

The Christian Messenger.

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

NEW SERIES.
Vol. XIX., No. 3.

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Wednesday, January 21, 1874.

WHOLE SERIES.
Vol. XXXVIII., No. 3.

Poetry.

WAIT ON THE LORD.

"Lord, behold He whom Thou lovest is sick!"—JOHN 11:3.
One touch from Thee—the Healer of diseases;
One little touch would make our brother whole;
And yet Thou comest not,—O blessed Jesus!
Send a swift answer to our waiting soul.
Fall many a message have we sent, and pleaded,
That Thou wouldst Thy haste coming,
gracious Lord;
Each message was received and heard and heeded,
And yet we welcome no responsive word.
We know that Thou art blessing with a withholding;
We know that Thou art near us though apart;
And though we list no answer, Thou art folding
Our poor penitents to Thy smitten heart.
A bright and glorious answer is preparing,
Hid in the depths of love—the depths of grace;
We know that Thou, the Risen, still art bearing
Our cause as Thine within the holy place.
And so we trust our pleadings to Thy keeping;
So at Thy feet we lay our burden down;
Content to bear the earthly cross with weeping,
Till at Thy feet we cast the heavenly crown.
—Episcopalian.

THE NEW CHURCH ORGAN.

They've got a brand new organ, Sae,
For all their fuss and search;
They've done just as they said they'd do,
And fetched it into church.
They're bound the critter shall be seen,
And on the preacher's right
They've got a chorister and choir,
Ag'in my voice and vote;
For it was never my desire,
To praise the Lord by note!
I've been a sister good an' true
For five-an'-thirty year;
I've done what seemed my part to do,
An' prayed my duty clear;
I've sung the hymns both slow and quick,
Just as the preacher read,
And twice, when Deacon Tubbs was sick,
I took the lead an' led!
And now, their new-fangled ways
Is coming at us fast;
And I, right in my old days,
Am fairly crowded out!
To-day the preacher, good old dear,
With tears at his eyes,
Read, "I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies."
I always liked that old hymn—
I 'pose I ain't a wit;
It somehow grieves my whim,
To good old On-ouville;
But when that choir got up to sing,
I couldn't catch a word;
They sung the most outlandish thing
A body ever heard!
Some worldly camps was grindin' near;
An' when I see the n'grin,
I bid farewell to every tear,
And bodily wa'n in.
I thought I'd sing my tune along,
And tried with all my might;
But though my voice is good and strong,
I couldn't see a right;
When they was singin', then I was low,
An' also cou'nted;
An' I too fast, or they too slow,
To "mansions in the skies."
An' after ev'ry verse, you know,
They play a little tune;
I didn't understand, an' so
I started in to sing.
I pitched it pretty middlin' high,
I fetched a lute tone,
But, oh, alas! I found that I
Was singin' to be alone!
They la'shed a little, I am told;
But I had done my best;
And not a wave of trouble rolled
Across my peaceful breast.
And Sister Brown—I could but look—
She sits right front of me;
She never was no singin' book,
An' never meant to be;
But then she a'ways tried to do
The best she could, she said;
She understood the time right through,
And kep' it with her head;
But when she tried this mornin', oh,

I had to laugh, or cough!
It kep' her head a-bobbin' so,
It 'seem a'most came off!
An' Deacon Tubbs—he all broke down,
As one might well suppose;
He took one look at Sister Brown,
And meekly scratched his nose.
He looked his hymn-book through and through,
And laid it on the seat,
And then a pensive sigh he drew,
And looked completely beat,
An' when they took another bout,
He didn't even rise;
But drew his red handker out,
An' wiped his weepin' eyes.
I've been a sister, good an' true,
For five-an'-thirty year;
I've done what seemed my part to do,
An' prayed my duty clear;
But death will stop my voice, I know,
For he is on my track;
An' some day I, church will go,
And never more come back;
And when the folks gets up to sing—
When that time shall be—
I do not want that potent thing
A squealin' over me!
N. Y. Observer.

Religious.

CHRISTIAN VIRTUE versus WORLDLY AMUSEMENTS.

BY REV. W. O. AYER, PETERBORO, N. H.

Holland, as every one knows, lies below the sea level. As the sea has gradually encroached, the people, to save themselves and preserve their State, have built massive dykes, against which the sea harmlessly beats. Were the dykes to be removed, Holland would quickly become a waste of waters.

Christianity and the spirit of the world stand in about the same relations as Holland and the sea. Christianity is separated from the hostile world by the grand dyke of Christian principle. But that dyke is swarming with men who are at work, some with big tools and some with little, seeking to remove the barrier, and bring the world and Christianity more on a level.

They tell us that the church is not charitable; it is too austere, too gloomy, too exclusive and secluded; that the church would be better off and more popular if diversified by the beautiful streams and attractive cascades which the world might furnish. And so they dig away at Christian principle, paring it down as rapidly as possible, thoughtless that the innocent looking waters will, when the advantage is gained, and the barrier sufficiently removed, rush in, carrying away whatever of Christian principle is left, and devastating everything in their course.

Perhaps you are standing on that dyke, looking this way and that—at the water, at the protected land—at the world, at the churches. Ah! take heed that you lift not even a foot thoughtlessly to strike at the barrier which Christ has reared for our safety between the church and the world.

But what is this dyke? What is the radical difference between the Christian and the man of the world?

The foundation principle of the Christian is this: he is bound to follow the right, at no matter what sacrifice, no matter how opposed to temporary self-interest.

The man of the world, on the other hand, will, on the whole, make self-interest the motive; following the right if thereby his interests will not suffer; following the wrong rather than sacrifice the interests of self.

This loyalty to the right is the sum and substance of Christian virtue. He is the Christian virtue who is loyal to the right. He is the true Christian. Not that the true Christian, exposed as he is to the besetments of sin, will actually succeed in attaining this high standard; but this will be his aim. Rarely will he be governed by the wrong principle of self-interest; out of deliberate and enlightened choice, never!

And the standard of right is the will of God. And now we have it.

The underlying distinction between the true Christian and the man of the world is this: the Christian's motive is the will of God. He inquires, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" The motive of the man of the world is self-interest.

And this difference in the root will cause a great difference in the fruit.

Because it is right, because it is the will of God, the Christian will strive to serve the Lord his God with all his heart and with all his soul; to keep the commandments of the Lord, and His statutes. For the same reason he will endeavor to "have anxiety for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication make known his wants to God." For the same reason, whether he eats or drinks, or whatever he does, he will do all to the glory of God. For the same reason, in his relations with others, he will make the second great commandment of the law his guide, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

It is in respect to this last—in respect to the duties which the Christian owes to his fellow-men, that I wish to apply practically the principle just brought out.

The restless ones who are seeking to level the dyke of Christian principle complain of the austerity and unattractiveness of religion. And, especially, Christians are criticised very severely for their rigidity in condemning certain popular and attractive sources of amusement—as the theater, the dance, the card party, and the like. Even young Christians sometimes share to a greater or less extent the doubt of the justness of the attitude of the church on this question of amusements.

Now, without entering into a general discussion of the question, look at it, if you profess to be guided by the laws of Christian virtue, merely in the light of the second commandment of the law. Granting for the sake of argument, that it can be shown that many are not injured by occasional indulgence in these amusements, can it not be shown that many more are?

Can it not be shown that they are a prolific source of the cultivation of pride, and the play of extravagance; that they are the gateway to dissipation, the strengtheners of impure passions and lusts, the feeders of a misguided and effeminizing imagination? And if so, can the Christian lend his sanction, even though to him personally they appear harmless, when he remembers that Christ has commanded, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself?" Can he approve, while weaker ones are thereby entering the paths of sin, and rushing on to ruin? Can he disclaim accountability for the action and the hurt of others, and wickedly adopt the language of Cain and say, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

And if approval of these questionable amusements does lay us open to the liability of breaking a commandment of God in respect to our fellow-men, and thus of violating the grand, distinguishing law of Christian virtue, can there be but one course for the Christian to take? What is the charge of narrowness and bigotry and cant to the guilt of disobeying Christ? What is this to the danger of influencing a single soul hellward, instead of heavenward?

The season of "amusements" is upon us. The god of this world has a swarm of laborers at work on the dyke, seeking to level it, and allow the waves of the world to enter and submerge the fair fields of Christianity.

Will you lend your efforts to destroy the breakwater of Christian virtue, or to build it yet higher and make it yet stronger?

THREE WANTS.—A shrewd Yankee says, "Grit, grace and greenbacks are the great wants in the Sunday School work," or perseverance, piety and pecuniary support.

True self-denial is harsh at the beginning, easy in the middle, and most sweet in the end.

For the Christian Messenger.

A GREAT HELP.

"MOSES AND ISRAEL."—Here, in one thin 8 vo. vol. of 166 pp. is the best thing extant for our teachers on the International Lessons for the first half of 1874.

A revision of the text of the lessons is given by those two distinguished scholars Drs. Mead and Bliss. This is extremely beautiful; and the teacher will know by its help, just what the lesson is. Then Dr. Franklin Johnson of Cambridge, Mass., has prepared very full notes, giving in popular form, just what the teacher needs to help him understand and apply the lesson. \$200 would not buy the Commentaries, Bible Dictionaries, Books of Travels, &c., the cream of which is here condensed for the Teacher's use. This splendid contribution to the Sunday School work is acceptable to all evangelical Christians, for there has been no occasion to traverse any disputed grounds of doctrine. The American Bible Union has laid us under a lasting debt of gratitude by its publication. The Bible and Publication Society (2 Tremont Temple, Boston) and the American News Company are engaged in circulating it. The retail price is exceedingly low—\$1—but reduction will be made to schools ordering quantities. We should think, that all Sunday School men in the Maritime Provinces, would take hold of this thing, that the booksellers would keep it and bring it into notice.

Nothing better could be done for the Sunday Schools.

ULIFILAS.

For the Christian Messenger.

CONCERNING UNION.

"Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years, I am afraid of you" &c. —GAL. IV. 10, 11.

That there was a tendency to the unnecessary and unauthorized observance of so called religious seasons, at a very early period of the Christian Church, is manifest from the above and similar passages in the writings of the Apostles. The discovery of the fact, aroused in their minds serious and grave apprehensions that things were far from being in a proper or desirable condition, especially in the Galatian Church. And the conclusion that the Apostle Paul puts upon record is, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain."

A little further on he adds, "Am I become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" and again "I stand in doubt of you."

These Galatians had had the gospel preached to them in its purity. They had had the freedom of gospel liberty, contrasted with that of legal bondage, and yet there was hankering after what was "pleasing to men." Hence the Apostle says, "For if I yet pleased men I should not be the servant of Christ."

I may be in error but my observation leads me to conclude, that there is a growing desire on the part of other denominations of Christians, manifesting itself more and more, to win Baptists as a body from the simplicity of their worship, and if possible, more or less, amalgamate them, if I may thus utilize the word, with the pedobaptist churches. Most of these, as I have shown, evidence their regard for holy-days and special seasons, called now, Leuten, now Evangelical, now Union, and such of us as cannot appreciate these traditions and ordinances, and disregard them, we may, I apprehend, safely fall back upon the admonition of the same great Apostle writing to the Colossian Church when he said, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holiday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath." Classing such practices with the "worshipping of angels and intruding into things not seen, &c."

But why, some one may say, why this spirit of watchfulness if not of hostility, to practices which good and devout men of other denominations appoint and regard? Because I see, on-think I see, in them the thin end of the wedge, and believe them to be the more dangerous, because of their plausibility.

As an illustration, let me point your readers to what is transpiring in the Christian Church all around us. I have been favoured with the perusal of a pamphlet of a dozen or so pages just issued by "THE CHURCH ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO" addressed "to the members of the Church of England of that Diocese."

At the head of this Organization stands the name of The Hon. Chief Justice W. H. Draper, C. B., with the Dean of Toronto, Vice Chancellor Blake, and Prof. Wilson as Vice Presidents. An Executive Committee of twelve gentlemen, more or less known, a Treasurer and Secretary constitute the Society and represent a Section of the Church of England. They have issued an appeal indicative of the desperate state of things existing among them.

Quoting from the reply of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to a memorial signed by over 60,000 members of the Church of England, using these memorable words, they say "There can be no doubt that the danger you apprehend of a considerable minority both of clergy and laity among us desiring to subvert the principles of the Reformation, is real." The Appeal is to the laity, to aid in the attempt to stay the tide of Ritualism and Romanism, overflowing all the banks of the ancient hierarchy.

The danger we are told in the address, emanates from "unfaithful men professing to be ministers and members of the church," all attributable to the "zeal of a group of devout men of Oxford, some forty years ago," men we are told "some of whom were actuated by an honest desire for a return to what they regarded as primitive principles, based on tradition, or taught by certain fathers of the Church."

"In London alone," says the Catholic Register, as there cited, a Roman Catholic organ "during the past year there have been 2000 converts from Protestantism," and still they come, "From every ritualistic congregation in London, there is a continual stream of converts drifting towards us." Adding "of every twenty Anglicans, not less than seventeen have been prepared for the step by the preaching heard from Ritualistic pulpits and practices they have got accustomed to, in Ritualistic churches."

This is "the letting on of water," and see how rapidly the stream gathers force! How else, now is the great Church of the Reformation to withstand this mighty tide, but by cutting off its springs entirely? O, but feast days, fast days, holidays, all for religious purposes, and so utilized, how do you connect them with Ritualism and Romanism? Look into any of the many Churches and Chapels even here in the Provinces, where high Churchmen officiate, and few would probably repeat the question.

These High Churchmen slide so gracefully into the wide spread arms of the Vicar Apostolic, and they receive such cordial welcomes when they arrive!

The "Church News," one of their English organs speaks of the work for which Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper, laid down their lives—as "protestant heresy"—the pest of protestantism. And another of these organs of the party "The Church Times" anathematizes the Reformers by whose labours Roman error was uprooted as "unredeemed villains" and unmitigated scoundrels. See the address page 3.

But underlying, and at the very foundation of all this ritualism and mischief the unscriptural dogma and practice of Infant Sprinkling presents itself. And how can Baptists who regard it as the most dangerous of all Rome's delusions and devices, how can they, heart and hand unite with those who