

Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

"Not slothful in business : fervent in spirit."

NEW SERIES.
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WHOLE SERIES
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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness." Psalm xvii. 15.

Jesus, my heart is yearning
To lean upon thy breast;
I'm ever, ever learning
To find in thee my rest.

Oh may my soul come nearer
And nearer still to thee!
And may that light grow clearer!
Which shows thy love to me!

Why should I disbelieve thee?
Or ever doubt thy grace?
Thy love cannot deceive me,
I shall behold thy face.

Begone, then, doubt and sadness!
All unbelieving fear,
My soul is filled with gladness,
My Lord, my life is near.

I shall behold thy glory!
Thy face with rapture see!
And cast my crown before thee,
And find my heaven in thee.

June, 9.

THE VEXED QUESTION.

The rights of women!—What are they?
The right to work, the right to pray;
The right to watch while others sleep;
The right to weep with those that weep;
The right to comfort those that mourn,
To welcome wanderers that return;
The right to strengthen feeble knees,
With all love's gentle ministries;
The right to oil the wheels of life,
The right to heal the wounds of strife;
The right to deck the shrine of home,
To soothe the passage to the tomb;
The right to honour, love, obey,
The right to join in children's play;
To nurse the sick, to help the poor,
To keep a hospitable door;
The right to silence when oppress'd,
In blessing others to be blest.

The right by scripture and by choice,
To be without a public voice;
Humbly at home her Bible search,
Meekly keep silence in the church;
Gladly enjoy her cherished right,
To keep aloof from party-fight,
Shame-facedly—remember Eve,
And to her lord, the battle leave

With lawful rights so manifold,
Might not the new defraud the old?
Rights paramount—because divine,
Such, and such only—still be mine.

My sisters! all these rights are ours,
Why should we crave less noble powers?
"This woman hath done what she could,"
(Though not the half of what she would)
Be this our mood in that great day,
When heaven and earth shall pass away!

R. R. T.

Evangelical Magazine.

Religious.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S MEETINGS.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

One reason why so many adult members of our churches never take any part in social religious meetings is, that they were not trained to do so from the start. Their "early education" was sadly neglected.

When I asked an excellent man of thirty to take part in a prayer-meeting, he replied,

"I was not called out by the pastor of the church where I joined ten years ago, and I have never learned. It is hard to begin now."

A new convert's subsequent career commonly depends on the first six months of his religious life. He should at once be "put into harness." He should be called on to pray and to say a word for Jesus, and to engage in some practical work.

Like a raw recruit, he should be drilled and taught to handle his spiritual weapons.

One of the best training schools I know of is the Young People's Meeting.

A weekly gathering for those who are yet young in years, or young in religious experience [even though they be forty years old]. A new convert is not so bashful in the presence of young disciples gathered in a private parlour as he would be in a church lecture-room before the elders and deacons, or the veterans of whatever name. If he "breaks down" in his first attempts he does not mind it so much.

He soon gets used to the sound of his own voice; he acquires fluency; he learns how to use "the gift that is in him."

From this training-school he comes into the Sunday-school, or weekly conference meeting of the church with some equipment for Christ's service.

During the last fifteen years there has been such a "Young People's Meeting" in the two churches of New York and Brooklyn to which I have been permitted to minister. It is arranged on this wise. The meeting is held in a private house, for by this method a social intercourse is promoted throughout the congregation. In the course of the year fifty different families open their houses for an evening visit from the other members of the flock. The place of meeting is selected by a committee chosen annually. It is held on Monday evening, at 8 o'clock, and commonly lasts one hour. The spot selected is announced from the pulpit on the Sabbath.

No inconvenience is occasioned to the household who receive the "meeting" under their roof. The sexton of the church takes a cart-load of camp stools to the house about supper-time, and a box of hymn-books. They are placed in the hall. As each one comes in he helps himself to a seat and a hymn-book.

The service is conducted by some one designated beforehand. As soon as a new convert has spoken a few times, and has "got the hang of things," he is appointed to lead a meeting.

Some may object that this process may tend to produce forwardness and self conceit; or else that the meeting may suffer from being in the hands of an inexperienced novice. But I have never seen either of these results to follow.

The crying sin of our churches is not excessive forwardness for Christ in anything; it is rather an excessive backwardness or a tongue-tied timidity.

The meeting begins with a lively hymn. Then follow a prayer and a passage from God's Word. After that the way is opened for every one to take part. If a man has an experience to relate, he gives it. If a troubled soul wishes prayer, he or she rises and makes the request. If a young wife is burdened in spirit for the conversion of a husband, she either sends a note to the leader, asking special prayer for him, or else makes the request herself audibly.

If any one wishes to sing a verse of a familiar hymn, like "Jesus lover of my soul," he strikes up, and the others chime in. Appeals are made to the impenitent, questions of conscience are discussed. Statements of personal labour for the Master are made. Each one speaks, sings, or prays as the spirit moves. Often there are twenty different addresses and prayers made within the single hour.

The interest seldom flags; and there is such a perpetual freshness in these meetings, that although they have been kept up for every Monday evening through nine years the service of last night was crowded to the doorway. During the most of the year, the average attendance is from seventy-five to one hundred, and occasionally two neighbouring houses are required to accommodate the attendance.

It is a blessed "institution" in our church which we would no more give up than we would our sabbath school.

Every church that is large enough to "run alone" should try a Young People's Meeting.—*Christian at Work.*

THE DOGMA OF INFALLIBILITY—THE CANONS.

The printed scheme of the dogma of infallibility has been distributed. It contains five canons:—

1. If any one should say that the Episcopal Chair of the Roman Church is not the true and real infallible chair of Blessed Peter, or that it has not been divinely chosen by God as the most solid, indefectible, and incorruptible rock of the whole Christian Church, let him be anathema.

2. If any one should say that there exists in the world another infallible chair of the truth of the Gospel of Christ, our Lord, distinct and separate from the chair of Blessed Peter, let him be anathema.

3. If any one should deny that the Divine magisterium of the chair of Blessed Peter is necessary to the true way of eternal salvation for all men, whether unfaithful or faithful, whether laymen or bishops, let him be anathema.

4. If any man should say that each Roman Pontiff, legitimately elected, is not by Divine right the successor of Blessed Peter, even in the gift of the infallibility of magisterium, and should deny to any one of them the prerogative of infallibility for teaching the Church the Word of God pure from all corruption and error, let him be anathema.

5. If any one should say that General Councils are established by God in the Church as a power of feeding the Divine flock in the word of faith superior to the Roman Pontiff, or equal to him, or necessary by Divine institution in order that the magisterium of the Roman Bishop should be preserved infallible, let him be anathema.

A despatch from Rome states that the discussion of the primacy and infallibility of the Pope commenced in Saturday's general congregation of the council, which will sit henceforth nearly every day. Great confidence and enthusiasm prevail among the ultramontane party, and it is believed that the discussion will terminate within a month. Many fathers sitting in the centre of the council have asked for leave of absence. About one hundred fathers have inscribed their names to oppose more or less radically the proposed dogmatic definition.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

THE GOSPEL OF PROTOPLASM.

The following article from the *Christian Era* is a fine expose of the late pretensions of certain writers to build up a new theory of existing things—half-sarcastic and half-real—it shows to what such speculations lead, and how they stand in relation to the genuine gospel of Christ:—

The Science of Positivism in our day makes open war on revealed religion. It claims to supersede it, and to furnish a substitute better fitted to the needs of the race. In place of conjectures it professes to give facts; and in place of theories established laws. It asserts its office to guide the race out of the mists of twilight into the luster of noon-day. These are brave assertions; but, before giving up the old Gospel, which has ennobled so many lives, and supported multitudes in their passage over the dark river, it may be well to ask what is the substance of the new Evangel, and by what evidence it is buttressed.

The latest and simplest exposition of the new science is given by Prof. Huxley, as preacher. The text is "Protoplasm;" the sermon is, the unity, not of the human race, but of the universe. The preacher, with characteristic eloquence, extols the sharp analysis of science and its broad generalizations. Great is Protoplasm! It makes up the universe. Vegetable, bird, beast and man are only protoplasm.—Everything springs from protoplasm, and returns to it again. Bring forth the bags! let science be crowned! How wonderful the discoveries touching man's origin and destiny.

The old Gospel made much of certain large and vague words, God, Immortality, Heaven, Redemption. Its believers found in these words a strange charm and power. The new Evangel discards them, as the sun-rise remands ghosts to the land of dreams. It knows no God, but inexora-

ble law. It declares no immortality, but a new phase of protoplasm exuding thought as the maple exudes sap. Heaven is but a speculation; and Redemption a delusion. Man is not a being, formed by the plan of a person God, he is a development of protoplasm, shaped by a law of selection, latent in nature. He is not under the care of a wise and loving Father. Like all the universe, he is held in the grasp of an unconscious Fate, passes through certain changes, and then yields up the protoplasm in him to new uses.

There may be minds that think this new Evangel an advance upon the old. They are fortunately few. The race will not accept it. The grand verities of the old faith, its sublime hopes, its eternal supports are what the race need, and they will have them. The heart cries out for God. It longs for immortality. It travails under a sense sin, and yearns for a Savior. When men prefer a field of icebergs with brilliant colorings, to a fertile valley waving with grain and luxuriant in fruit, then may they prefer the Evangel of Comte and Huxley with its terrible negations, to the Evangel of Jesus with its assurances of sonship to God and Eternal Life.

But the new Evangel claims acceptance for its scientific certainties. It will have nothing to do with guesses, but presents only established facts and laws. It ought to bring strong proof for its assertions that there is no difference between the colored lichen of the rock and the painter who strives to reproduce it, between the flower which adorns a girl's hair and the blood which courses through her veins. Such dreary materialism needs evidence exact and demonstrative. But, unfortunately, every one of the pillars of the Gospel of Protoplasm is a guess, not one is either a fact or a law. So Prof. Kingsley has proved in a searching review in the *New Englander* for June.

Prof. Huxley attempts to prove that "a three-fold unity, a unity of power or faculty, a unity of form, and a unity of substantial composition, pervades the whole living world." His own treatment of the first point disproves it, for he admits an essential difference in the working of the powers in living things. The power of the animal is limited to animal and vegetable matter while the power of the vegetable is limited to vegetable and mineral matter. The powers of vegetable and animal differ, therefore, in the source of nourishment and in its products, in the beginning and course, and end of life. As Prof. Kingsley well says, one who hold to a unity of power with such differences, can assert that the act of the horse is drawing a load and of the philosopher in drawing an inference are essentially one.

The unity of form, Prof. Huxley does not attempt to prove. The senses contradict it. He claims only that the protoplasm which gives form to organic life is in all cases in unceasing motion; but as the law of motion differs, in the size and shape of the ultimate atom, in their distances, in the rapidity of their motions and the lines, straight or curved, they follow, it is not easy to attach any definite idea to the so-called unity of form. A horse is not shaped like a man, nor an elm like a sunflower, either in general contour, or in the form or revolution of ultimate particles.

Nor does Prof. Huxley prove his third point, "the unity of material composition in all living matter." This is true in the sense that all living matter may be resolved into a few simple substances. But as no art will change charcoal into a diamond though both seem identical in substance; nor carbonate of lime into a crystal of collespan, though chemistry detects no difference; it is not safe for science to assert that resemblance of composition proves identity.

As proof fails in these three important points, it fails equally throughout the entire sermon. Science, in the hands of one of its acknowledged masters is less logical than revelation. It assumes its facts and conjectures its laws and rests its conclusions on false premises. The new Gospel of Protoplasm proves to be dreary in its truths and deficient in its evidences.