

The Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

NEW SERIES.
Vol. XVIII., No. 38.

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Wednesday, September 17, 1873.

WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XXXVII., No. 38.

Poetry.

LEFT ALONE AT EIGHTY.

What did you say, dear, "breakfast?"
Somehow I've slept too late;
You are very kind, dear Effie,
Go tell them not to wait.
I'll dress as quick as ever I can,
My old hands tremble sore,
And Polly, who used to help, dear heart!
Lies 't' other side o' the door.
Put up the old pipe, deary,
I couldn't smoke to-day;
I'm sort o' dazed and frightened,
And don't know what to say.
It's lonesome in the house, here,
And lonesome out o' door—
I never knew what lonesome meant,
In all my life, before.
The bees go humming, the whole day long,
And the first June rose has blown,
And I am eighty, dear Lord, to-day,
Too old to be left alone!
O, heart of love! so still and cold,
O, precious lips, so white!
For the first sad hours in sixty years,
"You were out of my reach, last night."
You're out the flower. You're very kind.
She rooted it, last May;
It was only a slip; I pulled the rose,
And threw the stem away;
But she, sweet, thrifty soul, bent down,
And planted it where she stood,
"Dear, maybe the flowers are living," she
said,
"Asleep, in this bit of wood."
I can't rest, deary—I cannot rest;
Let the old man have his will,
And wander from porch to garden post—
The house is so deathly still;
Wander, and long for a sight of the gate
She has left ajar for me—
We had got so used to each other, dear,
So used to each other, you see.
Sixty years, and so wise and good,
She made me a better man
From the moment I kissed her fair young
face,
And our lover's life began.
And seven fine boys she has given me,
And out of the seven, not one
But the noblest father in all the land
Would be proud to call his son.
O, well, dear Lord, I'll be patient,
But I feel so broken up;
At eighty years it's an awful thing
To drain such a bitter cup.
I know there's Joseph and John, and Hal,
And four good men beside,
But a hundred sons couldn't be to me
Like the woman I made my bride.
My little Polly, so bright and fair;
So winsome, and good, and sweet!
She had roses twined in her sunny hair,
White shoes on her dainty feet;
And I held her hand—Was it yesterday
That we stood up to be wed?
And—No, I remember, I'm eighty to-day,
And my dear wife, Polly, is dead.

Religious.

SING, CHRISTIAN, SING!

When Mr. Duncan Matheson was in the Crimea, in the time of the recent war with Russia, he did much for the temporal and spiritual welfare of the soldiers, as well as gave the New Testament in their own language to the soldiers of the Sardinian contingent. He was daily engaged laboring among the healthy, the sick, and the dying, both in the camp and in the fleet.
One night as he was returning from before Sebastopol to his comfortable lodgings in a poor hut at Balaklava, and wading almost ankle-deep in the celebrated mud and was in circumstances of discomfort sufficiently depressing, he lifted up his eyes and viewed the bright, calm stars, that shone over head, and, his soul soaring beyond them, he cheered his toilsome way by singing, to a well-known tune, the inspiring him, beginning,
"How bright these glorious spirits shine!
Whence all their white array?
How came they to the blissful seats
Of everlasting day?
"Lo! these are they from sufferings great
Who came to realms of light,
And in the blood of Christ have washed
Those robes which shine so bright."
Next day, as he was on his way to

the trenches, he fell in with a poor soldier in miserable circumstances. His clothing was meagre, tattered and muddy, and his toes were sticking out at the sides of his worn-out shoes. Mr. Matheson asked, in his frank, manly way, how he was getting on, and seeing his wretched circumstances, gave him a half a sovereign to buy a pair of shoes.

The soldier replied, that although he was far from being well, or comfortable in mind, he was much better than he was yesterday. This excited Mr. Matheson's curiosity, and he pressed him to tell why he was so excessively wretched yesterday, which he did with some hesitancy and apparent reluctance. His tale of that yesterday's misery was substantially this:

"As I thought," said the soldier, "of all we had passed through since we came out here; that we had been before this place so long, and that we appeared as far from taking it as the first day we sat down before it; that I was perfectly miserable, and could hardly be worse, death seemed preferable to life, and I resolved I would do for my myself and be done with it. I took up my musket, and went down there about eleven o'clock last night, and was making all ready to despatch myself, when a person I could not distinguish in the darkness passed down near me, wading through the mud, but apparently in a happy mood of mind; for he was singing.

"How bright these glorious spirits shine!" etc. to a tune with which I was familiar; and I said to myself, 'Well, now, this is too bad of me, it is very cowardly; for that fellow's circumstances are, no doubt as bad as mine, and yet he seems to be happy; but on listening to the words he was singing, I thought he must be in possession of a source of happiness, and have a something to support him, to which I was quite a stranger. I wished I only knew how to be as happy as he; and with that I put my musket under my arm and returned, and I feel better to-day, and more resolved to bear the worst."

How great was his surprise to be told that the singer who had charmed away from him the evil spirit of yesterday was now before him. "Was it you? Then I won't keep your half-sovereign. I won't keep it now; for your singing last night has given me already much more than I can express." Mr. Matheson would, doubtless, embrace this favorable opportunity to lay before him the way of salvation from sin and wrath.

But the great moral of the story which I wish now to apply is, *Sing! Christian, sing!* Yes, my Christian friend sing, however wretched you may be in outward circumstances, however gloomy may be your prospect. SING! "Rejoice in the Lord alway: again, I say, Rejoice;" and if you do so, you cannot tell the mighty effect it may have in a world lying in wickedness and bent on self destruction! Never despair! Have confidence in the God of all grace, and praise Him always with all your might. It will become the heirs of a kingdom—"the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty"—to be moping, disconsolate, sad, and desponding like the waifs of Satan. In the midst of your tribulation be cheerful and happy; and let the world see how your faith can make you rise above your adverse circumstances, and sing as you struggle through the mud of this world's evils, and you may be well assured it will have a mighty influence upon the careless and ungodly.

CONDITIONS OF SOUL GROWTH.

BY H. C. FISH, D. D.

Growth is dependent upon means used to promote it. The child grows in strength and stature by its mother's milk, animals in much the same way, and trees and vegetables by the processes and supplies of agriculture. So in religion.

Giving in charity is a means not much thought of. Jehoiada placed the chest for offerings next to the altar of

sacrifice. The apostle ordered collections to be made for the poor every Lord's day. The giving to the Lord of our substance has always been, from the beginning, an act of worship and a means of grace. And then there is giving in the way of teaching, and the giving of time and effort to benefit and save others. Exercise is as necessary as food in order to healthful animal existence, and in the same way the Christian graces are developed.

There is a singular reflex influence in good deeds. Some one has said that the heart of the raven that carried food to Elijah must have been warmed in feeding that famishing prophet. And we have the best assurance that the liberal soul shall be made fat. Of old they tried to store up and keep the manna but it bred worms. Instructive fact for those who would ever receive but nothing give; who, in a life of indolence, are gatherers and hoarders, but not distributors of spiritual blessings. Remember that the regular exercise of our spiritual man in all well doing is as necessary to spiritual growth as is bodily exercise to physical development. There must be positive Christian activity if soul-life is expected to prosper.

But one cannot thrive by activity alone (a mistake made by some in this busy age.) There must be food as well, and that food is the bread of the "word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God," the "strong meat," and the "sincere milk of the word," which is "to be received that we may grow thereby." The indwelling Christ—"Christ in us"—is the life-blood circulating in the veins of the spiritual being, and Christ is communicated to us through the word. Just as the blood of the body is formed from the food of the body," so says a writer, "Christ, the blood of the soul, is formed from the word, the food of the soul. The written word becomes the personal word within us. A Christ without the Bible is as impossible as a salvation without a Christ." Neglectors of the Bible are, therefore, neglectors of Christ, however much they may beguile themselves with some sentimental illusion. Oh, forget not that the Bible, studied and received by a living faith, is as the making of blood for the soul—the supply of Christ's efficiency to the inward man. And, if you do not love God's word, your whole life is out of sorts, and needs a revolution; and you had better go to work and mend your habits as soon as possible.

Hence public worship, where the word is dispensed, is a means of grace. In this, too, are adoration, praise, and confession, which are for the soul's edification. Social worship has the same influence. "One stick," says an old author, "cannot make a fire where several can, so the fire of faith kindles and burns where two or three are together"; and one live coal lying by itself apart, will go out, where several, piled together, create a draft and glow into a flame. Who can tell the loss of those who neglect the prayer-meeting? I have yet to find out how one can thrive who voluntarily does this.

Private worship is essential to soul growth. "Enter into thy closet and pray" assumes that every Christian has one; and a soul, without prayer, is as a body without breath—dead! The first step in departing from Christ is generally taken at the closet door.

The Lord's Supper is a means of grace; and what progress can one expect to make who disregards this institution, expressly set up that, through feeding by faith on the great sacrifice offered upon the cross, he may be "strengthened with all might by the spirit in the inner man?"

Am I going forward or backward? Let us be sure of one thing; indifference on this subject is a painful evidence that we are not advancing. No one can make progress who does not mean to.

Hope is the sunlight of life.

JESUITISM NOT A RELIGION.

Catholicism is a religion; and under the law of religious equality, we are bound as citizens to treat it as we would any other religion, giving it free course and a fair share in all the advantages of the State. As Christians, we are bound to regard it with charity, and to overcome it, not with evil but with good. But Jesuitism is not religion; Jesuitism is, and always was, conspiracy. It conspired of old with Catholic despots for the overthrow of Protestant governments, and of the liberty in which Protestantism has its being. It conspires with factions for the same purposes now. When Bismarck expelled the Jesuits, we are told that he cruelly banished a set of pious men, entirely engaged in performing the offices of religion, ministering to the rich, and educating the poor. In which of these pious offices were the Jesuits engaged when they secured by their intrigues the arms of Philip II., and prepared the way in England for the Armada; when they dictated to Louis XIV. the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the elimination of the French Protestants; when they instilled into English Catholics the treasonable sentiments which led to the conspiracy of Guy Fawkes; when they filled the Swiss Confederation with malignant jealousies, brought it at last to civil war, and compelled a Republic, in which Catholic and Protestant have long dwelt together in peace, to send the Order over the frontier; when, the other day, they instigated the French invasion of Germany, for the purpose of destroying a great Protestant power? Those machinations against German unity which they were continuing to carry on, and which brought down Bismarck's heavy hand upon the authors of them, did they belong to the duty of performing religious offices, or of educating the poor, or of ministering to the sick? The Jesuit has no country, no tie or restraint of patriotism, no regard for the nation on which he operates, no compunction in bringing on it war or any other calamity, provided he can quench his free life, and turn in into one of those living corpses which Loyola enjoined his disciples to be. He strangles free communities as offerings to his Spanish deity, as human beings have been immolated by those fanatical Eastern sectaries whose devotion of body and soul to their secret society or chief equals that of the Jesuit to Loyola. The very mystery with which he shrouds himself is a proof that he is a conspirator; honesty, even honest fanaticism, never shrinks from the light of day. Against conspiracy society has a right to guard itself, though it has none to interfere with the exercise or the propagation of any religion. The main object of a Jesuit university would not be education, but intrigue. It would be a centre, established by the nation, of conspiracy against the national life. The British Parliament is bound to refuse its sanction to the establishment of a Jesuit university, or a university to which Jesuits are to be admitted; so is any Canadian Legislature, and the Dominion Parliament, if the question ever comes before it, as the case of the New Brunswick school act shows that such questions may be.—*Goldwin Smith.*

RECENT ASSYRIAN EXPLORATIONS.

BY MR. GEORGE SMITH.

The return of the *Daily Telegraph* exploring Commissioner has been announced. Mr. Smith gives a further account of excavations at Nimrod. Of one of the palaces he says that all the chambers had been rifled at some early period, and that they were full of coffins and skeletons belonging to an epoch after the fall of the Assyrian Empire. "In some cases solid walls six feet thick, had been cut through, terra-cotta coffins inserted in the openings, and new brickwork built up round them. I came into one cham-

ber utterly ruined, full of coffins and urns. Parts of the floor alone remained. There were several other apartments belonging to the south-east palace also ruined and full of skeletons, but almost all had been plundered, and even the pavements sometimes removed. One beautiful portion of carved stone pavement cut out of a much larger block, and used subsequently for an inferior purpose, still remained; and there were also fragments of a very fine wall, painted with scenes in brilliant colours like the Egyptian tombs; but these were so broken that I could not make out the subject of the representation. Some winged bulls which had adorned the entrance in this direction were also in fragments, while everywhere throughout the place the chambers were choked with fallen beams of burnt wood—the rafters of the roof. Heaps of charcoal were present all over the place, and my fire was supplied as long as I remained at the site with these remnants of antiquity. Some of the terra-cotta coffins were fine specimens, and no two were of the same shape. They were mostly bricked up very closely and the top covered by one or two slabs torn from the neighboring palaces. The investigation of these burials was no part of my original plan, but as they were from time to time accidentally discovered, I examined them and collected some of the contents. All the coffins were shorter than the human stature, and the skeletons had been doubled to make them fit. Accompanying the remains were bracelets of rough metal rings, beads, heads of weapons, and various other instruments. Beside the mouldering dust stood in most cases the silent evidences of the belief of these people in a future life, although their ideas about it appear to have been very material. A terra-cotta water bottle and a saucer for food accompanied the remains in nearly every case. The skeletons were in a very decayed condition, falling to powder on the slightest touch."

PULPIT THEMES.

In one of a series of articles, entitled "The Decline of Methodism in New York," the *Methodist* says:

It is conceded that the number of commanding pulpit orators among us is not as great as it was in former years. The average quality of Methodist preaching is better, but the other fact is as we have stated. Yet while we have gained much, we have lost something. We do not move the masses of the people as easily as we did formerly, and do not gather our fruit as rapidly as in the olden time. Our preaching is more reflective, but less arousing. In some instances, it aspires to be philosophical, and then ceases to be preaching at all; or it betakes itself to manuscript, and then instead of a sermon, we have an essay. Now, it is characteristic of the successful Protestant preachers of this city, who are not Methodists, that they are purely Biblical in their treatment of their themes. They preach the Gospel, first, last, and always. They leave the controversy between science and Christianity to the essayists, or handle it themselves, as essayists, through the press. The results prove that they are right. The people listen to them gladly, for the people want to hear of Christianity as a positive and divine power in the world. The crowds that attend Dr. Thompson's Bible-class in Association Hall prove that there is an unflinching interest felt by the popular mind in the simple exposition of the word of God. These facts may suggest to us, as Methodists, some useful hints.

At the last when we die we have the good angels for our escort on the way. They who can grasp the whole in their hands can surely also guard our souls, that they may—that last journey safely.

No lie can be dangerous unless it be the ghost of some truth.