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## Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

### The Child and the Star.

We have stood beneath the vault of heaven  
At eve, a little child and I,  
And watched the clouds which tempest driven,  
Swept o'er the cold autumnal sky.  
And through a sudden rift there beamed  
A star so bright above the land  
To fancy's quickened eye it seemed  
Fresh from its mighty Maker's hand.  
The child beheld with wond'ring view  
Until a thought illumed its soul,  
Then turning, sweetly asked, "Can you  
See God through yonder little hole?"  
Not thus, I thought, but through the mind,  
By reason's stronger light I see  
In star and cloud and rushing wind  
The hand and power of Deity.  
Long have I viewed his works by day,  
And seen at night his glories shine,  
Yet has not time nor reason's ray  
Brought me such faith, my child, as  
thine.

## Religious.

### Four Reasons for attending Public Worship.

1. For my own sake. "Faith cometh by hearing;" and I want this faith. "God is pleased, by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint."  
2. As an example to others, that they also may be partakers of like precious faith. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." The power of example is very great; and mine shall ever lead to the house of God, and not from it.  
3. For the sake of the preacher, who may be cheered, strengthened and encouraged in his great and good work by my presence, my attention, my seriousness, and my prayers; and who may be correspondingly pained and distressed by my absence; and surely the toils and tears and trials and temptations of the minister of God are enough, without my adding an additional pang to his anguish (Rom. ix. 1-3). Good and faithful hearing is as essential to the success of the Gospel as good and faithful preaching.  
4. For Christ's sake. If Christ has died for me; if He mediates for me, intercedes for me, and has graciously sent me the proclamation of the glad tidings, the least, certainly that I can do, is to go and hear him. Thus, only, can the earth be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.  
If I can go anywhere else, I can go to church; and for fifty years I do not know that I have turned away from any preacher, whether old or young, learned or illiterate, traveling or local; and neither shall I, by God's help, as long as I live.—*An Old Disciple.*

**PREACH SIMPLY.**—Preaching to the young should be very simple. Mr. Spurgeon says he has often thought, when hearing certain preachers of a high order speaking to the young, that they must have understood the Lord to say, "Feed my camelopards," instead of "Feed my lambs," for nothing but giraffes could reach any spiritual food from the lofty rack on which they place it.

That may be right which is not pleasant, and that pleasant which is not right; but Christ's religion is both. There is not only peace in the end of religion, but peace in the way.—*MATTHEW HENRY.*

A little body doth often harbor a great soul.

## Sensational Preaching.

There are some men, filling evangelical pulpits who attempt to multiply hearers, and build themselves up as good preachers, by what is called sensational preaching, that is, preaching on strange and extraneous subjects, outside of the great commission. The programme sometimes will, perhaps, contain the following themes: "Who is the greatest liar in town?" "Who is the greatest fool?" "The significant letter S." "Hoosie Tunnel." "The Scarlet String," "Jehudi's Penknife," etc. Now this whole thing is a sad and very damaging mistake. It is impossible that shortsighted and carnal policy should please and honor God or secure the approbation of any good men and women who are blessed with the gift of common sense. The ostensible object is to draw hearers, and interest the young people. But it is, viewed on this lower plane, a failure every time. People may and will flock, for a while, to hear and see some new and strange thing. A freak or two of buffoonery "Dandy Jack on his pony" will gather the crowd temporarily, but when the performance is over they are gone, and gone in disgust with the whole clap-trap, and where such things are played off frequently, even a morbid curiosity cannot be awakened, and when attempts are being made to turn the pulpit into a rostrum, or a play actor's stage, the whole thing becomes too contemptible to draw even the children. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. It would be an immense advance in heavenly wisdom if we could all learn that no carnal policy of any kind or degree is admissible in preaching the gospel or building up the cause of Christ in any of its departments. The foolishness of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Congregations that gather to hear or see some strange things said or done, to amuse or beguile them, fly like many wild pigeons at the discharge of a shotless gun. Churches gathered by sensationalism, are destitute of all gospel adhesion, and drop in pieces of their own weight, like a rope of sand.

The heavenly appointed plan of diffusing the blessings of Christianity through the world, is to preach the gospel, the pure, unadulterated gospel; to preach it in all its parts, in great plainness, directness, earnestness, in faith, in much prayer, trusting alone in the Holy Spirit to give it efficacy. This plan admits of no amendment, no improvement. It is like its Divine Author, infinitely right and good as it is and needs no alterations. There is nothing on earth so attractive as the gospel preached in its simplicity, and heavenly beauty, when God meets with his people. The human soul is restless, and instinctively longs for light and pardon, and when God comes down among his adoring and faithful ones to save and to bless, the people flock from afar. See what crowds gather from day to day and from week to week to hear the pure gospel from the earnest lips of D. L. Moody and Joseph Cook. All the showmen and mountebanks in the land, by putting their wits all together cannot by their arts and side issues so attract and hold such interested thousands. Preaching the pure gospel in great simplicity, and self-denial, and trusting in God alone to bless and seal his own word, evinces true faith. But sensational preaching indicates no faith in God, but great faith in self and the wisdom of human folly. Is it not time that all our preachers should understand, that nothing they can say or do will be so popular and pleasing, in all our churches, as to give us more and more the pure, simple, heavenly gospel in all its parts, and that by common consent all merely sensational preaching is as much out of place in all our pulpits as the image of Baal in Solomon's temple? What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?—*Christian Secretary.*

Love asks faith, and faith asks firmness.

## Joseph Cook's Lectures

contain many precious gems which require to be taken separately and examined to see their full beauty. The following is from his lecture on "The First Cause as Personal."

### A THOUGHT PROVES A THINKER.

Adhere, without a particle of wavering, to the proposition that there cannot be a thought without a thinker. That is Des Cartes' fundamental axiom. The corner stone on which he placed himself face to face with all skepticism and unrest, and which is the one point of philosophy where certainty is firmest up to this hour. There cannot be thought without a person. I think, therefore I am a person! There is thought not our own in the universe; therefore there is a Person in the universe not ourselves! The thought is one; the thinker therefore is one! Sometimes, when I stand under the dome of that truth, I am moved as the constellations never stir me. The old songs once sung in the Temple yonder on a hill that has influenced the ages more than Athens or Rome, come into my thoughts; but these calls are altogether too feeble to start the enthusiasm which bursts up face to face with the scientific method in our day. We must expand David's outlook on the universe. No doubt he beheld the moral law more vividly than we do; no doubt he had interior insight such as belongs to that strange race of which he was a representative. The Greek knew art better than we do; compared with him we are uncouth. Compared with the Hebrew in his best estate we are morally imperceptive. But these grandeur of law which God seems too have revealed to us, the Aryan race; these grandeur of co-ordination which make us, in our fragmentaries of endowment, sometimes almost content with a mere Cosmic Deity, without much thought of a person—we must unite them all, the modern with the Greek and Hebrew organ-pipes! But the music proceeding from them altogether, falling, expanding, filling the dome of the universe—that is but a shepherd's pipe compared with melodies that rise in any full-orbed souls whenever we look aloft into the azure represented by the simple certainty that there cannot be in the universe thought not our own, without a person not ourselves; and that, as the thought is one, so that personality is one. Let us be glad! Let us lift up our hearts! Let us say to the eternal gates of science: "Lift up your heads, that the King of Glory may come in." The day is coming when another age will say this to the gates that have foundations. The day is coming when our transitory stage of thought—simply the sophomore year in human investigation, in which we can ask more questions than we can answer—will be looked back upon with disdain. The day is coming when the iron lips of science will utter the words of the Psalmist and the words of all natural law: "Lift up the Gates on which the Pleiades are but ornaments! Lift up these Gates on which all the immensities and the infinities and the eternities are but so much flagrae! Lift up these Gates, and the King Immortal, Eternal, Invisible, not ourselves, and who loves Truth, Beauty and Righteousness, will come in!"

Our best conclusion is adoring silence before the slowly lifting Gates through which the Eternal, who holds infinities and eternities in his hand as small dust in the balance, is passing into science, into politics, into the perishing and dangerous populations of the world, into the Norse American as well as into the Puritan American, into literature, into woman's heart, into Conscience, into the future, and into that world into which all men haste. He is there, he is here; and our best speech before him, in the name of science, is silence and action.

Here is another from his Lecture on "Organic Instincts in Conscience"

INSTINCT COMPARED TO REASON.  
Let us be everywhere mercilessly

true to the scientific method. Since man does possess instincts by which he is led to act as if the approval of a Higher Being were the end of life, we are to investigate these instincts at least as searchingly as we do those of the bee, the ant, and the beaver.

1. Instinct is an exhibition of intelligence, in but not of the being to which the instinct belongs.

Your bee builds according to mathematical rule; but do you suppose that all the intelligence it exhibits is in an intellect possessed by that insect? Has it planned, has it thought out geometrical problems, and at last ascertained in what method to construct the honeycomb? None of us believe that. We hold that the bee works by instinct, and the difference between instinct and reason is very broad. Instinct never improves its works, but reason does. The bird builds her nest now as she did before the Flood, and the honeycomb is the same to-day as it was in the carcass of the lion when Samson went down to Jordan. Instinct copies itself and no more. It builds better than it knows. But Somewhat knows how well it builds.

Somewhat knows, did I say? What a contradiction it is to affirm that Somewhat knows! Somewhat does not know anything. Somewhat is nobody. You all admit with Matthew Arnold that behind Conscience there is a Somewhat, but you ask whether behind the Somewhat there is a Someone. When Matthew Arnold says that an Eternal Power not ourselves loves righteousness, he is introducing surreptitiously the idea of Someone behind the Somewhat. Someone loves; Someone may fight intelligently for righteousness; but Somewhat never does or can love.

### INSTINCT PROVES A PLAN.

Almost imperceptible creatures in the sea build in the Indian ocean a goblet. It is called Neptune's cup. Sometimes it has a height of six feet and a breadth of three. It is erected solely by myriads of Polypti, fragile animals shrank within their holes, and only half issuing in order to plunge their microscopically small arms into the waves. One of these creatures, struggling to keep its position on some reef, made, perhaps, by the graves of its predecessors, begins to build without any consultation with its swarming mates. They all build, and they fashion little by little the base of the goblet. They then carry up the long slender stem. They have no consultation with each other in their homes there under the seas. Each works in a separate cell; each is as much cut off from communication with every other as an inmate of a cell in the wards of Charlestown prison yonder is from his associates. They build the stem to the proper height, and then they begin to widen it. They enlarge it, and commence the construction of the sides of the cup. They have no communication with each other. They build up the sides, leaving a hollow within. Everything proceeds according to a plan. You have first the pedestal, then the stem, then the widened flange of the goblet, the hollow within, looking up to heaven. The savage passes and gazes on Neptune's cup in the Indian ocean, and is struck with reverence. He says in his secret thought: These creatures cannot speak with each other, but they act on a plan as if they were all in a conspiracy to produce just this Neptune's cup. Is the plan theirs, or does it belong to a Power above them and that acts through them? Your poor savage there on the foaming coast of the tropics looks up to the same sky into which the cup gazes, and finds the Author of the form of that Neptune's goblet in a Power not of, but in, the creatures which build it. It is in them, but not of them, for they have no intellect which can conceive what the goblet is; but in isolation from each other they so build their cells that they produce at last a structure having a plan held in view, not only apparently but in fact from the very first. Even your foremost French materialists find themselves dazed when they stand where

this savage does. One of their opponents, writing lately, affirms that Neptune's cup is the noblest challenge that can be thrown down before the school of materialistic evolution. And yet we have men so filled, not with the depth of the sea of thought, but with its mere froth—so filled with what even the coral insects might rebuke, disloyalty to instinct that when they stand before Neptune's cup they see nothing to wonder at. But just as these isolated creatures build Neptune's cup, so the bioplasts, isolated from each other in the living tissues which they produce, build the rose and the violet and all flowers, the pomegranate and the cedar, the oak and the palm and all trees, the eagle and all birds, the lion and all animals, the human brain and all men. It is absolutely necessary that the builders of Neptune's cup should be governed by one dominant idea. Does chemistry explain the origin of their common thought? It is also absolutely necessary that all the bioplasts that weave any living organism should be governed by one idea, and that idea differs with the differences of individual living forms. Does chemistry explain the origin of that co-operating thought? Neptune's cup alone strikes us dumb. But what shall we say of the mystic structures built by the bioplasts? There is the cup; it is a fact; and the eye is another Neptune's cup; and all this universe is another Neptune's cup; and out of such cups I for one, drink the glad wine of Theism!

2. The instincts of the bee, the beaver, the migrating bird, are found, when scientifically investigated, to raise no false expectations; they all have their correlates; they are never created to be mocked.

3. From the existence of the profound instincts of Conscience, we must infer that they, too, when scientifically interpreted, raise no false expectations.

4. But it is conceded that there are instincts in the human mind by which man is led to work as if the approval of a Higher Being were the aim of life.

### A SOMEWHAT IMPLIES A SOMEONE.

5. This instinct involves a consciousness of God as not merely a Somewhat, but almost a Someone.

It is not to be supposed that any scientific line fathoms the depths of the nature of the Someone or of the Somewhat, revealed in the instincts of Conscience. But the quality of an infinity we may know even when we cannot know its quantity. Knowledge does not cease to be knowledge by becoming Omniscience. Power does not cease to be power by becoming Omnipotence. Space does not cease to be space by becoming infinite in extent. Time is time, although you stretch it out to the infinities and the eternities. Intellect does not cease to be intellect by becoming infinite. The seat of intellect! That was Paley's definition of Personality. We have no better definition than that. Wherever we have a thinker, we know, therefore, that there exists a person. Ideas flame from all quarters of the universe; plans appear in all the Neptune's cups along the coasts of the upper Indian oceans yonder, in the sounding surf of the constellations where the starry dust of the nebula floats as spray. We find there a plan, and here a plan; and wherever a plan, we find an idea; wherever an idea, a thought; wherever a thought, a thinker; and wherever a thinker, a person; and so if you say all has been evolved, we say of necessity that all has been produced by an Evolver.

6. It is conceded everywhere that Conscience forbodes punishment and anticipates reward.

7. Those activities of Conscience which forbode punishment and anticipate reward involve a consciousness of God as personal. The sense of obligation and the sense of dependence both involve a consciousness of God as personal.

There are organic and instinctive activities of Conscience by which we forebode punishment or anticipate reward. Who denies this? . . . If God makes an instinct, there is always something to match it. The instinct of the mi-