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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

LIFE.

Childhood, like the morning, wears a robe of light.
Hope and joy, advancing, paint the noontide bright.
Birds of early springtime, waken, in the air,
Music, and the breezes waft no thought of care.
Soon the fleeting moments, bear the morn away,
To Life must come the burden, and the heat of day.
Flowers, that at the dawning, sparkled, gemmed with dew
Withered now, and fallen, the heated way bestrew.
Yet the noon rejoices, strength is in his hand;
Jewelled crowns now glitter, gems on many a strand.
The glory of the mid-day, may scorn the rising sun,
But soon the shadows lengthen, soon his course is run.
Then as nature's voices hush at eventide
And the weary toilers, home at rest abide,
So the way-worn traveller waits beside the door.
Till night shall close the portal, and bear the spirit o'er.
O'er the deep dark waters, beyond the dream-land shore
Where the soul shall waken to toils of life no more.
Death, the sleep of life—Night, of time the grave
As rest when day is ended, so rest in you we crave.
There's another morning, when the sun shall rise,
Never more to darken, in the clouded skies.
Morn shall break in glory, noon be bathed in light,
Shadows never gather, "and there'll be no more night."
UNA.

THE BIBLE.

Study it carefully,
Think of it prayerfully
Deep in thy heart let its pure precepts dwell!
Slight not its history,
Ponder its mystery,
None can e'er prize it too fondly or well.
Accept the glad tidings,
The warnings and chidings,
Found in this volume of heavenly lore;
With faith that's unfeigning,
And love all prevailing,
Trust in its promise of life evermore.
With fervent devotion,
And thankful emotion,
Hear the blest welcome, respond to its call;
Life's purest obligation,
The heart's adoration,
Give to the Saviour who died for us all.
May this message of love,
From the tribune above,
To all nations and kindreds be given,
Till the ransomed shall raise
Joyous anthems of praise—
Hallelujah! on earth and in heaven.

Religious.

THE CHRISTIAN LAW OF DRESS.

BY W. I. BUDINGTON, D. D.

To do all things for the glory of God is the Christian's law. *All things*; the apostle specifies among them *eating and drinking*. He means evidently that a Christian is to eat and drink those things and in those measures which conduce to his highest efficiency of mind and body, for this reflects honor upon the Creator; the healthier, the happier, the better in all respects a man is, the more glory is reflected upon the wisdom and goodness of God. The rule, to eat and drink to the glory of God, is not obeyed by merely stopping short of drunkenness and gluttony; it is not enough that a man do not hurt himself, be not a slave to appetite, he must make his eating and his drinking a revenue of good to himself and honor to the Being that made him.

By parity of reasoning must the Christian dress to the glory of God. This surely is included in the *all things* to which the rule applies; and it is not

a little thing, but a great thing; it is to be ranked next to, if not alongside of eating and drinking, as a manifestation of the Christian life. Estimates are often made of what intemperance costs in respect of money; the amount transcends conception, and rises among the infinities. Who has ever computed the expense of extravagant dressing? Who can do it? It is at the present moment, beyond question, at the root of the most frightful evils of society. Bankruptcies innumerable and most disastrous are to be traced to it. To meet it, husbands and fathers are incited to speculation, and so to disgrace—to over-exertion, and so to death. Many a woman, who has not a father or husband, to gratify this passion for display, has been led by it to self-immolation. Honor, peace, immortal hope, all have been paid as the price.

But this is only the first item in the long catalogue of miseries produced by extravagant dressing. It acts as an incentive to envy, malice, crime, and every evil. Every new dress that is a novelty of fashion and costliness, is responsible for a new era of fashionable folly; the crowd are set in motion, and pride or envy, and oftenest both, rule the hour. The poorer classes envy the rich; the rich envy one another. The toiling seamstress toils later and later into the night, competition presses harder and harder upon the lower order of workers, they must add more hours, or take less pay per hour. The complicated and terrible problem of the *relation of capital to labor* is made more complicated and terrible; and who shall tell how much fashion and extravagance in dress is responsible for, in the bitterness that is springing up between the employes and the employers? How happens it that the city, which is the focus of fashion and luxury, from which come the *modes*, and where are made the *trousseaus* of brides in all lands, has become the gazing-stock of all nations, while her palaces have gone up in smoke to heaven, and her artisans, male and female, and especially female, drunk with blood, have danced amid the flames? Will any one dare to say that it has had nothing to do with the boundless extravagance of our times? Will any be bold enough to deny that *Communism* is in part the outburst of the envy which the enormous prodigality of the age has provoked?

However this may be, the Christian law is too plain to be misunderstood. St. Peter and St. Paul alike have laid it down. "Outward adorning" is in express terms put under the ban, specifications are made, just such as the times need. "Brodered hair, gold, pearls, costly array." In precise and well-considered terms, "modest apparel" is required; good works in place of gay clothing; the manifestation of "the hidden man of the heart," even the incorruptible "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

Now is this an impracticable law for a Christian in these later times? So far from it, it is as reasonable as it is scriptural. The extravagance of the reigning fashions is as *truly*, perhaps it is not going too far to say, as much forbidden by good taste as by apostolic precept. Character comes out in dress, and it cannot be helped; its varieties and delicate shadings are indicated by color, shape, and stuff. A worldly, material nature publishes itself by the clothes it wears. The vain, the ostentatious, the notoriety-seeking, are to be distinguished by it, as are the unobtrusive, the meek of heart, the intellectual and the spiritual. If there be any truth in the inspirations of St. Peter and St. Paul, it is enough to see the dress of some women and some men, to know they are not Christians, and cannot be, no matter what their professions.

Dr. Johnson used to say that a gentleman ought to dress so that after he has left you, you cannot remember what he had on. This is the dictate of common sense. The man should be so more apparent than his clothes that he should be thought of and they not. Now the Christian law is only this

maxim of good taste enlarged and consecrated. Let the Christian dress so that Christian manhood shall not be overlaid, disguised, or misinterpreted. Let Christians so dress as to show that their hearts are not on these things, but heavenly. Whatever goes to indicate that dress is a supreme object in life, and whatever implies this, is just so far forth wrong and unchristian. There is no better definition of an *idol* than that it steals the heart away from God; and when dress does, it is as much an idol as ever Moloch was; and it is fast coming to be seen that it is a worship no less cruel and bloody.

WOMAN AS A CHRISTIAN HELPMATE.

BY REV. D. MORSE, WEST HENRIETTE, N. Y.

"Tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away."—John 20: 15.

Weak woman, but heart-strong with Divine love. If the body of her Lord reposing in the tomb was against the wish of the gardener, if he had taken that body away to another and less fitting place, then her own weak arm, yet strong with love, would bear Him away. She stopped not to argue with cold, calculating reason how she would do it, any more than she stopped to consider who would roll the stone away from the sepulchre when she started on her mission of love. Ardent love waits not for calculation, but is fearless and bold; it leaps over every obstacle, triumphs over every hindrance and plucks success from the very verge of despair.

As the darkness of the early dawn, the timidity of woman, or the closed sepulchre were no hindrances to these friends, so when they found not their Lord they were unwilling that His body should be hidden away. They must know; tears should manifest their disappointment, earnest inquiry their devotion, and the avowed purpose to take their Lord away the supreme object of their love. If love of offspring regards no danger, even to the sacrifice of life; if love of art bids defiance to poverty and tramples in the dust every obstacle, and day by day and year by year slowly but perseveringly plods its way towards ultimate success; if inventive genius strikes boldly out into a barren waste, meeting only with discouragements and frowns, but with untiring energy evolving every thing from the crucible of thought, and at last finds its triumph in the homage of an admiring world; then surely there is merit and triumph in the ardent love of a Christian heart.

Success in the cause of Christ has not come with a mere wish; it has not won its way over a pathway of roses, amidst the smiles of friendly hearts, the assistance of friendly hands, or the plaudits of the multitude; but it has everywhere met with opposition, scoffs, ridicule and persecution; yet steadily and grandly, by the nerve and energy of loving hearts, has it pressed its way to eminence. Disappointment and death have often wrapped their dark mantle around her shining form, but anon! brighter and grander has she appeared, making progress even in darkness, and weaving a wreath of triumph out of apparent defeat. And woman, noble woman, has been signally instrumental in this success. Last at the cross and first at the sepulchre, her words have cheered in the hour of discouragement; her love, ever buoyant and strong, has nerved to conquest where others saw naught but failure; and her presence has animated to renewed effort even when further effort seemed fruitless.

What the cause of Christ needs to-day is not power, but the development of the power already acquired. It is hardly too much to say that there is not a church, which, if all the power was brought out, utilized and made effective, would not possess quadruple influence. For this reason we hail with joyful satisfaction the formation of the Woman's Missionary Society auxiliary to our Missionary Union, for raising funds to sustain female mis-

sionary success proves conclusively that female laborers exert an influence and accomplish an amount of good that would be almost wholly lost without them. If woman's heart is so filled with love to Jesus and His cause as to enable her to turn away from all the endearments of home, the happy associations of civilized society, and go into the darkness and uncultivated society of heathendom, and there toil amidst the hardships and privations unknown to us; then surely she ought to receive the sympathies, the prayers and assistance of her sisters at home.

God, in His providence, is opening a grand and effective agency in these woman societies for carrying on more efficiently the evangelization of the world, and also for developing the latent power in the church. The spice-bearing Marys are to be more numerous in the church than they have been hitherto. The light and power of their love and Christian influence is yet to arise and shine gloriously. God will not allow one of his most useful agencies to remain powerless or hidden when he can use it for the advancement of His own glory in the world. The sphere of woman's influence, invaluable as it is, is not to be wholly restricted to the sick chamber, the love and happiness of the home circle, the refinements of society, or the cultivation of a purer taste in letters, music or art. No! God is bringing out into the clearer light of His own truth these hidden ones, to labor still more efficiently in behalf of His own cause. It is well for us sometimes to read scriptural truth as containing more truth, more influence, and of further reaching application, than the immediate circumstances surrounding it. I love to look onward through coming years and see these truths enlarging their spheres; stretching out their power through the whole earth, and constantly gathering around them the increasing glory and victory of the Messiah's kingdom.

What the Saviour said to those faithful women after he had revealed Himself to them expresses to my mind a far-reaching truth: "But go to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and to your God." Their mission of love in bearing spices to the sepulchre was not their only work. They were the first commissioned to carry the glad tidings of a risen Saviour. Disappointed in their mission to the sepulchre they were honored as the first heralds of the resurrection. And thus we may read the constantly and increasing influence of woman in the advancement of Christ's cause throughout the world. When the babe Moses was first discovered by Pharaoh's daughter the mother of that child was unknown, hidden away from sight; "And his sister stood afar off to see what would be done to him:" but in the wise providence of God the mother was chosen to care for the child, and thus to mould his character for all coming time. So do I believe the time has come for the influence and power of woman to be brought out fully into the foreground of Christian effort.

EXTEMPORANEOUS TEACHING.

The teacher who goes to his class thinking that he himself is always competent without preparation is making, what I think, a gross mistake. It is well to preach without notes, no doubt, but a man who should preach purely extemporaneously, without thinking beforehand, would probably be an exceedingly dull and dry preacher.

"Would you believe it, Sandy," said a divine, "that I never thought of the sermon before I went into the pulpit?"

"Oh, that is exactly what Mr. Macintosh and I have been saying, while you were preaching."

Now, if Sunday-school teachers pride themselves in their extemporaneous teaching, their pride is peculiar to themselves, and the children will not take much pride in them.—Spurgeon.

The following from the N. Y. *Christian Weekly* is a lucid examination of a question which has doubtless, often, in some form, suggested itself to almost every person. The remark at the close respecting property in knowledge, if properly appreciated would become a powerful stimulus to parents to give their children as large a measure as possible of this property, which does not take to itself wings and fly away like other riches:—

A QUESTION IN BUSINESS MORALS.

A correspondent sends us the following question:

"A business man in traveling finds a piece of land containing, to all appearance, a fine quarry of rare marble. The owner of the land is ignorant of its value, and holds it at farm prices. Is it right for the business man to buy the land at the low price at which the countryman holds it, without saying anything of the unsuspected value therein?"

A good lawyer is always reluctant to give a legal opinion on a hypothetical case, because it often requires as much legal acumen to determine what are the important circumstances as to decide what are the controlling legal principles. We shall not undertake to give a direct answer to our correspondent. But there are two principles whose application may help in the solution of the problem which, in different forms, is of constant occurrence in business life.

It is clear, in the first place, that the business-man has no right to use his superior knowledge to mislead his more ignorant neighbor. He has no right to deceive him, either by direct or indirect means. He has no right to depreciate the property which he wishes to purchase. He is bound to pay a fair price for it. But the fair price in such a case is what it is worth to the farmer, not what it is worth to the business-man—what it is worth to the man who sees in it only hay and grain, not what it is worth to him whose superior knowledge discerns beneath the soil a valuable quarry.

For each party in such a transaction has a right to his own—the farmer to his land, the business man to his knowledge. There is no more reason why the latter should be considered under obligation to give his superior knowledge to the farmer, than why the farmer should be considered under obligation to give his land to the business man. It is not impossible that the purchaser has acquired his knowledge at no little expense of time and money. He has paid, perhaps, for a college and a scientific education, counting on the returns which it will afford him to pay the cost of it. The fact that knowledge is money is an incentive to study. Let it once be settled that the ignorant and the unthinking are entitled to the benefits of their more studious neighbour's knowledge, without paying for it, and one of the most considerable spurs to industry in study will be taken away. Even if his superior knowledge is a native, not an acquired gift, it is still his own, just as the farm belongs to the farmer whether he earned it or inherited it. Christianity gives as little countenance to communism in ideas as to communism in property.

No one doubts that a man's muscles are his own. But a great many people seem to think that a man's brains belong to his neighbors. No! Thoughts are property, and the thinker has a right to the profits of his own thinking. Any other doctrine would offer a premium on mental laziness by depriving mental industry of its just reward.

Nevertheless, as we have said, circumstances alter cases. And in such a case as our correspondent describes, the law of Christian love will require that the purchaser take no more by his bargain than that proportion of the profit which a fair and impartial judgment would award as legitimately belonging to the man whose knowledge