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Poetry.

The Voice in the Twilight.

I was sitting alone towards the twilight
With spirit troubled and vexed,
With thoughts that were morbid and gloomy,
And faith that was sadly perplexed.

Some homely work I was doing
For the child of my love and care;
Some stitches half-wearily setting
In the endless need of repair.

But my thoughts were about the "building,"
The work some day to be tried;
And that only the gold, and the silver,
And the precious stones, should abide.

And remembering my own poor efforts,
The wretched work I had done,
And, even when trying most truly,
The meagre success I had won.

"It is nothing but 'wood, hay and stubble,'
I said: 'it will all be burned,'—
This useless fruit of the talents
One day to be returned.

"And I have so longed to serve Him,
And sometimes I know I have tried;
But I'm sure when he sees such building,
He will never let it abide."

Just then, as I turned the garment,
That no rent should be left behind,
My eye caught an odd little bungle
Of mending and patchwork combined.

My heart grew suddenly tender,
And something blinded my eyes,
With one of those sweet intuitions
That sometimes makes us so wise.

"Dear child! She wanted to help me,
I knew 'twas the best she could do;
But, oh, what a blotch she had made it—
The gray mismatching the blue!"

And yet—can you understand it?
With a tender smile, and a tear,
And a half-compassionate yearning,
I felt she had grown more dear.

Then a sweet voice broke the silence,
And the dear Lord said to me:
"Art thou tenderer for the little child,
Than I am tender for thee?"

Then straightway I knew his meaning,
So full of compassion and love,
And my faith came back to its Refuge,
Like the glad returning dove.

For, I thought, when the Master-Builders
Comes down His temple to view,
To see what rents must be mended,
And what must be built anew,—

Perhaps, as he looks o'er the building,
He will bring my work to the light,
And seeing the marring, and bungling,
And how far it all is from right,—

He will feel as I felt for my darling,
And will say, as I said for her:
"Dear child! She wanted to help me,
And, love for me was the spur."

"And, for the true love that is in it,
The work shall seem perfect as mine;
And because it was willing service,
I will crown it with plaudit divine."

And there, in the deepening twilight,
I seemed to be clasping a hand,
And to feel a great love constraining me,
Stronger than any command.

Then I knew by the thrill of sweetness,
'Twas the hand of the Blessed One,
That would tenderly guide and hold me,
Till all the labor is done.

So my thoughts are nevermore gloomy,
My faith no longer is dim,
But My heart is strong and restful,
And mine eyes are unto Him.

MRS. HERRICK JOHNSON.

Religious.

Stewardship.

By REV. WM. ASHMORE.

"And the Lord commended the unjust steward."

Commended him for what? for his roguery? for falsifying his accounts? Certainly not. No man is ever complacent towards one who has robbed his till or picked his pocket. But he commended his sharp-sightedness. He displayed forethought, and was quick to act before it was too late. The steward saw his turn had come. His master

called for his accounts to be made up as soon as possible. So the steward reasons: To-day I have a chance to make friends out of those tenants; to-morrow it will be too late. To-day, therefore, while I still hold the books and have a chance, I will have bills made out to suit myself, so that I can get some benefit from them after they have passed out from under my control.

Now here was shrewdness and foresight, and provision that men commended. In the application of it the Saviour says: "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." He would have his disciples take a lesson. To-day you have this mammon in your hands. You can do as you like with it. You have houses and lands and flocks and treasure. It is ours for the time being. You can use it well or you can use it ill, or you can let it lie about, or hoarded up. To-morrow it will not be yours. You will be put out of possession. Somebody else will be owner. You cannot control a halfpenny of it. Therefore, while it is in your hands, make a good use of it. Use it in such a way that the influence of it and the results of it will be a joy and profit to you after the money itself is gone from you, or rather after you are gone from the money.

Here, for example, are two new members of the same church. Both of them are truly Christians, saved by the blood of Christ. Both are successful business men, know all about the "ins" and "outs" of business, the "ups" and "downs" of trade. But in the use they make of their money they differ. One uses it as he goes along; he gives to the poor, he dispenses abroad, he gives to missions, he helps churches, he builds colleges, he circulates the Bible, he holds forth the Word of Life; he does good, he is read to communicate. To-day he himself has control of the funds. While he has a generous support for himself, and God would have him enjoy it, he is also liberal and large-hearted. By-and-by his time comes. He will be no longer steward. What remains is turned over to other hands. But he has been a shrewd man; he used it well while he had it. And now when he gets home, what a joy it will be to look back to earth and look around in heaven, and see the good that his benefactions have done.

The other brother is not wise in his generation. He intends to do good some day. Any number of good resolutions are filed away, or laid on the table, or engrossed, or passed to a second reading. But none of them gets as far as a third reading, and none of them are passed. He is a man of definite promise, but of indefinite execution. He knows it—truly, this is a good object, and so is that. Something ought to be done; something must be done—and really, some day something shall be done. It is true, missions are suffering, the Lord's work is languishing, the land is parched. I could do something, but I can do it better in the future than I can now. I will wait a while; it is too great a trial to let money pass out from under my control. So he goes on. The message comes, "Soul, come home!"

"But my property?"
"Too late for that now. Yesterday you might have had your will about it. To-day it will fall to some one else. You have missed your opportunity. You have put it off a day too long. There is no dial of Ahaz here for the sun to go back fifteen degrees on."

And so our good brother B—goes after good brother A—, and is no longer steward. He might have learned a lesson from the story of Lot, but he was so full of business that he scarcely had time to glance over the Parable of the Steward, much less to read minutely about "those Old Testament characters."

When the angels first went to Sodom, they told Lot he had time to save everything. "Hast thou here any besides? Son-in-law and thy sons and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place." If Lot had gone to work that very night, without hesitation, he might have got out his flocks and herds, all of them be-

fore daylight. But his children were not ready, and so things lagged and dragged, with much excellent exhortation but with nothing done. By the next morning the chance to save his property had gone beyond recovery. One short twelve hours lost the whole of it. Now, then, all they could do was to save themselves personally. "Arise, take thy wife and thy two daughters which are here." All the rest must go to destruction. Too late for them. "Escape for thy life!" Lot's herd of fat cattle were not only lost to him, but made a fiercer blaze around his sons and sons-in-laws. There are plenty of Christian parents like Lot. Their abuse of the money they have here will not only abate the glory of their own heaven, but it will make hotter the bed in which—Alas! for the ruined children, whose inherited riches in time becomes to them an entailed curse throughout eternity.

Christians, hearken to the word of the angel of Jehovah, "Whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring out of this place."

The English General Baptists.

held their 108th Annual Association at Leicester, on Monday the 18th June:

The Rev. C. Clarke, on taking the presidential chair, said: We meet to-day in Leicester—which has been designated the metropolis of Dissent—and we are proud to say, in the ears of the religious world, that we are not ashamed of our principles. We meet from year to year; we deliberate and debate; we alter and diversify our modes of action; but never have to rescind or amend the Articles of our faith. Every year which the denomination adds to its age only serves to confirm our faith in the old age of the principles on which our churches are based. In the words published in our Year-book, "The New Connection of General Baptists was formed in the year 1770, with the design of reviving experimental religion, or primitive Christianity, in faith and practice." Though in the report presented yesterday by the theological tutor of our college, of themes discussed and lectures delivered, we have words which we venture to say, no English dictionary defines, and which Dan Taylor never heard, the theological instruction given to our rising ministry, and the doctrines preached every week by our pastors are, we believe, in wondrous harmony with the six articles of our faith drawn up 107 years ago. On the fall of man and its consequences; on the nature and obligation of the moral law; on the person and work of Christ; on salvation by faith; on regeneration by the Holy Spirit; and on believers' baptism we do not alter our convictions. To alter would be to degenerate; to reject would be to disown the sacred oracles of God. We come to our Annual gathering from the towns and villages of our country. We come to transact details of business in connection with our various institutions; but there is a noble purpose. We want a Divine breath to blow upon the fire. We want some influence derived from mutual sympathy, and the Spirit of God to stimulate and encourage us to fidelity to our principles. We doubt not for a single moment that the truths designated evangelical are best fitted to regenerate and sanctify our race. Our views and practice in regard to believers' baptism are the best safeguard against the ceremonialism and the sacramentalism of the day. But when we speak of fidelity to our principles, we refer not exclusively, or even chiefly, to the teachings in our college, to the ministrations of our pulpits, or to the avowed sentiments of our churches; but we want the fidelity in the individual life. Our mission is fulfilled not in catching the public ear, in catering for popular tastes, but by forcing into human consciences and hearts, by the earnestness of men who believe a conviction, that nothing is so true, so blessed, as the Gospel we preach and live.

The Rev. L. Llewellyn said he, in company with other gentlemen, attend-

ed there as a deputation from the Leicestershire Association of Baptist Churches to welcome them to the town. Rev. R. Caven read a formal address of welcome which had been drawn up, and S. Baines, in a few appropriate words, also welcomed the ministers.

The president in the name of the association, gave those gentlemen the right hand of welcome, for they were one in spirit and purpose. The last time he saw Mr. Caven was in Burlington House, Piccadilly, when both were sitting for the B. A. examination. Then they were both Particular Baptists. Now, Mr. Caven was pastor of a Particular Baptist church, and he (the president) was pastor of a General Baptist church, besides which he had had the great honor conferred on him that day of being appointed President of the General Baptist Association, and although he was nominally a Particular Baptist and Mr. Caven was nominally a General Baptist, they were neither the one nor the other—they were Baptists—"Hear, hear," and laughter—and they both believed that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted of death for every man.

The Secretary then read his report, from which we extract the following:—Of the 169 churches in their last year book, 158 had made returns. There were St. Mary's Gate, Derby, with 600 members, pretty closely followed by two London churches, New Church-street, and Praed-street each of which returned 574. There were seven churches with a membership not exceeding ten each, and nine more not exceeding twenty. The list of churches with a membership over 200 each was forty-three, and there were exactly as many with less than fifty. Five churches exceeded 400; twenty exceeded 300; and more than half the whole ranged between fifty and 300. Something less than a score of churches appeared to be in very encouraging circumstances, and nearly forty more might be described as having good ground for thankfulness and hope. The great mass of the churches, however, appeared to be stationary, though in the case of a considerable proportion there was a hopefulness of tone in the report which it was trusted was the prelude to more aggressive work. Eighteen churches had received additions of more than 20 each, and half of these upwards of 30. Five churches reported 40 or more baptisms per church. The statistical statement for the year, under the head of additions, was—baptized 1365, received 465, and restored 108. Reductions: dismissed 519, excluded 149, dead 35, erased 767. The number of churches was 175, as against 170 last year; the members 23,747 against 23,453, giving a clear increase of 294. 141 churches had contributed £3365 12s. 4d., for sending the Gospel abroad.

REV. DR. LANDELLS AND HIS TWO SONS.

Interesting Valedictory Services were held recently in the Regents Park Baptist Chapel, London, on the occasion of the departure of Rev. W. K. Landells and Rev. John Landells as missionaries in Italy.

The Rev. W. K. Landells, who has for the last twelve months been laboring with the Rev. J. Wall, in Rome, returned to England prior to entering his new sphere of labor, specially to collect funds towards the cost involved in the contemplated new buildings.

The Rev. C. Bailhache, one of the Secretaries of the Missionary Society, offered, in the name of the committee connected with the movement, their congratulations to Dr. Landells on the fact that two of his sons were to be engaged in the blessed work, and sympathized with him in the feeling to which he had given utterance that it was the highest honor he could have desired for them.

The Rev. J. Wall, of Rome, who had only just arrived in England, and was heartily welcomed, and proceeded to explain that Mr. W. K. Landells had already made considerable progress in the work, and especially had learnt to adapt himself to the wants of the peo-

ple around him. Remarking that real missionaries were not made by colleges or societies, but by the Holy Spirit under whose inspiring influences a man could not help going forth in the service of Christ, the speaker said it was under the stress of such a desire that he in the midst of many difficulties, went forth to preach the Gospel to the Italians. Of liberty he stated they enjoyed as much in Rome as in England. Being in Paris on Sunday and asked to speak, he was about to refer to the circumstance of Signor Grassi's conversion, and to "Popery," when he was stopped by a reminder that such allusions were not there permitted. At this he was surprised and almost thought it would be better for them to speak right out plainly, and, if necessary, go to prison at once.

Such restrictions did not exist in Italy, and they had more freedom in the Sala Christiana than was given in the French Chamber of Deputies. The Pope was not now able to do what once he did, and, with his paternal heart yearning over the people, bring five armies into the country to slaughter them, so he now arranged to introduce armies of pilgrims, who were, to the number of about twenty thousand, visiting Rome. As illustrating, however, the tendency of popular opinion in that city, he mentioned that the people protested against the assumptions of the pilgrims, and obtained permission to hold a public meeting in the theatre for the purpose of uttering their feelings on the matter. At that meeting between five and six thousand persons were present, and, in spite of Government interference to prevent the Pope being spoken against, they insisted on a free expression of opinion, and clamoured, in fact, for the expulsion of the Government delegate for his interference, whereupon that official declined to take upon himself the responsibility of so far opposing the voice of the people as to stop the meeting, which had the desired result of modifying the unseemly conduct of the pilgrims. Mr. Wall went on to state that their Italian mission was essentially evangelistic, and they had never put forth secondary questions, either of a social or ecclesiastical character, only desiring to lead men to Christ. Their church was not called "Baptist," but the members styled themselves "Successors of the early Christians of their own city." Signor Grassi usually told the people that he had not left Romanism or the religion of the early fathers, but had gone back to it, finding he had previously been travelling in the wrong direction. Mr. Wall, in describing the progress of the work in Rome, mentioned the fact that they were building a second chapel, and hoped to get rid of the old rubbish of mediævalism, and to get back to primitive Christianity and to the principles of the Christian Church as given in the Word of God, appealing to its authority when speaking to the Italians, and accepting its decisions, and being actuated by its spirit. He said they now needed men like Dr. Landells himself, and declared that he should not wonder if after taking all the family they had to come back and fetch him. He concluded with expressions of firm confidence in the ultimate triumph of the Gospel in Italy.

Signor Grassi, by the aid of an interpreter, added a few words, after which, at nearly ten o'clock—until which hour the interest of the meeting was thoroughly sustained—the proceedings closed.

On Monday June 11th, the 500th anniversary of the issue of three Bulls from Rome against John Wycliffe, was celebrated by a numerous and attended public meeting in Exeter Hall, London, convened under the auspices of the British and Foreign Christian League and Systematic Benevolence Society. The Bishop of Meath (Lord Plunket), who presided, said Wycliffe was a reformer before the Reformers, a translator of the Bible before those whom that title was usually given, a statesman of great wisdom, varied learning, dauntless courage and true piety.