

# The Christian Messenger.

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## POETRY.

### Harvest.

With throbbing heart and tearful eye  
I watched the spring-time fleeting by.  
I saw the snow-drop at its birth  
Felled, by spears of rain, to earth;  
The iris burst her emerald sheath,  
And show the amethyst beneath;  
The painted tulip fade and close  
Before the glory of the rose;  
And now, down fields of sunburnt grass  
I see the withering rose-leaves pass;  
And night by night, and day by day,  
The life of summer ebbs away.  
I see the granaries overflow,  
The mellowing orchards bending low.  
O God! my heart in awe and fear  
Looks back upon thy perfect year.  
Thy bounty covers all the lands;  
I lift in prayer my empty hands.  
Of all the summer of my life  
The harvest is but sin and strife.  
Oh! could these tears, like April rain,  
Make moist my heart's hard soil again,  
And stir the seeds which Thou didst sow,  
Oh! never should they cease to flow.  
Could prayer but melt this ice away,  
Oh! never would I cease to pray  
Till thou in mercy, Lord, didst bring  
Into my soul a second spring.  
Oh! then what rich reward and sweet  
To lay its harvest at thy feet.  
—KATHERINE SAUNDERS, IN GOOD WORDS.

## RELIGIOUS.

### The Great Pot and the Twenty Leaves.

A SERMON BY C. H. SPURGEON.

(Concluded.)

"Set on the great pot,"—2 KINGS IV. 38.  
"Then bring meal,"—2 KINGS IV. 41.  
"Give unto the people that they may eat,"—2 KINGS IV. 42.  
II. And now, briefly, but very earnestly, I desire to speak to BACKSLIDERS. In all our churches there are members who are no better than they should be. It is very questionable whether they ought to be allowed to be members at all; they have gone very far back from what they used to be, or ought to be. They scarcely ever join the people of God in public prayer, though they once professed to be very devout. Private prayer is neglected, and family prayer is given up. Is it not so with some to whom I address myself? Have you not lost the light of God's countenance and gone far away from happy communion with Christ? It is not for me to charge you; let your own consciences speak. I hope that you are now beginning to feel an inward hunger, and to perceive that your backslidings have brought famine upon you. What shall I bid you do? Go and attempt your own restoration by the works of the law? By no means; I bid you bring your emptiness to Christ and look for his fullness. Yours is a great empty pot; set it on the fire, and cry to God to fill it. Jesus says to lukewarm Laodicea, "If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in unto him and sup with him." "Alas," says the Laodicean, "I have nothing in the house." Your confession is true, but when our Lord comes to sup he brings his supper with him. He stands at the door of every backslider and knocks. Will you let him in? "Oh," say you, "I wish he would enter." Dear brother, open your heart now, just as you did at the first, when as a poor sinner you went to him. Say unto him, "Blessed Lord, there is nothing in me but emptiness, but here is the guest-chamber. Come in all thy love and sup with me and I with thee. I am nothing, come and be my all in all." "But," says the backslider, "may I really come to Jesus, just as I did at the first?" Listen. "Return, ye backsliding children, for I am married unto you, saith the Lord." He is married unto you, and though you have behaved badly, the marriage bond is not broken. Where is the bill of divorce which he hath sued out? Is it not written, "he hath put away?" Come just as you are and begin anew, for he will accept you again.

"But," say you, "alas for me, I have been gathering wild gourds!" What have you been doing, professor? You have left undone what you ought to have done, and you have done many things you ought not to have done, and therefore there is no health in you. You have been trying to find pleasure in the world, and you have found wild vines? You have been tempted by love of music, love of mirth, love of show, and you have gathered "wild gourds, a lap full," almost a heart full. You have been shredding death into the pot, and now you cannot feel as you used to feel, the poison is stupefying your soul. While we were singing just now you said, "I want to sing as saints do, but there is no praise in me." If you are a worldling, and not God's child, you can live on that which would poison a Christian; but if you are a child of God, you will cry out, "O thou man of God, there is death in the pot!" Some of you have become rich, and have fallen into worldly fashionable habits—these are the colocynth cucumbers. Others of you are poor, and necessarily work with ungodly men, and perhaps their example has lowered the tone of your spirit, and led you into their ways. If you love this condition I grieve for you, but if you loathe it I trust you are a child of God, notwithstanding your state. What are you to do who have in any way fallen? Why, receive afresh the soul-saving gospel. "Bring meal"—simple, nourishing, gospel truth, and cast it into the poisoned pottage. Begin anew with Jesus Christ, as you did at first; say to him, "Lord be merciful to me asinner." "Repent and do thy first works." Do you not recollect the period when first your eyes lighted on his cross, and you stood there burdened and heavy-laden, fearing that you would sink to hell, until you read in his dear wounds that your sin was put away? There you found peace as you find transgression laid on Jesus and removed from you. Oh how you loved him. Come, brother, let us go to-night again to the cross and begin to love him again. That will cure you of the world's poisonous influences, and bring back the old feelings, the old joys, the old loves, and take the death out of the pot. Backsliders, you need now exactly what you needed at first, namely, faith in Jesus. Come repenting, come believing to the Saviour, and he will remove the ills which the gourds of earth's wild vines have brought upon you.

"Ah," say some of you, "we can understand how the Lord Jesus can fill our emptiness, and heal our souls' sicknesses, but how shall we continue in the right way? Our past experience has taught us our weakness, we are afraid that even the great pot will only last us for a little while, and then our souls will famish." Then remember the other part of our text, in which we read that when the few loaves, and the ears of corn in the husks, were brought to Elisha, the Lord multiplied them. Though you may have very little grace that grace shall be increased. "He giveth more grace." We receive grace for grace—daily grace for daily need. Between this and heaven you will want a heaven full of grace, and you will have it. No one knows what draughts you will make upon the exchequer of the King of kings, but his treasury will not be exhausted. "Trust in the Lord, and do good: so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

III. Our third and last word is to THE SEEKING SINNER. Many of you, I trust, desire salvation. The subject before us has much comfort in it for you. You are hungering and thirsting after Christ, and have not yet found peace in him. You lament your own emptiness of all that is good. Then, poor soul, do just what the prophet bade his servant do—"set on the great pot;" that is confess your emptiness unto the Lord. Tell the Lord what a sinner you are. I know not whether the story be true of Mr. Rowland Hill's leading the landlord of an inn to pray. Mr. Hill would have family prayer wherever he stayed, and if this was re-

fused he would order out his horses and go on. On one occasion he is reported to have asked the landlord to act as priest in his own house, but the man replied, "I can't pray, I never prayed in my life." However, after a while Mr. Hill had him on his knees, and when the man said "I can not pray," Mr. Hill cried out, "Tell the Lord so, and ask him to help you." The man exclaimed, "O God, I can't pray, teach me." "That will do," said Mr. Hill, "you have begun." Whatever your state is to-night you desire salvation, go and tell the Lord your condition. Say, "Lord I have a hard heart, soften it." If you cannot feel, tell him so, and ask him to make you feel. Begin at the root of the matter; set on the great pot, empty as it is. Be honest with the Most High; reveal to him what he so well knows, but what you so little know—the evil of your heart, and your great necessity. If you cannot come with a broken heart, come for a broken heart. If you cannot come with anything good, the mercy is that nothing good is needed as a preparation for Christ. Come just as you are. Do not wait to fill the pot, but set it on to be filled.

Do I hear you reply, "Ah you don't know who I am! I have lived many years in sin." Yes, I know you; you are the young man that found the wild vines and gathered of its gourds a lapful—a horrible lapful. Some of you rebellious sinners have ruined yourselves, body and soul! and perhaps in estate as well, by your sins. We hear of people sowing their wild oats: that is a bad business. They had better never do it, for the reaping of those wild oats is terrible work. You have poisoned your life, man, with those wild gourds. Can the pottage of your life be made wholesome again? Yes, you cannot do it with your own efforts, but "bring meal," and it will be done. If thou believest on the Lord Jesus he will be the antidote for deadly habits of sin. If thou wilt simply trust in him who bled for thee, the tendency of thy soul to sin shall be overcome, the poison which now boils in thy veins shall be expelled, and thy soul shall escape as a bird out of the snare of the fowler. Thy flesh upon thee, in a spiritual sense, shall become fresher than a little child's. Though thou art full of the poison, till every vein is ready to burst with it, the Great Physician will give the antidote which shall at once and forever meet thy case. Wilt thou not try it? Incline thine ear and come unto him; hear and thy soul shall live. May God put the meal of the gospel into the pot to-night.

"Ah," say you, "but if I were now pardoned, how should I hold on? I have made a hundred promises and always broken them; I have resolved scores of times, but my resolutions have never come to anything." Ah, poor heart, that is when thou hast the saving of thyself; but when God has the saving of thee, it will be another matter. When we begin to save ourselves we very soon come to a disastrous shipwreck; but when God, the eternal lover of the souls of men, puts his hand to salvation-work, and Jesus puts forth the hand once fastened to the cross, there is no total failures then. He saves indeed, and saves to the end. The little grace received by the soul at first shall never be exhausted; it shall grow and grow so long as need remains. The barley loaves and the ears of corn in the husks shall be increased, and thou shalt have enough and to spare.

I have tried to preach a very simple sermon, and to say some earnest things; but it is likely I may have missed the mark with some, and, therefore I will again draw the gospel bow in the name of the Lord Jesus. O Lord, direct the arrow. If God will bring souls to Jesus, I will bless his name throughout eternity. Poor lost souls, do you know the way to salvation, do you know how simple it is? Do you know the love of God to such poor souls as you are, and yet do you refuse to attend to it? Do you know that he does not exact any hard conditions of you, but he points to his Son on the cross and says, "Look?" Can

it be that you will not look? Does Jesus die to save, and do you think it not worth while to think about salvation? What is the matter with you? Surely you must be mad. When I look back on my own neglect of Christ, till I was, fifteen years old, it seems like a delirious dream, and when I think of some of you who are thirty or forty, and yet have never thought about your souls, what can be invented to excuse you? I see some of you with bald heads, or with the snow of wintry age lying upon them, and you have not yet considered the world to come, I would say unto you, "Men, are ye mad?" Why, ye are worse than mad, for if ye were insane, ye would be excused. Alas, the madness of sin has responsibility connected with it, and therefore it is the worst of all insanities. I pray you by the living God, you unsaved ones, turn unto the Saviour to-night. If you be saved or lost it cannot so much matter to me as to you. If I faithfully beseech you to look to Jesus, I shall be clear, even if you reject the warning; but for your own sakes, I beseech you turn to Jesus. By death which may be so near to you; by judgment, which is certain to you all; by the terrors of hell, by the thunderbolts of execution, by eternity, and better still, by the sweets of Jesus' love, by the charms of his matchless beauty, by the grace which he is prepared to give, by the heaven whose gates of pearl are glistening before the eye of faith, by the sea of glass unruffled by the single wave of trouble, where you shall stand forever blest if you believe in Jesus, by the Lord himself, I entreat you, seek him at once, while they may be found. May his Holy Spirit lead you so to do. Amen and Amen.

### The Beautiful Gate at Bedford.

The Duke of Bedford has presented to the trustees of Bunyan Chapel, Bedford, near which the statue of Bunyan stands, a pair of bronze doors, on the panels of which are ten scenes taken from the "Pilgrim's Progress."

The cost of the gift is about \$5000. Each of the pair of doors contains five panelled subjects, in bold yet delicate relief, illustrative of the most striking scenes in John Bunyan's immortal allegory. The subject and mottoes are as follow:—No. 1. Christian reproached by his wife and neighbors. "As he read he wept and trembled."—No. 2. Good-will pulls Christian through the wicket-gate.—No. 3. Christian met by the three shining ones. "Thy sins are forgiven thee." No. 4. Christian sleeping in the arbour. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard."—No. 5. Christian passing the lions at night. "Is thy strength so small?"—No. 6. Christian sees Simple, Sloth, and Presumption. "I see no danger."—No. 7. Christian in the armoury. "They harnessed him from head to foot."—No. 8. Demas beckons Christian and Hopeful to the silver mine. "Let us keep on our way."—No. 9. The death of Faithful. For though they killed thee thou art still alive."—No. 10. Christian crossing the flood, supported by Hopeful. "Be of good cheer, my brother." The size of the doors is about nine feet by five feet. The new portico is in excellent taste, forming at a little distance an appropriate frame to the new art treasure, upon which a subdued light falls through the glazed roof. The vestibule within the doors has been restored and re-arranged; and fronting the entrance is a brass plate bearing the inscription:—

THE BRONZE DOORS OF THIS MEETING WERE GIVEN BY HIS GRACE FRANCIS CHARLES HASTINGS RUSSELL NINTH DUKE OF BEDFORD, ON THE 5TH DAY OF JULY, 1876.

Here was the barn so often referred to as situated in the orchard, Mill-lane. Here worshipped the little church, in whose records, dated the 25th of the second month, 1658, we find the following minute:—"It was ordered, according to our agreement, that our Brother John Bunyan do pre-

pare to speak a word at next church meeting, and that our Brother White-man fail not to speak to him of it." And again in the year 1671, "The church was also minded to seek God about the choice of Brother Bunyan to the office of elder, that their way in that respect may be cleared up to him." Again, "At a full meeting of the church at Bedford, after much seeking of God, by prayer and sober conference formally had, the congregation did at the meeting, with joint consent (signified by solemn lifting up of their hands), call forth and appoint our Brother John Bunyan to the pastoral office of eldership, and he accepting thereof, gave himself up to serve Christ and His Church in that charge, and received of the elders the right hand of fellowship, after having preached fifteen years."

### Walking with God.

BY REV. WILLIAM LAMSON, D. D.

"And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him." Gen 5: 24.

Far back in the morning twilight of the world's day there lived in this world a man whose name was Enoch. He lived here three hundred and sixty-five years. And when he left the world God inspired this record of him. It is a brief, but comprehensive biography, compressed in a single sentence; "He walked with God." volumes could not have revealed more. His whole character is here given. It was a noble life, a life in the highest sense glorious. Before it earthly honours pale and seem worthless. Is it a life possible to men now? Can it be imitated in our time?

Most certainly. Few and faint were the revelations of God to this patriarch compared with those vouchsafed to us. The advent of Him who was God manifest in the flesh was then far distant. The faintest promise of His coming was all that had been given. If then Enoch could walk with God much more may we. Rich is our knowledge compared with his. many are our helps of which he knew nothing. But what is it to walk with God? I see two men walk along the street side by side, but as I watch them I see they say nothing to each other. They are near together but they can hardly be said to be walking together. There is no communion, no converse with each other.

Again I see two men walking, busily conversing. But as I watch them I see that after a little one turns off and leaves the other. It was a mere casual coming together. It was not designed; there was no purpose in it. But I see a third couple. They are walking together, in the same direction, to the same place and on the same errand. They have one purpose. They are agreed, united. And as they walk they talk of their common purpose. Here we have one truly walking with another. It is not merely the motion of the bodies, the keeping step together, but there is a union of thought and feeling. Soul walks with soul. Thus I think a human soul may walk with the Infinite Spirit, a man with his maker. There is a fellowship, a companionship between them. They are agreed, united by a common purpose. The one is in harmony with the other. It is an amazing thought that man the creature of a day, may thus be lifted into companionship with the Infinite and Eternal. But it is a reality and no illusion. The experience of a countless multitude has proved it. Your experience and mine may prove it. This blessed, exalted and exalting companionship may be ours. If a man love me, said Jesus, my Father will love him and we will come unto Him and make our abode with Him. Let us not fritter away the precious meaning of this promise by human comments and explanations, but take it as true in all its boundless wealth of meaning. Jesus knew whereof He affirmed. We need not fear to take it too literally. That saintly man, Prof. Upham, went abroad and visited the holy land. On his return he printed for his friends