

The Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

NEW SERIES.
Vol. XVII, No. 17.

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Wednesday, April 24, 1872.

WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XXXVI, No. 17.

Poetry.

WHAT WAS THE CUP?

BY CHARLES A. DENNISON.

What was the cup in the hand of our Lord,
As the grove of betrayal at midnight he trod;
When like drops of his blood lay his sweat on the sward,
And the cry of his anguish went upward to God?
Ah! what was the cup that the angel looked in,
As he hung by its brim on the gloom of mid-air?
Did he see through its depths the last pang of sin?
Did he count in its dregs the last woe of despair?
What spake to God's Son God's own minister then?
What strength was the strength that his ministry gave?
Was Christ's sorrow to death like the sorrow of men?
What his grief all the grief of the Mighty to save?
Disciples of Jesus! all weary of life,
As broken of heart ye in agony fail,
Crushed down by the heel of the merciless strife,
Still lift to the Master your pitiful call.
Oh! think of the cup that our Crucified bore,
As he bowed in the darkness, and trembled,
And prayed;
Then think of the crown that the Conqueror wore,
Rising up in his might from Gethsemane's shade.

Religious.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.

We take the following extract from a recent sermon of Rev. Dr. Brooks, President of Kalamazoo College, Michigan, whose position and mature mind entitle his opinions to great respect. We had the pleasure of forming his acquaintance some years ago, and then learned to set a high estimate upon him as a man and a Christian minister.

The thoughts here presented deserve careful consideration by our people at the present time:—

What is a Christian education? A most careful and vigorous training of the mind is not necessarily a Christian training. The education given in our public schools, excellent as it is, cannot be called a Christian education, except in a very general and vague sense of the term. It is given in many instances by men and women of the truest Christian character, who are even more anxious for the religious welfare than for the mental development of their pupils. But the work for which they are employed does not include, as its smallest part, the religious training of the young. If any one of them, believing in what we call the evangelical doctrines of religion, attempts to impress these doctrines, or to enforce the duties which result from them, on his pupils, another teacher, rejecting the evidences of a divine revelation, may with equal right, instill into the minds of his scholars the principles of a deadly infidelity, and a third may not be blamed for enticing the unwary young into the corrupt forms and dangerous delusions of the Romish church.

The State provides for its children an education of great value, training their various intellectual faculties, and filling the storehouse of their minds with varied knowledge. But this does not constitute a Christian education. That is the training of the mind and the heart of the Christian life and Christian service. It is an education in which the pupil is reminded of his duty to God, and in the development of his intellectual powers, is not allowed to forget his obligation to be personally a Christian. In such an education the teacher is at liberty to consider character more important than acquisitions of learning, or strength and grace of intellect, and will always consider his pupil as not having attained the most important learning, so long as he has

not learned the best of all the sciences. A Christian education is one in which all learning is considered chiefly as a preparation for doing good and serving God. The true Christian educator desires, and prays, and labors, that those whom he teaches may be disciples of Christ, and efficient workers in Christ's kingdom. Inasmuch as to be personally a Christian is better than all merely intellectual attainments, a Christian education requires that the teacher, while attempting to impart knowledge the most varied and most valuable, and to develop the mental powers most fully and most systematically, should also aim at making every pupil, first a Christian, and then a well-developed, efficient Christian.

But there is nothing sectarian in this; for we have seen that the fundamental idea of the Christian life is simple allegiance to Christ. The respects in which all Christians differ from one another are as nothing compared with those in which they agree. To lead a sinner to Christ, to awaken faith in Christ, to make one a truthful, earnest disciple of Christ, this is not sectarian, but it is Christian.

There is such a thing as a sectarian education; and every one must recognize the correctness of the classification by which a leading journal lately distributed the colleges of our country under the three titles, Sectarian, Christian, and Irreligious. A sectarian school is one in which the peculiar dogmas of a sect are regarded as more important than simple Christian character. Such, from the very nature of the case every school sustained by the Romish church must be. If I were an honest adherent of the Papal church, believing that salvation is attained only by members of this communion, I would labor with all diligence, in school and every where else, to make men Romanists; and I cannot blame those who use every possible means to entice the young into their schools, that they may acquire an influence over them, by which they may draw them into what they believe to be the only true church, and the only ark of safety. Their schools are necessarily sectarian.

But if a teacher believes that to be a Christian is far higher and better than to be a Baptist,—that one must be a Christian before he is prepared to be a member of any church, and that God will accept the service and faith of every true disciple, whether he has learned all truth or never in this life comes to a perfect understanding of all the teachings of Jesus, that teacher may be faithful to all his convictions of duty while he conducts a school that is Christian, but not sectarian. For he esteems piety as infinitely better than orthodoxy, and faith in Christ as immeasurably higher than acceptance of any creed.

But there are also irreligious schools. For if an institution of learning is supported by men of all creeds and all characters, they to whom its instruction is committed, cannot, as teachers, seek even the Christian character of the students, without trespassing on the rights of some of their supporters. If the principle on which a college is planted involves the absence of all religious influence, and it would be considered an impertinence for any teacher to aim at the religious welfare of the students, I do not see any impropriety in calling it an irreligious college,—not in any offensive sense of the word, for the question is debatable, whether a college ought to be Christian, but simply as expressing the fact. Many able men argue in favor of such an institution, and claim that a perfect freedom from the influence of Christian truth is more favorable to the progress of free inquiry, and to release from old superstitions. But I am afraid of such schools of learning, not because they encourage freedom of thought, but because the tendencies of our time are too strongly towards freedom from the needed restraints of religion, and because thought is more in danger of being in bondage to the sinful tendencies of our nature, than of being enslaved by the creed of our fathers.

We need, then, Christian rather than sectarian or irreligious schools of higher learning. How can we have them? Can the State found and endow them? Can all the people, Christians and Infidels, Jews and Pagans, be required to contribute for the maintenance of Christian institutions? I know it is sometimes said that we are a Christian people. But only in the most vague possible sense of the word is this true. We profess to believe in perfect religious liberty, not for one church simply, but for all citizens,—not for Christians only, but for unbelievers also; for men of any creed and for men of no creed. It is a fundamental principle among Baptists, that every man is accountable for his religious opinions and character to God alone,—that so far as the civil power is concerned, all religions, and the adherents of all religions are alike in their rights,—that Christianity asks no patronage from the State, and cannot receive any without damage to herself. If this is a correct position, the State has no right to establish or maintain a Christian school of learning. It is an interference with the admitted rights of those who reject Christianity. And the fact that these are very few, compared with the whole population, cannot change the character of the act. They have their rights, and those rights must be respected. It cannot be right that all the people, of all possible religious opinions, be compelled to sustain Christian institutions, whether of learning or of worship.

But suppose this difficulty did not exist. Let it be admitted for a moment that all the people profess to be Christians, and all without exception, are ready to co-operate in sustaining a Christian College. Yet these avowed Christians are of all grades of opinion, even respecting the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. How can they agree as to what constitutes the essence of our religion? To meet the demands of each of the different sects, nothing must be taught, that is in direct opposition to the opinions of any sect. Else the members of that sect will justly complain that their rights are invaded. But we have seen that to include in Christian doctrine only what all Christians accept, is to include nothing distinctively Christian. And as such doctrine could not rightly be called Christian, so a school which should teach only such doctrine, could not be called a Christian school. It must take rank among irreligious schools.

In our colleges the amount of directly religious instruction that is imparted, especially in the recitation room, is very small, and cannot be large. But the indirect instruction is much greater, and insinuates itself into every department of study. There is certainly nothing specially religious in the study of logic and rhetoric; and a Pagan or a Jew might fully comprehend, and clearly expound the principles of both. But some of you know that Archbishop Whately in his treatises on these subjects, finds occasion, by his abundant and apt illustrations, to make known his opinions on almost every leading question that has agitated the Christian church. And he does it legitimately. How much more opportunity would a teacher find for such illustrations in the oral instructions of the class-room. Where should an earnest teacher find illustrations of any department of art or science, if not in those subjects which absorb his chief attention? In teaching the Evidences of Christianity, or Natural Theology, or Moral Philosophy, a Christian teacher not only has abundant opportunity to make known his opinions on various questions, respecting which the Christian world is divided, but he can scarcely avoid doing so. His opinions will shape his illustrations and his arguments; and even when he has no such intention, he will unconsciously but surely indicate his Christian philosophy.

Some time ago I heard the President of an excellent State University preach to the students on a Sunday afternoon. He is a man of catholic feeling, and perhaps as free from sectarian bias as any man belonging to a sect can well

be. His subject was not such as to demand any doctrinal statement, to which any one of half a dozen leading Christian denominations would object. He did not utter a single sentence which, taken by itself, could be criticised as sectarian. Yet his discourse as a whole, in its general tone, in its pervading spirit, in its underlying philosophy, indicated very clearly his attitude in reference to some of the fundamental doctrines as to which the sects differ. No one carefully listening to him could mistake his denominational relations. And how could it be otherwise? How can an earnest man preach and say nothing? How can he say anything from a full heart, without indicating his opinions on subjects in which his heart is deeply interested? I do not now refer, of course, to questions affecting the moral government of God, the character of man, the way of salvation, the mission of Christ. These will not be kept out of sight. And if the Christian teacher has well defined ideas on these questions, his pupils will learn what his opinion are, even if he wishes to conceal them. And if they are, in his estimation, the foundation of all Christian character, and the most important teachings of the inspired word, he will not wish to conceal them.

Hence the inevitable tendency, in our higher institutions of learning which are not distinctively religious, is to become irreligious. Men of positive religious convictions are likely, sooner or later, to give offense to those from whom they differ; and their places must be filled by men less likely to give offense. I speak of this as the tendency in such institutions. It is not always developed at once. Some such institutions are under the direction of men of noblest Christian character, who cannot fail to exert a favourable influence on the character of the young men whom they teach. But this will not always be so. With human nature what it is, and the people as wide apart as they are in their religious convictions, a change will inevitably come, sooner or later; and the sons of Christian parents will be subjected to the instructions of men who will mingle with their teachings the doubts of scepticism or the sneer of infidelity, just as their predecessors are now incidentally teaching the truths of Christianity, and the value of Christian faith.

The remedy for this is in Christian schools of learning, in academies and colleges founded and sustained by Christian men, for Christ and the church. We cannot do without them. Our churches cannot have the largest prosperity without them. We shall fail of an adequate ministry without them. Too many of our sons and daughters for whom we seek a higher education, will, without them, acquire power unsanctified by the grace of God, only to misuse. Oh! that all our people could see their obligation, in this regard, to their own children, their obligation to Christian truth and the welfare of the world, their obligation to the church of Christ which he purchased with his blood.

The influence of a good college on the denomination of Christians sustaining it, cannot fail to be good. Blot out all the influence on the Baptists in New England, exerted by Brown University, and you greatly diminish the number and the efficiency of the churches, as well as the number and power of the ministers. Hamilton and Rochester have contributed largely to make the Baptists of New York, and of all the Western States, what they are. The University at Lewisburg has added to the resources of our brethren in Pennsylvania far more than she has received from them. So in any one of the newer States, a good school of learning will add to the general cultivation of the people, and multiply the number of ministers, and make the standard of attainment in the ministry higher, and give new strength to the churches.

Discontent, like ink poured into a bottle of water, turns all to blackness.

STATE OF MEN AFTER DEATH.

BY REV. ALVAH HOVEY, D. D.

Paradise.

In the last two articles of this series I have examined the only two passages of the New Testament which seem to me, at first sight, to be inconsistent with the doctrine of a general resurrection at the return of Christ in glory, and have found them, upon further study, entirely consistent with that doctrine. I return, therefore, to the conclusion reached in my second article, namely, that "the doctrine of a middle state is established by the only suitable evidence; and this evidence is so plain, and direct, and complete as to render serious doubt impossible to one who accepts the New Testament as an inspired record." But I now wish to modify this statement, making it read: "And this evidence is so plain, and direct, and complete as to exclude all doubt from my own mind;" for it does not accord with truth or charity to say that the evidence must be equally convincing to every one who accepts the New Testament as an inspired record. Had I thought of particular persons, when writing the original sentence, the extravagance of the remark would have been instantly suggested; but none were in my mind; and so, without sufficient reflection, I assumed that what appeared to me so plainly revealed by the Saviour Himself, and by His inspired apostle, must appear in the same light to others. With this correction I repeat my statement, that the doctrine in question is established by the only suitable evidence, namely, the testimony of God's Word.

But what do the Scriptures teach as to the condition of good men between their death and resurrection? As to their bodies no special light from revelation is needed, for it is obvious to sense that they rest in the grave and return to dust; yet when the Bible speaks of the consequences of death to the body, its language agrees with the evidence of our senses. To this general remark another may properly be added, that the effects of death upon man, as a living being, are sometimes, and especially in the poetical books of Scripture, described by its effects upon the body. And this is just what might have been expected from the popular style of that holy book. But what does the Sacred Record say of departed spirits? For if we are to know any thing in respect to their condition after death, light from revelation is indispensable; the testimony of reason, conscience, aspiration leaves us still in doubt; the eye of sense cannot pierce the veil; and our only refuge is the Word of God. That, however, does not disappoint us; it gives us light, sweet, pure and quickening, though not perhaps in such fulness as some of us crave. But enough is revealed to awaken gratitude and inspire hope. For the state of pious souls immediately after death is described as "being in Paradise," "in Abraham's bosom," "with Christ," and "perfect." To ascertain their condition, therefore, is simply to find the meaning of these expressions, as employed by Christ and His apostles.

The souls of the righteous enter Paradise at death. For it is recorded that Jesus was crucified between two malefactors (Luke 23: 42 sq.), one of whom blasphemed Him, while the other said to him, "Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom!" Instead of adjusting His response to the form of the petition, Jesus replied, "Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." What then, was meant by Paradise? The word was used by Xenophon to signify a spacious garden or park, having streams and trees, "enclosed against injury, yet with its natural beauty unspoiled." It was selected by the Seventy to signify the garden of Eden, and is employed wherever there is an allusion to that delightful spot. It was used by the Essenes to signify a region beyond the ocean, oppressd by no