualities. From the moment of his conversion he took a decided stand for Christ and his cause. He wrote letters to all his impenitent friends, informing them of the change he had experienced, and inviting them, as Moses did Hobab, to join him journeying to the "good land."

It was my pleasure to ride with this gentleman in his buggy, soon after his conversion to Washington, Pa., a distance of twenty-six miles. During that journey he gave me a full and most interesting account of his religious experience. At the close of it, I said to him: "Mr. M——, what, in your judgment, has contributed most to the happy change you have just related to me? He promptly replied: "The example of one of my clerks." His answer interested me deeply, and I begged him to explain himself more fully. To this request he responded substantially as follows:

"When I commenced business some eighteen years ago, I employed a gentleman as bookkeeper who was a member of the Associate Reformed church. He was a quiet, but holy