

Christian

A Family Newspaper—Devoted to



Visitor.

Religious and General Intelligence.

BAILEY & DAY, Proprietors.

"BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED,"—ST. PAUL.

{ Rev. E. D. VERY, Editor

VOL. I.

SAINT JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK, WEDNESDAY, JULY 27, 1848.

NO. 36

YOUTH AND AGE.

The following beautiful lines originally appeared in the "Etonian," a periodical started about twenty years ago by the boys of Eton College. For truth, tenderness and melody, they are incomparable.

I often think each tottering form
That hangs along in life's decline,
Once bore a heart as young, as warm,
As full of idle thoughts as mine!
And each has had its dream of joy,
His own unequalled romance;
Commencing when the blushing boy
First thrills at lovely woman's glance.

And could each tell his tale of youth,
Would think its scenes of love and
More passion, more unearthly truth,
Than any tale before or since.
Yes! they could tell of tender lays
At midnight penn'd in classic shades:
Of days more bright than modern days,
And maids more fair than modern maids:

Of whispers in a willing ear,
Of kisses on a willing cheek!
Each kiss, each whisper, far too dear
Our moderate lips to give or speak:
Of passions too untimely crossed,
Of passions slighted or betrayed—
Of kindred spirits early lost,
And buds that blossom but to fade:

Of beaming eyes, of trusting gey,
Elastic frame and noble brow,
And forms that have all passed away,
And left them what we see them now.
And it is thus—in human love
So very light and frail a thing!
And must Youth's brightest visions move
Forever on time's ruthless wing!

Must all the eyes that still are bright,
And all the lips that talk of bliss,
And all that forms so fair a sight,
Hereafter only come to this?
Then what are Earth's best wishes worth,
If we at length must lose them thus?
If all we value most on Earth,
Ere long must fade away from us!

Baptism of the Monster Bell.

The following account of the ceremony of christening the monster bell of the Roman Catholic Cathedral, in Montreal we copy from the correspondence of the Montreal Courier. It portrays the foolish ceremonies even now practised in the "mother church," and will be read with interest:—

On Sunday last, (June 18,) at half past three P. M., the time appointed for christening the monster bell in the Roman Catholic Cathedral, I proceeded to the church, and having secured a position which would command a complete view of the intended ceremony, I awaited with impatience the conclusion of the devout chanting of the Latin vespers and the delivery of an oration, which was introductory to, or apologetic, I can't say which, of the proposed baptism of the brass bell.

The whole pomp of that pompous body was displayed, and the church presented to the view of the faithful its most fascinating appearance. The monster bell had, at great cost and labor, been brought into the church, and placed at the foot of the altar in the centre of the nave, a scaffolding had been raised to support it, and it was thereby elevated about three or four feet from the floor, suspended by a rope fixed at the top of the frame. Within the altar rails, and at about ten feet from the bell, stood a small table containing all the paraphernalia to be used on such occasions, consisting of a large silver vase filled with holy water, a silver sprinkler, two silver diabes, a huge bouquet, a number of towels, and a variety of other articles. The bishop was seated within the altar, on the right hand, invested with a robe of purple and gold—the benches on both sides of the tabernacle were filled with priests and other ecclesiastics.

At four o'clock precisely the very sacred rite was introduced by a pious and appropriate *walk*, played by a brass band placed in the choir. A door at the left of the tabernacle shortly opened, and about eight or ten priests issued forth, clothed in all the colors of the rainbow, and bearing, one, the mitre, another, a bundle of robes, and a third a book; two or three others lighted wax tapers, &c., &c.; having crossed the space within the altar, and bowed down and worshipped (vide the second commandment!) the contents of the tabernacle, they approached the bishop, before whom they simultaneously bent their knees. The centre priest then approached his lordship and devoutly kissed his ring. The ceremony of undressing and dressing the bishop which is practised on all ordinary occasions, then commenced. His lordship divested himself of a species of scarf, called, I believe, a *chope* which he first kissed and then delivered it to the priest in question, who also kissed it, and handed it over to an attendant; the same process of unrobing and kissing having taken place with regard to several other vestments, the officiating priests then produced those they intended to substitute, and which consisted of an embroidered muslin skirt, made like that of a lady's dress or petticoat, and was put on him in a similar manner, viz: by throwing it over the head and then tying it round his waist by a scarlet riband. A short muslin surplice was then thrown over his shoulders, and over that a species of cloak of cloth of gold lined with crimson satin—altogether a most gorgeous dress, and well calculated to make an impression upon the minds of those who are taught to consider such things as conducive, if not essential, to salvation.

The mitre having been placed upon his lordship's head, he advanced in all pomp between two priests, who held out to the fullest extent the corners of his cloak, and surrounded by several who acted as his supporters, into the centre of the dais, and having prostrated themselves before the tabernacle, turned towards the table containing the holy water, &c. Here a few Latin verses were chanted, and the boquet having been placed in the bishop's hand, he descended the steps of the altar, dipped it into the vase of holy water, held by an attendant, and proceeded to wash the bell by passing the boquet up and down its outward sides in a perpendicular line, repeating all the while, some unintelligible Latin sentences; he then gave the boquet to one of his supporters, who completed the ablution by washing every part of the bell. The process of drying it was precisely the same—the bishop first using the towel and then giving it over to his attendant to wipe every part of it. The same ceremony of washing and drying was performed for the inside of the bell, the bishop and priests getting under it for that purpose.

The object of all this attention was then anointed with what is called the *holy cream*, contained in a small silver box, and apparently very precious; this was done by rubbing it on particular parts of the bell, which were pointed out to his lordship by his principal attendant. *Holy salt*, invariably used in the baptism of infants were also applied.

I should have stated before that the bell was honored by having twelve god-fathers and twelve god-mothers, selected (with a view which will presently become apparent) from among the *wealthiest* of that creed in this city, and of whom the Attorney-General for Lower Canada and his lady were the principal. They had taken their seats in the centre of the nave, and immediately flanking the bell.

After the washing, wiping, and anointing were concluded, and the bell, by the addition of of the *oil, cream, and salt*, had been treated by a salada, the bishop advanced a few paces and enquired of the sponsors the name they intended bestowing on their brazen god-child. "*Saint Jean Baptiste*" was of course, the reply, and forthwith some further crossing, or sprinkling, of the bell took place, which I could not well comprehend.

The ceremony of dressing the bell then commenced by the production of an enormous white satin petticoat, which was thrown completely over its fair proportions, this was then covered with a most gorgeous robe of crimson silk-velvet, trimmed with rich lace and gold which with the peculiar form of the bell gave it of the appearance of a gigantic lady, without a head suspended in the centre of a church.

The bishops and priests then ranged themselves on each side of the *Saint Jean Baptiste*, and a crimson rope having been made fast to the tongue of the bell, the sponsors were individually invited to ring it. A lady and a gentleman then advanced and held the rope while a sturdy headie gave the necessary impetus to the tongue, and produced (in a double sense) the *first bell*; for a large silver plate having been placed in a very conspicuous position near the bell, the privilege of ringing it was compensated by a deposit of money, by way of toll, by each successive candidate for the distinction.

The sponsors retired after having enjoyed, and liberally paid for, this privilege, and was then thrown open to promiscuous competition on the same terms, and I am informed the ringing continued to a late hour, and the toll-band was swelled of course in proportion. After the sponsors had concluded their part of the performances, the bishop retired to his seat, where a similar process of unrobing, robing, and kissing the vestments terminated this very *apostolic and christian ceremony*.

Constitution of Nature.

THE ATMOSPHERE.

It is evident from common observation that the sun's light is of the utmost importance to vegetable life and perfection. A plant may indeed grow in a feeble and sickly manner without light; but under such a privation, the parts which are usually green assume a sickly white colour, as is the case with vegetables which happen to grow in a cellar.— "When deprived of light, all plants nearly agree in the quality of their juices. The pungent vegetables grow insipid; the highest flavoured inodorous; and those of the most variegated colours are of an uniform whiteness. Vegetables which grow in an exposed situation, burn when dry; but a vegetable hid in a dark box contains nothing inflammable." It cannot well be conceived that such effects of light upon vegetables as have been briefly described, should occur, if light and the organs of vegetables, had not been wisely adapted to each other.

The moisture which floats in the atmosphere is likewise of essential use to vegetable life. The leaves of living plants appear to act upon this vapour in its elastic form, and to absorb it. Some vegetables increase in weight from this cause, when suspended in the atmosphere and unconnected with the soil, as the *house-leek* and the *aloe*. In very intense heats, and when the soil is dry, the life of plants seems to be preserved by the absorbent power of their leaves. With an increasing heat of the atmosphere, an increasing quantity of vapour will rise into it, if supplied from any quarter. Hence it appears that aqueous vapour is most abundant in the atmosphere when it is most needed for the purposes of life, and that when other sources of moisture are cut off, vapour is then most abundant.—

When clouds are of the same nature with steam from the spout of a boiling tea-kettle, they are then of the most essential use to vegetable and animal life. They moderate the fervor of the sun in a manner agreeable, to a greater or less degree, in all climates, and are grateful no less to vegetables than to animals. It has been observed, that plants grow more during a week of cloudy weather than in a month of dry and hot, and that vegetables are far more refreshed by being watered in cloudy than in clear weather. In the latter case, probably the supply of fluid is too rapidly carried off by evaporation. Clouds also moderate the alternations of temperature, by checking the radiation from the earth. The coldest nights are those which occur under a cloudless winter sky.

Rain is another of the consequences of the properties of water with respect to heat; its uses are the results of the laws of evaporation and condensation. These uses with regard to plants are so obvious and too numerous to be described. It is evident that on its quantity and distribution depends in a great measure the prosperity of the vegetable kingdom; and, as will afterwards be described, different climates are fitted for different productions no less by the relations of dry weather and showers than by those of hot and cold. "These alternations of fair weather and showers appear to be much more favourable to vegetable and animal life, than any uniform course of weather could have been. To produce this variety, we have two antagonist forces, by the struggle of which such changes occur. Steam and air, two transparent and elastic fluids, expandible by heat, are in many respects and properties very like each other. Yet the same heat, similarly applied to the globe, produces at the surface currents of those fluids tending in opposite directions. And these currents mix and balance, conspire and interfere, so that our trees and fields have alternately water and sunshine; our fruits and grain are successively developed and matured."

It has been calculated that the quantity of rain which falls in England is thirty six inches a year, taking the average of the whole country. Of this it is reckoned that thirteen inches flow off to the sea by the rivers, and that the remaining twenty-three inches are raised again from the ground by evaporation. The thirteen inches of water are of course supplied by evaporation from the sea, and are carried back to the land through the atmosphere. Vapour is perpetually rising from the ocean, and is condensed in the hills and high grounds, and through their pores and crevices descends, till it is collected and conducted out to the surface. The condensation which takes place in the higher parts of a country may easily be recognized in the mists and rains which are the frequent occupants of these regions. The coldness of the atmosphere and other causes, as already mentioned, precipitate the moisture in clouds and showers, and in both of these states it is condensed and absorbed by the cool ground. Thus a perpetual and compound circulation of the waters is kept up, it ascending perpetually by a thousand currents through the air; and descending by the rills and rivers, it again returns into the great and magnificent reservoir of the ocean.

In every country of our globe these two portions of the aqueous circulation have their regular and nearly constant proportion. In Great Britain the relative quantities, as before stated, are twenty three and thirteen. A due distribution of these circulating fluids in each country appears to be necessary to its organic health; to the habits of vegetables, to all animals, and to man. Drought and sunshine in one part of Europe may be as necessary to the productions of a wet season in another, as it is on the great scale of the continents of Africa and South America, where the plants during one half of the year are burnt up to feed the spring of the mountains, which in their turn contribute to inundate the fertile valleys, and prepare them for a luxuriant vegetation. Indeed, the properties of water with regard to heat, make one vast watering engine of the atmosphere.