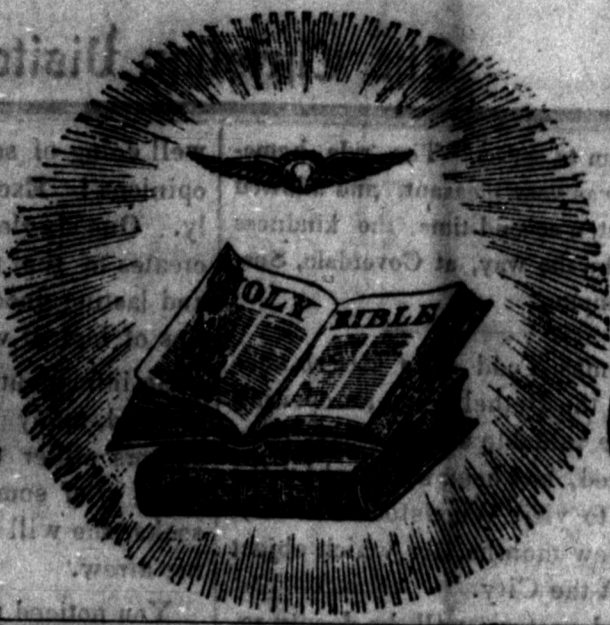


# Christian

A Family Newspaper—Devoted to



# Visitor

Religion and General Intelligence.

BAILEY & DAY, Proprietors.

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

{ Rev. E. D. VERY, Editor

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## EVENING SONG.

BY JAMES HUNGERFORD.

Cloudless skies are bending o'er us,  
Fair before us  
Wave and Land—  
Sunset hues are round us glowing,  
Zephyrs blowing  
Soft and bland.

Oh, in happy hours departed,  
Joyous hearted,  
Hand in hand  
Have we watched the sunset fading,  
Twilight shading  
Sea and Land.

As the light that softly shineth,  
Slowly declineth  
Ray by ray,  
Joys we deemed as fadeful treasures—  
Earthly pleasures  
Passed away.

But why mourn for moments vanished,  
Pleasures banished—  
Withered flowers?  
Joys that fade not like the even,  
Hope and Heaven  
Still are ours!

## THE HEART'S SONG.

BY REV. A. O. COKE.

In the silent midnight watches,  
List thy bosom-door.  
How it knocketh—knocketh—knocketh—  
Knocketh evermore!  
Say not 'tis thy pulse's beating;  
'Tis thy heart of sin;  
'Tis thy Saviour stands entreating,  
Rise and let me in.

Death comes down with equal footsteps  
To the hall and hut;  
Think you death will stand a-knocking  
When the door is shut!  
Jesus waiteth—waiteth—waiteth—  
But thy door is fast!  
Grieved, at length away he turneth;  
Death breaks in at last!

Then, 'tis thine to stand entreating  
Christ to let thee in;  
At the door of Heaven beating,  
Wailing for thy sin.  
Nay, alas, thou foolish virgin,  
Hast thou then forgot,  
Jesus waited long to know thee,  
But—He knows thee not!

## The Two Brothers.

BY PROF. WILSON.

The coffin was let down to the bottom of the grave; the planks were removed from the heaped up brick; the first rattling clods had struck their knell; the quick shovelling was over, and the long, broad, skilfully cut pieces of turf were aptly joined together, and trimly laid, by the beating spade, so that the newest mound in the churchyard was scarcely distinguished from those that were grown over by the undisturbed grass and daisies of a luxuriant spring. The burial was soon over, and the party, with one consenting motion, having uncovered their heads, in decent reverence for the place and occasion, were beginning to separate, and about to leave the churchyard. Here some acquaintances from different parts of the parish, who had not had an opportunity of addressing each other in the house that belonged to the deceased, nor in the course of the hundred yards that the procession had to move, from his bed to his grave, were shaking hands quietly but cheerfully, and enquiring after the welfare of each other's families. There a knot of neighbors were speaking without exaggeration of the respectable character which the deceased had borne, and mentioning to one another the little incidents of his life, some of them so remote as to be known only by the grey headed of the group. While a few yards further removed from the spot, were standing together parties who discussed ordinary concerns, alto-

gether unconnected with the funeral; such as the state of the market, the promise of the season, or change of terms; but still with a sobriety of manner and voice that was insensibly produced by the influence of the simple ceremony now closed, by the quiet graves around, and the shadow of the spire and the grey walls of the house of God.

Two men yet stood together at the head of the grave, with severe and unimpassioned grief. They were brothers—the only sons of him who had been buried; and there was something in their situation that naturally kept the eyes of many directed upon them for a long time, and more intently than would have been the case, had there been nothing more observable than the common symptoms of common sorrow. But these two brothers, who were standing at the head of their father's grave, had for some years been totally estranged from each other; and the only words that had passed between them during all that time had been uttered within a few days past, during the necessary preparation for the old man's funeral.

No deep and deadly quarrel was between these brothers, and neither could distinctly tell the cause of this unnatural estrangement. Perhaps dim jealousies of their father's favour; selfish thoughts that will sometimes force themselves into poor men's hearts, respecting temporal expectations; unaccommodating manners on both sides; taunting words, that mean little when uttered, but which rankle and fester in remembrance; imagined opposition of interests, that, duly considered, would be one and the same—these, and many other causes, slight when single, but strong when rising up together in one baneful band, had gradually and fatally infected their hearts, till at last they who in youth had been seldom separate, and truly attached, now met at market, and, miserable to say, at church, with dark and averted faces, like different clansmen during a feud.

Surely, if anything could have softened their hearts towards each other, it must have been to stand silently side by side, while earth, stones, and clods were falling down upon their father's coffin. And doubtless their hearts were so softened, but pride, that destroyer of man's peace, prevented the holy affections of nature from being shown. And thus these two brothers stood there together, determined not to let each other know the mutual tenderness that in spite of them was gushing up in their hearts, and teaching them the unconfessed folly and wickedness of their causeless quarrel.

A head stone had been prepared, and a person came forward to plant it—a plain stone, with a sand glass, skull and crossbones, chiselled not rudely, and a few words inscribed. The younger brother, regarding this operation with a troubled eye, said, loud enough to be heard by several of the bystanders—

"William, this is not kind of you—you should have told me this. I loved my father as well as you could have loved him. You were the elder, and, it may be, the favorite son; but I had a right in nature to have joined you in ordering this headstone, had I not?"

During these words the headstone was sinking into the ground, and many persons who were on their way to the grave returned. For a while the elder brother said nothing, for he had a consciousness in his heart that he ought to have consulted his father's son, in designing this last mark of affection and respect to his memory; so the stone was planted in silence, and now stood erect, decent and simple among the other unostentatious memorials of the humble dead.

The inscription merely gave the name and age of the deceased, and told that the stone had been erected by his "affectionate sons." The sight of these words seemed to soften the angry man, and he said, something more mildly—

"Yes, we are his affectionate sons; and, since my

name is on the stone, I am satisfied, brother. We have not drawn together kindly of late years, and perhaps never may; but I acknowledge and respect your worth; and here, before our friends, and before the friends of our father, with my foot above his head, I express my willingness to be on other and better terms with you; and if we cannot command our hearts, let us at least bar out all unkindness."

The minister who attended the funeral, and had something entrusted to him to say publicly before he left the church-yard, now came forward and asked the elder brother why he spoke not regarding this matter. He saw that there was something of a cold and sullen pride rising up in his heart; but not easily may any man hope to dismiss from the chambers of his heart even the vilest guest if once cherished there. With a solemn and almost severe air, he looked upon the relenting man, and then changing his countenance into serenity, said gently—

Behold how good a thing it is,  
And how becoming well,  
Together such as brethren are,  
In unity to dwell.

The time, the place, and this beautiful expression of a natural sentiment, quite overcome a heart in which many kind if not warm affections dwelt; and the man thus appealed to, bowed down his head and wept.

"Give me your hand, brother;" and it was given, while a murmur of satisfaction arose from all present, and all hearts felt kindlier and more humanely towards each other.

As the brothers stood, fervently but composedly grasping each other's hand, in the little hollow that lay between the grave of their mother, long since dead, and of their father, whose shroud was haply not yet still, from the fall of dust to dust, the minister stood beside them, with a pleasant countenance, said:—

"I must fulfil the promise I made to your father on his death-bed. I must read to you a few words which his hand wrote at an hour when his tongue denied its office. I need not say that you did your duty to your old father, for did he not often beseech you, apart from one another, for your own sakes as Christians, for the sake of the mother who bore you, and Stephen, who died that you might be born, to be reconciled to one another. When the palsy struck him for the last time, you were both absent; nor was it your fault that you were not beside the old man when he died. As long as sense continued with him here, did he think of you two, and you alone. Tears were in his eyes—I saw them there—and on his cheek too, when no breath came from his lips. But of this no more. He died with this paper in his hand, and he made me know that I was to read it to you over his grave. I now obey—

"My Sons—If you will let my bones lie quiet in the grave, near the dust of your mother, depart not from my burial till, in the name of God and Christ, you promise to love one another as you used to do. Dear boys, receive my blessing."

Some turned their heads away to hide the tears that needed not to be hidden; and when the brothers had released each other from a long and sobbing embrace, many went up to them, and in a single word or two, expressed their joy at this perfect reconciliation. The brothers themselves walked away from the church-yard, with the minister to the Manse. On the following Sabbath, they were seen sitting, with their families, in the same pew; and it was observed that they read out of the same Bible, when the minister gave out the text, and that they sang together taking hold of the same psalm-book. The same psalm was sung, (given out at their request,) of which one verse had been repeated at their father's grave. A larger sum than usual was on that Sabbath found on the plate for the poor, for Love and Charity are sisters. And ever after, both during the peace and troubles of this life, the hearts of the brothers were as one, and in nothing were they divided.

## The Sea shall give up its Dead.

Imagine the state of mind in which the victims of death encounter the enemy. Who are the men that go forth to meet death in its most awful forms!—Are they the choicest and the best; prepared by a life of holiness and peace, to brave the foe, and contemplate the future with calmness and with hope? Need I stop to answer the inquiry? What is the character of our seamen? Let the streets of this vicinity furnish the reply. Let the public sentiment give the response. It is awful for a Christian to die thus! What must the feelings of the wicked be? Ah! look at the pale face and quivering lips of that sea-boy, that beholds death coming on the wave, and hears, above the tempest's roar, the appalling voice saying, "dying, thou shalt die." He was once his mother's pride; but that mother now lies in an early grave, and lies there through him. Her blighted hopes, her bitter disappointment, her broken heart, rise up to his remembrance now, and testify against him. That aged seaman, that stands aghast, as he expects that every moment the ship will part, or founder in the deep—what a long catalogue of crimes stares him in the face! That hitherto courageous man, whose brawny arm is still battling with the wave, or clinging with a death grasp to a portion of the wreck, what a tide of feeling gushes to his heart, and struggles for expression. Ah! once what hopes I had; then I was not far from the kingdom of God; but now, there is no hope—no! That youth, too—the child of pious parents, the hopeful member of a family of love, after a course of reckless folly and daring crime, he goes down to the caverns of the deep, in darkness and despair. But, oh! there is one who, beyond all the rest, attracts our notice, and, by his face of woe, claims our pity. What recollections are those which torture his spirit?—What conflict is that which agitates his soul? Our church books will answer the question. Once he professed Christ; he sat with us at His table, and eat of the broken bread; but the world ensnared his affections; temptation triumphed—sin regained its dominion—and the enemy held him in his fetters. It is the recollection of former days that gives to death its terrors. The storm within is louder than the tempest without. Thought struggles for expression—words for utterance. With a voice low, broken, half-stifled with the sobs of that heaving bosom, he breathes the language of prayer. Who will say there is no hope in his death!

And if to the pious sailor his dying day is, as to outward circumstances, a stormy one, or if it overtake him on a foreign shore, and under circumstances of sorrow and of anguish, his Saviour does not leave him then. He could raise the martyrs above the tortures of the stake, and fill them with joy, even on the rack. He can give peace in a storm, and amidst the horrors of the tempest; and though the wave be his winding sheet, and the caverns of the deep his resting place, even then it is well. To a believer, death may come under a thousand forms, but under all circumstances, to him "to die is gain."

Such, then, are the circumstances under which, frequently, our seamen perish, and the states of mind in which they find a watery grave. Ages shall roll round, and each successive generation shall contribute its proportion to the multitudes that lie buried there. And the sea shall give up its dead! What a scene will the morning of the resurrection present. Some shall arise to life eternal, and some awake to everlasting contempt. What arguments crowd upon the mind to stimulate to energetic action, and fervent prayer, in seeking the salvation of men destined to live forever; and the large proportion of whom die without hope, and shall rise again in dishonor and shame.—*Sailor's Magazine.*

God looks down upon them with an eye of favour, who look up to Him with an eye of faith.