

# The Christian Visitor.

A FAMILY NEWSPAPER: DEVOTED TO RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

REV. I. E. BILL, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men." EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

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## Poetry.

### I'm Growing Old.

BY JOHN G. SAKS.

My days pass pleasantly away,  
My nights are blessed with sweetest sleep;  
I feel no symptom of decay,  
I have no cause to mourn nor weep;  
My foes are potent and my friends,  
My friends are neither false nor cold,  
And yet, of late, I often sigh—  
I'm growing old!

My growing talk of olden times,  
My growing thirst for early news,  
My growing a-ty to rhymes,  
My growing love for easy shoes,  
My growing fondness for my nose,  
My growing fear of taking cold,  
All tell me in the plainest voice,  
I'm growing old!

I'm growing fonder of my staff,  
I'm growing dimmer in the eye,  
I'm growing fainter in my laugh,  
I'm growing deeper in my sigh,  
I'm growing careless in my dress—  
I'm growing frugal of my gold,  
I'm growing wise, I'm growing—yes!  
I'm growing old!

I see it in my changing taste,  
I see it in my changing hair,  
I see it in my growing hair,  
A thousand hints proclaim the truth,  
As plain as hints were ever told,  
That even in my vaulted youth,  
I'm growing old!

Ah, me! my very laurel's breathe  
The tale in my reluctant ear;  
And every boon the hours bequeath  
But makes me debtor to the year!  
E'en flattery's honied words declare  
That secret the decay of their wings!  
And tell me in "How young you are!"  
I'm growing old!

Thanks for the years, whose rapid flight  
My sombre moods to sad sighs;  
Thanks for the gleams of golden light  
That pierce the darkness of their wings!  
The light that beams from out the sky,  
Those heavenly mansions to unfold,  
Where all are blest, and none may sigh,  
"I'm growing old!"

## Correspondence.

For the Christian Visitor.

### To the Reader of the "Visitor."

Our standard of duty must be high, so high that we cannot fail to come short, if we would make worthy attainments in the divine life. It may be asked—what are we to adopt as our standard further than the standard of decency and morality common among those who despise what is low and mean, as well as hate that which is openly and glaringly wicked? I reply,—nothing short of the whole word of God. There is a false idea of excellence, which in this enlightened and refined age is apt to lift itself up, and, like anti-christ, to sit in the place of God and God's word. We are in danger of thinking ourselves and others well enough, provided there be manifest attention to outward conduct and no indulgence in mean dispositions and in open sin. Such is the common idea of morality. It is very limited indeed, when compared with that spirituality which the gospel requires. If found among the heathen where no law of Christ is known, it would comparatively speaking, be praiseworthy. But those who are the most refined among moralists go even beyond this idea of morality. They show us that there is such a thing as endeavoring to cultivate pure affections, noble principles, and love for virtue, and they exhibit many traits of mere human loveliness which are often conspicuous in the lives of Christians. Even some Christians it must be confessed, appear to disadvantage when compared with others who though professing nothing of Christianity in the heart, yet love and practice the external duties, such as hospitality, liberality and prudence. Frequently such persons are honest and upright in the sight of all men; and they manifest a regard for the church, for its observances, and for its ministers. They respect those who on the Sabbath day worship God according to their conscience, and they join outwardly in the ordinary duties of the sanctuary. They are willing even to bestow of their wealth to assist in maintaining the divine ordinances. Perhaps they give money to send missionaries to the heathen. You observe such persons exemplify in sustaining many of the various relations to life; as citizens, neighbors, and friends. It really seems as if the Christianity of the land excites a benign influence upon them, though they be regardless of it most important precepts which demand entire surrender of heart and life to the service of Jehovah. Here is where the world meets the church. Here is where the fine of distinction becomes in some cases very faint. Of many professors we are constrained to ask seriously: Can they be Christians? On the other hand, of many people of the world we are ready to say—they are almost Christians. We know however that almost is not one. Yet of many we are encouraged to hope that they are not far from the Kingdom. As it is, they seem better than some who say they are Christians, and they do not eat bread with him in the same dish, yet they do not Judas-like, plainly appear to be lifting up the heel against him. There is a God in the heavens who judges the heart. The inward thoughts and feelings with every secret motive is well known to him. Of his people Christ hath said "I know my sheep." By revelation it is said that they are all written in the Lamb's book of life.

human patterns of excellence. Who would not desire to go even thus far? Yet it is extremely dangerous to stop here. If many people of the world meet the church on the common ground of externals, there is one danger that in daily practice the church adopts the standard of the men of the world, and neglects the weightier matters of the gospel, faith and love; self-examination and prayer. Our aim should be far different from that of the most amiable and useful man of the world. We should aim high. Our duty is to take a clear view of the things required of us by the word of truth, to know the whole will of God in regard to our conduct and feelings towards him. In addition to the highest aim of the working, we should strive to do more than he does or can do, even as much as the Lord our God commands. While we endeavor to believe on Christ to the saving of our souls we should recommend our faith unto others by a "life and conversation becoming the gospel."

If we in true obedience and humble prayer take the Bible for our only standard of duty, and the captain of salvation for our pattern as well as our Saviour, we shall assuredly find that we must come short in our practice. A part of our duty it is to believe that we shall; and to abound in humble confession at the throne of grace; to implore pardon; and to seek the divine strength. Though we continually come short and fail in performing all that the Holy Spirit has marked out as our duty, yet there is "hope in Israel concerning this thing." Our exalted Redeemer knows our frailties. With him the sincere desire and the honest endeavor are accepted through his own surpassing merits. With hearts contrite, and sorrowing over prevailing infirmities, let Christians repair to the throne of grace, to the footstool of divine mercy.—Whilst there let them confess their sins, and extol the greatness of Jehovah, ascribing blessing and honor and power only to "Him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb for ever and ever." Let them rejoice in the fact, and plead the encouragement that "we have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," for we have one "who was in all points tempted like us, yet without sin." Let us look on high beloved; and having the piercing eye of faith fixed securely on "that which is within the veil loving that, imitating that, even Christ Jesus, who is the foundation of our hopes, and the sum of all excellence.

T. M. C.

### Son, go work to-day in my Vineyard.

The Vineyard of the Lord is very extensive, and there is something in it for every Christian to do. All may not be engaged in the same employment, but all should be engaged in some part of the work which God requires to be done. The Christian is no slave, He is not designed to dig the earth white and die; to toil on till death conducts his shattered system back to dust. A noble destiny awaits him. A nobler work he has to do. God has a cause in the world, and He is pleased to use human instrumentality in carrying it on. Hence we should seek to know our duty, and strive by the grace of God to do it. For if we labor not for God by seeking the salvation of our fellow creatures, we are blameable in His sight and the blood of souls is upon us.

It is our duty to labor for God. God is our Creator. He has made us for His own purpose. We are His rightful property. He has redeemed us also with the most precious price. Our body, soul, spirit, talents, wealth, influence,—all have been bought and paid for. Is it not our duty, then, to labor for the Lord? We shall feel it to be so, while the cries of the lost come waiving up from the chambers of death, and we hear the voice whispering in our ears, "I have delivered you from going down to the pit—I have found a ransom." Our duty will appear equally plain, if we ascend the Pisgah of faith and listen to the voice which says, "I go to prepare a place for you." Let us go to Calvary, and stand in the shadows of the cross. Who is there agonizing upon that rugged tree? 'Tis the Maker of the world—'tis my Saviour. He did not sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. Why does he die? For no guilt of his own he is suffering, but to cancel that of his murderer—man. We need not wonder, then, that a voice sounds out from the cross, "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." In consideration of these things, who could refuse to do all in his power for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom in the world? We are only stewards. We have nothing, except our sins, but what we have received. God has entrusted us with his property to be returned with usury. Then let us strive so to employ what is given into our hands as to meet with the approving words, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

It is our privilege to labor for God. The wise, the great, and the good have labored for Him. Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs,—the holy of every age and of every clime—have been engaged in this glorious work. Is it not privilege to be fellow-laborers with them? They have done their work and entered into rest. As a legacy to succeeding generations, they have left an honored name and a worthy example. And perhaps they are now watching with intense interest the conduct of their successors. If we labor in the cause of God, we labor for eternity. We rear for ourselves an imperishable monument. If we labor only for the things of this life, even if our efforts are successful, the objects of our pursuit cannot follow us far. Wealth

will crumble around the tomb, and fame will die away along the shores of time. But the holy deed done for God will follow us beyond the sepulchre, and throw a charm over the pages of imperishable memory. Thus it has ever been. Where are the emperors, statesmen, philosophers, and bards of antiquity? And where are their works? Let shapeless mounds of earth answer, and the owl of the desert. Of all the works of those who lived eighteen hundred years ago, what is remaining now? Nought save a ruin and a name. Everything that pertained to them whispers of desolation. The finish laugh of time is heard exulting over the destruction of them and their works. One man was ruler of half the then known earth, and millions were his slaves. Where are his doings recorded? In the dust, where his name is written. But there issued from the meanest city of the most despised nation of the earth, twelve poor men. Unarmed with sword, and scantily supplied with knowledge or thought, they went forth. And where are their names written? In the Book of Life and on the walls of the New Jerusalem, and are at this day proclaimed through all the earth. Their words are the treasury of the Church. They have become the support of the weak, the staff of the aged, the comfort of the afflicted, and the pillow of the dying. Their works will remain forever. It is one of the greatest privileges of life that we may so act that our deeds will live when we are not. If we strive to glorify God with all that He has entrusted to our care, our good example and admonitory counsels will live long after our bodies have been consigned to the grave and our spirits renewed to heaven. If any one would desire to exercise a permanent influence after his decease, let him seek to be a good man. For the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance, but the name of the wicked shall rot. If then we would wish to have our names borne over the billows of time and to remain forever, we must labor among the builders of that which is truly the Eternal City.

It is our interest to labor for God. We labor for many things in connection with the present life, from which we derive no profit. But the work we do for God will not be in vain. Its effects will be seen either in this world or in that which is to come. The consciousness that we have not lived altogether in vain, will shed a halo of calmness over our spirits even to the remotest hour of our earthly pilgrimage. For he that watereth shall be watered also himself. And when our eyes are dimmed with age and gray hairs are sprinkled upon us, how precious will it be to feel that we have been instrumental in promoting the interests of our Saviour's kingdom! And the more we have done, the happier we shall feel in contemplating the fact. Yet, after our greatest efforts and most glorious success, in view of our own unworthiness, we are to acknowledge ourselves as unprofitable servants. But God has promised to reward us according to the improvement of the talents which He has given us. 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