

THE RELIGIOUS

Poetry.

THE WATER OF LIFE.

"Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters."

A TRAVELER o'er the desert waste,
Of mortal life was I;
Weary and faint, with toil and thirst,
And yet no water nigh,
And brilliant mirage forms would oft
Around my path appear,
They were most beautiful afar—
But they were wrought when near.

Pleasures of earth, a glittering host,
Were thronged before my eye;
And though but gilded toys at most,
I grasped them eagerly.
First to my thirsting lips was pressed,
The sparkling cup of mirth,
So tasteless were the draughts therefrom,
I dashed the cup to earth.

And then with ardor hand I seized
Friendship's all-dazzling bowl;
I falsely deemed there was within
Enough to fill the soul.
I drained the bowl with eager haste,
But deeply thirsted still;
For although plesant to the taste,
The soul it could not fill.

And one by one, I drank in vain,
Each cup of earthly bliss.
For bitter were the dregs of some,
And none had power to bless.
"O! cruel mockeries!" I cried,
So soon ye bubble burst!
There no stream to satisfy
The soul's deep, living thirst?

And then my fainting spirit drooped,
In dark and deep despair;
Till a calm voice all said,
"Look up, a sea is there!"
I raised the eye of faith, and saw
The living water nigh—
Not merely "drops to tantalize,"
But "seas to satisfy."

I drank deep draughts and thousands more
Are drinking still with me—
And yet expands without a shore,
That boundless living sea.
—American Wesleyan.

THE HOUR OF PRAYER.

Hour of prayer full well I know it;
Sweetest hour on earth to me,
Never would my soul forego it,
Wade there need of prayer shall be.

Hour, in which the dews of heaven
Gently o'er my spirit fall;
Hour, when all my sins forgive
Lose their wormwood and their gall!

Like a streamlet from the fountain,
Like the gale when flowers are near,
Like the breeze upon the mountain,
Is to me the hour of prayer.

Miscellaneous.

THE POWER OF GRACE.

A writer in the *Banner of Peace* says:—"In October, 1849, after a hard day's ride, through rain, chilled, and drenched, I called at nightfall for lodgings at a cabin by the roadside. After becoming comfortable by a good fire, my host related the following history of God's gracious dealings with him:

"About three years previous, while a desperately hardened sinner, he was seriously injured in person by a neighbor who was more abandoned and wicked, if possible, than himself. He reflected upon the atrocious offence and injury, and concluded that it was of so outrageous a character that he must be avenged. He could think of no punishment which, to his distorted vision, would half equal the injury. The more he reflected on the subject, the deeper were the workings of unbridled passion, until he determined to murder his enemy! He thought that would be the very punishment he deserved. But then he would be arraigned at the bar of justice, and perhaps his life would be required to atone for his crime. How to make his escape after he had committed the deed, now occupied his thoughts. While his bosom was harrowed by these purposes of death, a meeting of great interest and power was in progress a few miles from his residence. He went for the purpose of looking on, but God arrested his attention, and applied His truth with such power and energy, that eternal death seemed to be his hopeless doom. His convictions of sin were so deep, and so awful now seemed his murderous purposes, that he concluded that God's mercy could never reach his miserable estate. In great precipitation, and in utter despair, he started home. But home seemed worse than the meeting. There the murderer had been devised. In almost a flight, he left home for the boundless prairie, just at hand, upon which he had a herd of cattle feeding. Ere he reached these the hand of Omnipotence seemed to be stretched in wrath over his guilty head, ready to smite him to death and hell. He dismounted from his horse, and throwing himself prostrate upon the ground, he cried from the depths of despair, for mercy to a half-deserving murderer. God heard his prayer, and sent peace to his soul. Then he called upon God, that he might send his Spirit and arrest his enemy, and bring him to Jesus. Behold, now, instead of murdering him, he prays for his enemy. What a change! Instead of lifting the mardous hand he raises his voice and soul in humble supplication, and bows before the mercy-seat and entreats for salvation through the Redeemer to be extended to him whom he had just before sought to slay!"

THE POOR BOY.

Don't be ashamed, my lad, if you have a patch on your elbow; it is no mark of disgrace. It speaks well for your industrious mother. For our part we would rather see a dozen patches on your jacket than hear one profane or vulgar word escape from your lips, or to smell the fumes of tobacco in your breath. No good boy will shun you because you cannot dress as well as your companion; and if a bad boy sometimes laughs at your appearance, say nothing, my good lad, but waly on. We know many a rich and good man who was once as poor as you. Fear God, my boy, and if you are poor, but honest, you will be respected a great deal more than if you were the son of a rich man, and were addicated to bad habits.

A WORD IN SEASON.

A poor blacksmith, bending with age and weakness, was passing through a country village: he stopped at a good woman's cottage, and rested himself on the railing before the door. The pious dame came out, and the weary traveler remarked that his time here would be short; he was often ailing; he added, "Ah, Nanny! I shan't be long for this world, I reckon!" She thought of his words, and replied, "Well, John, then I hope you'll prepare for your journey!" The blacksmith passed on, and his call was soon forgotten by Nanny; but that simple sentence was impressed on his memory by the Spirit of God, never to be erased. He pondered it while walking home, and soon consumption laid him on a bed of pain. Again and again did he think about "The journey," and about being "prepared" for it. He began to pray, and all around him were continually hearing the old woman's advice. No pious friends were near to converse with him, but it is confidently believed that the aged sinner wished to look to the Saviour through the simple incident related above. Almost his last breath was spent in thanking God that the good old woman ever warned him.

Reader, when thou seest an aged sinner drawing near to the gates of death, neglect not to give him a timely warning; it may be that God shall seal it on his heart. If thou pass him by, God may require his bloodstained hands. "Be instant in season, and out of season;" sow beside all waters, that thou mayest reap a glorious harvest at the coming of the Son of man.—[Christian Miscellany.]

THE DIFFERENCE.

A HINDOO was lying upon his bed, expecting soon to die. He was full of thought where his soul would go after death. He had been wholly given to idolatry, and now he was not happy. A priest came to see him, and the dying man said, "What will become of me?" "Oh!" said the priest, "you will live in another body." "And where shall I go then?" he asked. "Into another." "And where then?" "Into another, and so on through thousands of millions." The thoughts of the dying man darted across all that period, as if it were but an instant, and cried, "Where shall I go last of all?" The priest could not reply; and the unhappy idolater died, with no one near him to answer his anxious question.

A little burman girl was near death. Lifting her eyes to a kind lady who was her teacher, she said, "I am dying, but I am not afraid to die, for Christ will call me up to heaven. He has taken away all my sins; and I wish to die now that I may go and see him. I love Jesus more than any one else." What made the difference between the little Burman girl and the dying Hindoo? One had heard the gospel from the lips of the missionaries, and had received it into her heart; the other lived and died an idolater, for none had told him of "the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent."

INFLUENCE OF FAMILY PRAYER.—A few years ago, a man traveling in Ireland, being benighted opened a cabin door and requested permission to lodge there, which was granted. The poor man who inhabited the house was, according to the usual custom, reading a chapter of the Bible in his family. When the stranger was seated, he resumed his reading, and having prayed, the family retired to rest. In the morning the same thing again took place, which seemed to attract the attention of the stranger. On rising from their knees, the stranger thanked his kind host for his hospitality, and informed him that he had travelled into that part of the country in order to attend a fair, for the wicked purpose of passing bad money; that he brought with him base coin to the amount of four pounds; that this was the first time he had taken up such a practice, but that what he had heard in the cabin had made such an impression on his mind that he had resolved it should be the last. He then took out of his pocket a small bag containing the counterfeit, and threw it into the fire.—*Ladie's Repository.*

BOYS OUT AT NIGHT.

The practice of allowing boys to spend their evenings on the street is one of the most ruinous, dangerous, and mischievous things possible. Nothing so speedily and surely makes them course downward. They acquire, under the cover of night, an unhealthy state of mind, vulgar and profane language, obscene practices, criminal sentiments, and a lawless and riotous bearing. Indeed, it is in the streets after nightfall, that the boys generally acquire the education of bad, and the capacity for becoming rowdy, dissolute, and criminal men. Parents do you believe it? Will you keep your children at home at night, and see that their house is made pleasant and probable?

Genesee Republican.

It is seldom that more truth is compressed into so small a space. The thousands of boys, being longing to worthy respectable families, who are permitted, night after night, to select their own company and places of resort, are on the certain road to ruin. Confiding parents, who believe that their sons are safe—that they will not associate with the vicious—will one of these days have their hearts crushed as thousands have before, for the dreadful penalty. As I left him he said: "Will you pray for me?" and he added, "Oh! tell boys everywhere to mind their mothers, and the capacity for becoming bad companions."

MAKE THE FARM ATTRACTIVE.

The lot of the husbandman is by no means one of unceasing drudgery as many would have it, but a most important, and when rightly managed, agreeable vocation. Cincinnatus, the old Roman patriot, delighted above every thing else in the peaceful quiet of his little farm, never leaving it, except in response to the calls of patriotism. Washington pronounced the employment of farming the noblest of all others. Prince Albert is a devoted patron of English agriculture, while Louis Napoleon counts his acres by the thousand. Agriculture is the basis of all other pursuits, the great motive power which sets in motion and regulates all the vast and intricate machinery of trade and commerce. Then let no farmer underrate his profession, or envy those engaged in a seemingly more elevated employment. Make the homestead a place of attraction, not only to yourselves but to your children, and your sons will not desert the farm, on reaching that age when they may render valuable assistance, to enter the already too-crowded thoroughfare of business, and your daughters will be content with the daily round of their duties instead of craving the excitement and gayety of the city. Make your home beautiful guarding it securely with those surroundings which will keep out the spirit of discontent. The tidy yard encompassing your dwelling, with its grave walks; the neat picket fence in front entrenched with a row of shade trees; the grape arbor in the garden, with flower beds on either side; all these, which are accessible to the farmer, are in themselves sources of much enjoyment—and how easily and cheaply secured. Furnish the family circle with useful and entertaining reading matter. If it is not afforded by the district library, possess a library, however small it may be, of your own, and devote the long winter evenings to the intellectual development of the family. It is not necessary for them to be kept away from home, in order to accomplish this. Supply your sons with agricultural publications in order to awaken an interest in and furnish a stimulus to their labors. Give them a share in the profits of the land, an ownership in the stock, that they may feel a common interest. Allow your daughters to occasionally make butter and cheese on their own account, and devote a portion of the general proceeds to their extra little wants. By thus doing, farming may rendered the most delightful, as it is now the most independent, employment of man.

THE EARLIER THE EASIER.—An old man one day took a child on his knee, and talked to him about Jesus, and told him to seek the Saviour now, and pray to him and love him. The child knew that the old man was not himself a Christian, and felt surprised. Then he looked up into the old man's face and said, "But why don't you see God?"

The old man was affected by the question, and replied: "Ah, my dear child! I neglected to do so when I was young, and now my heart is so hard that I fear I never shall be able."

Ab, my reader! believe him. "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." It will be more difficult to hear to-morrow. And weeks and months, and years hence, even could you be sure of them, how high and strong a barrier will gradually be rising between you and Christ! "They that seek me early shall find me."

IF I HAD MINDED MY MOTHER.—I WENT a few weeks since into a jail to see a young man who had been once a Sabbath School scholar.

The keeper took a large bunch of keys and led us through the long, gloomy halls, unlocked one door after another until at length he opened the door of the room where sat the young man we had come to see. The walls of the room were of coarse stone, the floor of thick plank, and before the windows were strong iron bars.

Without all was beautiful—the green fields, the sweet flowers, and the singing of the birds, were as lovely as ever, but this young man could enjoy none of these—no, never again could he go out, for he was condemned to death! Yes, he had killed a man, and now he himself must die. Think of it, only twenty years old, and yet a murderer.

I sat down beside him and talked with him. "O!" said he as the tears rolled down his cheeks "I did not mean to do it, but I was drunk; then I got angry, and before I knew what I was about I killed him. Oh, if I had minded what my Sabbath School teacher said, if I had minded my mother, I should never have come to this! I should never have been here!"

It would have made your heart sore, as it did mine, to see and talk with him. Once he was a happy, playful child like you; now he is a poor condemned young man. He did not mind his mother, did not govern his temper, and as he grew older he went with bad boys, who taught him bad habits; and he became worse and worse, until, as he said, when drunk, he killed a man; and now, after a few weeks, he must suffer for the dreadful penalty. As I left him he said: "Will you pray for me?" and he added, "Oh! tell boys everywhere to mind their mothers, and the capacity for becoming bad companions."

THE BALANCE.—So many calls, So many mercies. So many wants, So many gifts. So many poor, So many rich. So many societies, So much need of them. So much to do, So little done. So many to be helped, So few to do it. So much need, So little given. So much talked about, So little listened to. So much preaching, So little practice.

MAKING LIFE LONG.—1 Live temperately, and have proper exercise. 2 Be virtuous. That life is long which is devoted to a preparation for eternity. The thief on the cross lived but a few moments after being converted, but through all eternity he will look with satisfaction on his life below. He embraced the first good opportunity he had to believe and be saved. 3. Fill up life with good deeds. Then, in looking back, life will appear to have been somewhat long, having been connected with many good moments, and performed many important deeds.

Patience is a tree whose roots are bitter, but the fruit is very sweet.

He that makes anything his chiefest good, wherein virtue, reason, and humanity do not bear in part, can never do the offices of friendship, justice, or liberality. —Cicero.

THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER

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