

# Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

"Not slothful in business : fervent in spirit."

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## Poetry.

### LOOKING OFF UNTO JESUS.

O eyes that are weary, and hearts that are sore,  
Look off unto Jesus, and sorrow no more;  
The light of his countenance sheweth so bright,  
That on earth, as in heaven, there need be no night.

Looking off unto Jesus, my eyes cannot see  
The troubles and dangers that hanf around me;  
They cannot be blinded with sorrowful tears;  
They cannot be shadowed with unbelief fears.

Looking off unto Jesus, my spirit is blest,  
In the world I have turmoil—Him in I have rest.  
The sea of my life all about me may roar,—  
When I look unto Jesus I hear it no more.

Looking off unto Jesus, I go not astray,  
My eyes are on him, and he shows me the way;  
The path may seem dark as he leads me along,  
But following Jesus I cannot go wrong.

## Miscellany.

### PEN SKETCHES.

No. 20.

#### TIMID PERSONS.

There are such constitutionally.—They are afraid to assert their principles, will rather give place and sometimes assent by word of mouth, or the nod of the head, when their own mind rebels against the same. They often act inconsistently because they are so timid.

Others are afraid of themselves, and think they may be wrong, and so through timidity allow others to triumph over them.

There are those christians who are so feeble and timid that they doubt their own piety and yet they may be the true servants of Jesus. To such let me say *Look to the Strong for strength.* Be not discouraged the Divine Master has said He will not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax.

JOHN.

#### ATHENS AS IT WAS, AND AS IT IS.

A visit to Bible Lands is full of the deepest interest. For a Christian to take his New Testament, and go and stand on the very ground that the Heaven-commissioned Apostles stood, and to walk the same streets which they walked, is calculated to awaken in him feelings akin to inspiration. The Rev. J. C. Stockbridge D. D., has been spending some time on the European continent and has given in the *National Baptist* an account of his "Sabbath abroad." The following is his description of what he saw at Athens, and though brief will assist the reader to a good realization of the condition of that city at of the present day:—

It was pleasant for me to remember while I was enjoying so much on the Sabbath of which I spoke in my last sketch, that the Apostle Paul once trod these streets, and looked upon much that I have seen within the past few days. The last half of the 17th chapter of Acts had for me an interest such as it never had at any previous reading. We look into the city of Thessalonica. The people are stirred by some unwonted commotion, and have raised a storm of persecution against Paul and his companions. The house of Jason, their host, is assaulted, and the mob seek for their victims in the privacy of the domestic circle, to which it is supposed that they had withdrawn. In vain their search; Paul and Silas were absent; but tidings of the uproar were brought to their ears, and they prudently retired from a place where in all probability their usefulness, for the present at least, was at an end, and under a cover of the darkness of night sought the city of Berea, sixty miles distant. Here probably Paul remained for several days, and would doubtless have

stayed longer, had not hostile Jews from Thessalonica stirred up the mob in Berea to raise a commotion similar to that from which he had just escaped. Remembering therefore the injunction of their Lord, "When they persecute you in one city flee ye to another," they prepared to flee from the storm which had been raised against them. The affection of the new converts prompted several of them to form an escort for their beloved teacher, as he hastened towards the Aegean sea, and in a few days were sailing into the Piræus, and dropped anchor in the famous harbor of Athens. The natural scenery is the same now that it was then. From the deck of the vessel which bore the Apostle, he saw Hymettus and Lycabettus; and the distant Parnes, "Old Egina's" rocks, and the gleaming waters of Salamis, were in full sight. The general appearance of the Piræus is substantially the same that it was on the day when the Apostle landed on the shores of Greece. Some parts of the moles which were built so many centuries before, still remain. Memory recalls them to my mind just as they looked as we passed between them in our good steamer, the Danube, of the Menageries Imperiales. Many changes however have taken place in the aspect of things between the Piræus and the city since the Apostle stood on the quay where he first landed. Very distinct traces of the "Long Walls," extending all the way from the harbor to the city of Athens, were then visible. Now the traveller finds but little to remind him of the stupendous structures reared by Pericles as a protection, against the enemies of Greece.

Entering Athens by the Piræic gate, which was situated in the hollow between the Pnyx and the Museum, Paul would find himself in full view of what was the glory of the city,—the Acropolis,—crowned with the magnificent temple of Minerva. A few moments' walk would bring him to Mars' Hill, on which, within a brief period, he was to stand and preach to the "men of Athens." From what my own eyes saw, I could easily understand the meaning of his courteous words, "I perceive that in all things ye are very much given to the worship of divinities," a much better translation than "I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious." As I stood on the Areopagus, I could see the Parthenon, still so splendid a structure in its ruins. Along the path by which I had ascended to the great citadel, the car of Minerva, followed by an eager band of worshippers, had often been drawn by the sacred oxen. The remains of the beautiful little temple of Wingless Victory were before me. At a short distance to the northwest was the famous temple of Theseus, the most perfect specimen, in some respects of architecture that has come down to us from ancient times. But these were but the smallest portion of the objects of interest that came under the notice of the Apostle's eye. The ruthless hands of the enemies of Greece have swept into oblivion the innumerable monuments of art and religious devotion, which were the pride of Athens. Standing on the very spot on which Paul stood, I could well understand how he could speak of the Athenians as being much given to the worship of divinities. All the gods and goddesses which were usually worshipped by the Greek and Roman, had their shrines and statues, many of which were distinctly visible to him as he stood up before that crowd of the "men of Athens."

Walking over the site of the "agora," or market-place, I remember that it was in this place that the Apostle disputed daily with those who met him. Among these were the Stoics and the Epicurians, holding opinions opposite to each other, in philosophy and practical life. It was not difficult to re-people the place with the philosophers and idle saunterers who were wont to frequent the place, ever intent on spending their time either in telling or hearing some new thing. Among this crowd walked that earnest man of solemn mien, his soul stirred within him, as he saw the whole city given to idolatry. The message which he brought to them was one more important than ever before had fallen on

their ears; but some mocked as they heard it, while others declared that he was a setter forth of strange gods, because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection. How interesting, I thought, would it be to ascertain the exact locality of the house in which the Apostle took up his abode.—Were there some Christian souls that sympathized with him? Did his intense earnestness make itself felt in that home of the arts, and had he power to draw away from the worship of the heathen gods any of their votaries? A few souls were given to him, and among them Dionysius one of the judges of the court of Mars, and who, if we may credit the traditions, afterwards became the first bishop of Athens. The success, however, of the Apostle was not great, and the fruits of his labors did not in after time, to a large degree, show themselves. We are told that "the Church of Athens was for a long time in a very weak state. In the time of the Antonines paganism was almost as flourishing as ever. The Christian community seems at one time to have been entirely dispersed, and to have been collected again about A. D. 165." Some seed was sown,—some trains of holy influence were set in motion; and Christ was honored among a people more given up, perhaps, than any other, to the worship of the divinities whose temples were built all over Athens.

#### "THE WANDERING JEW."

The story of the Wandering Jew is founded on an ancient legend. The *Jewish Messenger* gives an excellent epitome of the principal points of the narrative:—

In the reign of King John, there visited England an Armenian bishop, delegated by the Pope to examine into some curious relics. The bishop-delegate had a double duty to perform; he was called on to manufacture new relics or miracles for a home market, and detail in the places he visited other wonders that had happened elsewhere. Among his relations in England, that were listened to with amazement, was that of the Wandering Jew. Matthew Paros, the monkish historian, tells the whole story with great seriousness. Several persons examined the Armenian about the extraordinary personage, and the prelate positively stated he was then residing in Armenia; an officer of the retinue of the ecclesiastical ambassador confirmed his master's assertions, and entered fully into the details. He stated that this Jew had formerly been porter to Pontius Pilate, and was called Cataphilus; and that, standing by the Saviour when he was dragged out of the judgement hall, he struck him on the back. At this Jesus was offended, and turned about and said to him: "The Son of Man will go, but thou shalt stay till he come again." After this he was converted to the Christian faith, baptized, and called by the name of Joseph, and lived to be a century old. One day he grew sick and impotent, and fell into a swoon. Upon being restored, he woke up a man as vigorous as if only thirty years of age, being about that period of life when he gave the blow alluded to.

The bishop and his companions were well acquainted with this strange person, and they dined with him just before starting on their journey. The narrator had seen him several times; that he was a man of great solemnity and gravity, never smiling, or being in any way astonished when questions were put to him touching ancient history,—in fact, confirmed all the circumstances of the resurrection of the dead bodies that came out of the sepulchres at the time of the crucifixion, the apostle's creed and everything about the holy personages; that he was very fearful of the second advent, for then, he said, he must die in reality, and he trembled whenever he considered the dreadful crime he had been guilty of; yet he hoped for salvation, because it was a sin of ignorance.

About five hundred years later, in the year 1666, a large number of Jews flocked to England, in the reign of Charles II, availing themselves of his grants for pro-

tection and permission to practice their religion without molestation. Among them was a bare faced impostor, who announced himself as the Wandering Jew." The Countess Mazarin was on a visit to England at the time, and wrote to her sister, the Duchess of Bouillon, an account of this personage, as follows: "He says he was an officer of the great Sanhedrim, at the time Pilate condemned Christ, and remembers every particular relating to the apostles; that he struck our Saviour at the time of his coming out of the judgment hall, and was, therefore, compelled to live till his last coming; that he had travelled in every corner of the world, and pretends to cure all diseases by a touch: He speaks several languages, and gives just such an account of past ages that people do not know what to think of him. The two Universities set two doctors to examine him, who, with all their skill, were not able to discover the least contradiction in his discourse. One learned man spoke to him in Arabic, and he answered in the same tongue, telling him that there was scarcely a single history in the world that was true. The same gentleman asked him what he thought of Mahommed? He answered that he knew him very well; that he was a man of good understanding, but subject to mistakes as other men,—particular in denying that Jesus was crucified; 'for I saw him,' says he, 'nailed to the cross with mine own eyes! I was also present at the burning of Rome by Nero.' He said, likewise, that he saw Saladin returning from his conquests in the Levant, and told several particulars relating to Solymann the Magnificent. He affirmed, also, that he had seen Tamerlane and Bajazette, and gave an ample relation of the wars in the Holy Land. The common people give out that he works miracles; but the better and wiser sort look upon him as an impostor."

Perhaps this was the same individual who personified the Messiah elsewhere, as this was the year in which Sabatal Zevi, the great impostor, made his appearance.

#### HINTS FOR FISHERS OF MEN.

Eli Jones, at the Friends' Conference of the Sunday School Teachers, used the following striking incident intended to illustrate the truth, "Get the lambs and the ewe will follow"—win the children and you will reach the parents:

"A man came to a pool in which he observed many fishes, and at length noticed that they were very tame; and as he walked around the edge of the pool they followed, and as he put his hand into the water, they clustered round it, and were entirely fearless of injury. He wondered why they were so tame, and on the owner's coming near, he inquired what had produced such a state. He was told that on the present proprietor's obtaining possession of the pool, there were no fish in it, and that he had procured some old fishes and put them into the water. They quickly concealed themselves, and he rarely caught sight of any of them. After some time young fishes were seen, and food thrown to them; at first they were shy, but soon they learned to love the bread, and when it was seen on the water, they darted from their shelters and eagerly seized it, and finally became fearless and so tame that they knew their owner, and when he appeared by the side of the pool they came towards him to be fed. After a good while an old fish was occasionally seen, perhaps only a head from behind a hiding place, then another came out and oftener, until at last the old fishes rushed with the young ones, and came tamely and confidently to receive bread from the hand of their feeder."

Mental power may fill a chapel; but spiritual power fills the church. Mental power may gather a congregation; but spiritual power saves souls. We want spiritual power.—*Spurgeon.*