

# 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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## The Influence of the Life.

FOR YOUNG PROFESSORS.

It was in the suburbs of the Metropolis, and at the window of a pretty villa, whose sloping greenward and dark shrubs were the admiration of city pedestrians and the envy of the neighbourhood, that a young and intelligent face looked out upon the sunset. The face was the property of Bella Rooke; the sunset was a February one, attractive as the harbinger of coming glories, when winter should draw back still farther his dark veil of mist and cloud, and suffer all the grandeur of the day's decline to meet the eye of poet, painter, and friend.

Upon a table beside the window lay materials for writing and a Latin Dictionary; but a kitten was at play among the papers, and the dictionary upside down. Truth to tell, Miss Bella was no hard student, at all events, not in the presence of a crimsoned sky like that before her now.

Suddenly, however, her meditations were interrupted by the entrance of a beautiful girl some two years her senior, who bore in her arms three volumes of learned aspect and a roll of foolscap.

"Bella!" said the new comer in a tone of grave reprimand, "I left you standing in the same spot a quarter of an hour ago.—How much have you written, pray?"

"Not a line," said her sister, turning quickly round, "Puss has been busy, you see, but I have only opened this book—and verily," she cried, laughing, "it has been wrong way up all the time."

A shade of displeasure passed over the brow of the listener.

"You are a silly child, Isabel; when will you be ready to begin Greek with me?"

"Oh, in six months, perhaps; or, perhaps, never. I do not intend to be a 'blue,' my sweet Bertha—one such in a family will suffice! but I hope to be useful in the world for all that. I can learn from other things beside books."

"No doubt. But does not this butterfly life of yours prevent your real progress? Could you not, by steadiness and application, gain a position in the world where you would be far more useful than in that you now occupy? Apart from study, would you not as a Christian, be more influential if you were less—what word shall I use?—less gay?"

Isabel fixed her eyes upon the speaker and answered calmly, "I know what you mean, Bertha, and I own that I am not so useful as I ought to be. But I should not be so 'influential' as I am, if it were not that my friends discover that my 'new religion' has augmented rather than lessened my cheerfulness, my joy, I am not Bertha. If I should assume a character, if I should put the head of age on these most youthful shoulders, if I should wrap the mantle of the learned around these restless limbs—should I do honour to the religion that is truth? Trust me, sweet sister mine, I can do more good by being myself—provided that self be guided always by the Spirit from on high."

so absorbed in its contents, that the quiet irony of the remark was lost upon her. "Of course not," she carelessly replied, as she arranged herself for a morning at her studies; "there is every excuse for him."

Certainly this was not the reply Mrs. Hales expected, but she did not express her surprise.

Just then a servant entered. She was Irish, and without ceremony made known her errand. "Ah, ma'am! but the gardiner'll make a purty miss ov yer garden, if yer lave 'im alone like this. For what shud he be doin' but pullin' down yer beautiful rose-tree—"

"That will do, Katherine; I dare say Miss Rooke will oblige me by speaking to him for me. Give me the benefit of your taste, my dear young friend."

"Oh, certainly; I should not allow the rose-trees to be torn down. I am fond of roses; and I should pull up all that box around the beds, and have more turf in the garden;" and Bertha turned again to her studies with the air of one who has exhibited rare self-denial; and indeed it did appear to require considerable effort to look off from her book so long.

Mrs. Hales smiled. "I fear I must ask you to go into the garden," she said gently; "Martin is out, and the younger children do not understand. I am sorry to trouble you."

"No trouble," said Bertha, without looking up.

"Thank you. Then if you will direct him how to train the rose-trees, and say that as I am so ill, I leave it all to you—"

"Oh, certainly," muttered Bertha, who had not heard a word. "There is a misprint here; if you will excuse me, I will get a pen and correct it at once." So saying, she retreated to the drawing-room, and was seen no more till noon.

Nor was this the only selfish act perpetrated by the guest whom Mrs. Hales had invited with a view to social enjoyment.—Day after day did Bertha evidence how little she understood the teaching of the Master whom she professed to serve; day after day did she, by her conduct, increase the distaste which was already entertained by her own society of religious people, and even for religion itself. And yet she had the fullest confidence that she was right in this intense devotion to her own affairs, and neglect of the interests of others. She would have said that she was labouring for God in all. Alas! she did not understand the value of that silent but resistless influence, a self-denying Christian life.

One evening as they sat around the fire in the twilight, Martin, who was a good tempered and intelligent boy of sixteen, proposed a game which he called, "Twenty Questions," with especial view to the amusement of the little ones around.

asked the lady, lowering her voice to an earnest whisper. "I think that nobody can be at all good without the help of the Holy Spirit. Will you ask God, for Jesus sake, to forgive your sins, and give you that Spirit in your heart?"

"Yes, yes; I will." "Come into my room every morning, then, and I will tell you what to say. Don't forget, little one!"

"No," said the child, "I want to go to heaven with you; so I shall be sure to remember!"

Just then a youth came through the garden-gate. "Miss Isabel," he said earnestly, "can I speak to you alone?"

"I have something to tell that will please you," said the lad. "My mother has consented to have family prayers every day."

"Indeed! I am delighted. Who asked her?"

"I did."

"You! Ah, then, Mr. Martin, my words were not despised?"

"No, dear Miss Isabel, how could they be when the beauty of your life came before and after them with such irresistible force? Oh, it was your bright cheerfulness, your happy smile, your faithful words, that led me first to see a loveliness in the religion of the Bible. And, before I read the Book, I read its teaching in your daily walk!"

"Have you then obeyed that teaching?"

"Miss Isabel, I have!"

## A Noble Resolution.

"A little girl, of seven or eight years of age, once attended my Sabbath-school and Bible-class. She was a most interesting child, and one who always, regardless of the time of day, was often lighted up with brightness as she listened to instruction; and sometimes the tears would roll over her cheeks, as the truth was illustrated by some affecting anecdote pressed home upon her heart. Her mother also attended the Church, Bible-class, the Sabbath-school, and became impressed, and, we hope, truly converted to God. She was accustomed to pray with her dear child; and the child also prayed,—not with a form, but apparently with the heart and the understanding also. Some neighbours, who were caring for their souls, were also accustomed to meet in her house for prayer.—There lived at a little distance a family notorious for wickedness and especially for swearing. The father was a drunkard, and the most of his children were very godless and rude. This little girl was sent one day to this wicked house with a message. She went in; and as she was standing on the floor of the cottage, one of the sons said to her, 'You have been praying to-day, now haven't you?' The child looked shy, and acknowledged that they had. He then mocked at them as a set of praying fanatics, while he stood between her and the door, and said, 'You'll swear now, before I let you out.' The child said she would not swear, for she had been taught at the Sabbath school that it was wrong to swear. He said again and again, 'Swear; but the child said, 'No, I'll not swear, do what you like. Influenced by his bad and thoughtless heart, he put up his hand and took down a gun from the end of a bed near to where he stood. He made all ready as if he were to shoot, and cried to the little girl, 'You must swear or die.' The poor thing believed that her last hour was come, and at first shrunk away into a corner; but when he cried, 'Swear, or I'll fire,' she stood out with heroic confidence, and with determined face looked upon him and said, 'Fire, then, but I'll die!' She would rather suffer for death than take God's name in vain! Her's was a martyr-courage, which shames thousands who swear and blaspheme without any provocation or temptation at all. Reader, would you rather die than swear? You are neither possessed of true manliness nor godliness if you would not. Christ Jesus, who loves sinners, has said 'Swear not'; and this child obeyed his command. If you are a swearer, follow her example, and swear no more. I might have added, that the fortitude of the child, fairly overcame her rough persecutor, and he threw by the gun, and said, 'Go away home, then, and pray again; and I'll stick to him, and be the most of the 'family might be seen afterwards in the meetings in the sanctuary where the dear child was taught that it is right to pray and wrong to swear."

The night, as all the household knelt in prayer, and as the voice of her hostess with trembling rose to heaven, the heart of Isabel poured forth its thanks to God. To Him she—and rightly gave—the glory of the work, and blessed Him that He gave her grace to show to any around her the beauty and the worth of true religion.

## The Theatre an Enemy of Virtue.

Dr. Bellows implies that the theatre has done good in the world, and deserves the countenance of the friends of morality. Can it be that Dr. Bellows has existed for three thousand years, and yet affirm that any good can come out of it? He who is willing to stand up and endorse a vile thing, so far identifies himself with it as to stake his character upon his representations concerning it.

Joseph Styles, Esq., remarks, "That there is scarcely a distinguishing name among the philosophers, legislators and moralists of the world but is hostile to the theatre; and they have left, by their historians, or in their writings, an imperishable protest against the stage." Among the ancients we have testimony that Plutarch, Xenophon, Plato, Aristotle, Solon, Valerius, Maximus, Nascia, Scipio, Cicero, Horace, Tacitus, Ovid, Seneca, St. Augustine, Chrysostom, Clemens, Mutius Scaevola, Theophilus, Pegasus, Nerva, Eusebius and Tertullian were all opposed to the theatre as an evil. Even many pagans, it is seen, esteemed the stage fountain of licentiousness and misery, an unchanging enemy of virtue.

Judge Bulstode, in London, 1718, charged the Grand Jury with the opinion, "That one playhouse destroys more souls than fifty churches are able to save."

Rome passed a decree that "common players should be expelled from that city, as enemies to virtue." Another decree, called the Praetorian law, decided that the stage was infamous. Scipio Nascia urged the passage of a law before the Senate, which poor pignus passed, (and Addison affirmed that the modern stage had no: half the virtue of those of Rome and Greece); that a theatre whose foundations were laid should be stopped, and the materials sold.

The theatre has in every age been the un-compromising foe to all reverence towards holy things. Profanity on the stage has been one of its chief characteristics. Among nations where God was unknown the writers and actors seemed compelled to scoff at such gods as the people feared and worshipped.

The theatre has ever been the great promoter of impurity of mind. Only a few weeks since, in Burton's Theatre, while "Camille" was being performed, the outrage upon common decency was so gross, that I am credibly informed, one-half of the females of the audience turned their backs upon the stage. If Dr. Bellows or any one else thinks that the theatre might become purified, let them learn the history of the Theatre of Edinburgh, for which Holmes wrote; of the theatre gotten up by Sir Wm. Wyndham, in London; of the Federal Theatre, of Boston, and one in Philadelphia, in which the third tiers were abolished. It is said that the former is now a church, and of the latter, that if the objectionable feature was not restored the doors must be closed.

## Gems for Christian Ministers.

Have a care that you lose not what you have to say, while you are wholly taken up with considering how to say it. Beware of our own selves, my dearest brethren; many ministers, who opened the way to heaven for others, are now in hell for want of humility.—Xavier.

The heart of Dr. W. Gouge was so much in his work, that he often said Lord Coventry, then keeper of the great seal, that he envied not his situation.—Life.

Obscurity in the discourse, is an argument of ignorance in the mind.—Bishop Wilkins.

The chief characteristics of the eloquence suited to the pulpit, as distinguished from the other kinds of public speaking, appear to be these two—gravity and warmth.—Blair.

An eager desire to say what is curious and uncommon, is a dangerous turn of mind in a teacher of Christianity.—Dr. Erskine.

There has seldom been an instance of a dejection of a minister which has not been preceded by too much of social festivity.—J. Campbell.

I prayed that the Lord would be with me, for the pulpit without him was a terror.—Boston.

Too great a portion of time may be spent, even in innocent society.—Dr. Macgill.

## Answer to Prayer.

If Christian faith were stronger, one cannot doubt that more frequent answers to prayer would be witnessed. Much prayer is apparently lost, but because faith, even like a grain of mustard seed, is not found in the heart. The following instance of immediate answer to prayer, should lead every Christian to cry, "Lord, increase our faith."

In a New England town, the church had assembled on the last Thursday of February to pray for the colleges of the land. One gentleman was called upon to pray. He rose, and commenced his prayer. But as he began to supplicate for the descent of the Holy Ghost upon these fountains, his voice faltered, the tears rolled down his cheeks, and, overcome with emotion, he sat down. Ah! said to himself the pastor, he remembers his son in Yale College!

At that very moment, in New Haven, there were assembled within the college walls, a company met for the same purpose. And even while they yet prayed, the Holy Ghost came down. Many were bowed down with anguish of spirit. Among them was one, the merriest-hearted, the most beloved in college, who had hitherto made fun of religion.—"What must I do to be saved? Brethren, pray for me," was his language.

It was the son of him who had sat down, overcome, in the prayer meeting at N. Those in Montreal who listened to the preaching of a late beloved minister in this city, will know how that question was answered. "It shall come to pass, that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear."

## Only Six Hours from Eternity.

In Eastern countries the journey is reckoned by the number of hours it will take to accomplish it. They speak of being so many hours from a place. I once saw a man who performed the journey from comparative health to death and eternity in six hours. I will never forget the solemnizing scene. I had just reached home from the northern metropolis, when I was told that a young person had called to speak with me about the salvation of the soul. I had asked a few questions, and given some counsels, when I was compelled to dismiss the youthful inquirer, with injunctions to return and converse with me about the all-important matter of salvation, on account of receiving a message to go with all speed to see an elderly man who had been suddenly seized with paralysis, and was at

the authority of the United States, and established a dictatorship and despotism. Property is taken and human life destroyed—court records are burned, and travellers cast into prison, although guilty of no crime—United States officials are treated with contempt and are only defied. All of this is done in the name of religion. The Saints of the Salt Lake Valley consider that they are not bound to obey the "heathen" government of the United States, and they presume upon their distance from the seat of government, and upon their isolated position, to defy its authority.

The mormon delusion, with all its wickedness and enormity, has been suffered till now without interference from government. But it is evident that the present state of things cannot continue. The government must interfere, or rather it must assert and maintain its authority, or become a reproach among nations.

It is clearly the duty of the administration to exercise its authority firmly, decidedly, and with an adequate force, if need be, to suppress all resistance, and to keep down all rebellion. There can be no excuse for inaction on the part of government after the revelation made by Judge Drummond, of the high handed crimes committed by the leading Mormons. We believe that the administration will receive the support of every true lover of civil and religious liberty, in the exercise of prompt and judicious efforts for asserting the supremacy of law in the territory of Utah.—Boston Journal.

## Prospects of the Bible Union.

The American Bible Union has been closely watched through every step of its progress from the time of its first organization until the present time. Of this its friends have no reason to complain. But, it has a just right to complain that Christians, of whom they might have expected more success, but, even this has, by the over-ruling hand of God, wrought good; and the remainder of the wrath has, by him, been restrained.

We may hope that this wrath has nearly spent itself; and the good and honest-hearted, amongst its opponents, have been induced to examine, with more candor, its principles and objects. This is, in a good measure, true, for many who were hostile to its operations, of various denominations, have become its friends and supporters. While the Union has endured a great fight of affliction, its Board of Officers have, with commendable patience and perseverance, held on the even tenor of their way, and said to their enemies, "We are doing a great work and cannot come down; why should the work cease while we come down to you?"

The friends of the Bible Union have until recently, labored alone in this noble work of giving in our own language a correct revision of the Sacred Word. But recently, a number of individuals and societies have turned their attention to the same subject. The signs of the times clearly indicate that the work of revision will go on; and, if the Bible Union was to abandon the work and dissolve their organization to-morrow, others would take it up, and the noble enterprise is destined to a glorious triumph.

Members of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, have introduced the subject into that body; and presented resolutions and a scheme for carrying it into effect. Thus the agitation of the subject has provoked many; and secured to the Christian church a translation of the oracles of God into our vernacular tongue.

But, the Union are not going to abandon the work, or relax their efforts; for they believe the Christian has no armour for the back. Having therefore put their hands to the plough, they are not the men to look back.

True, the Union met with a sore loss, when Cone and Colgate, two noble champions in the cause, fell. But, the mantle of Elijah's rested on Elisha; and the spirit of these worthy men yet animates their associates and successors; and this stone cut out of the mountain without hands, is rolling, and is destined to fill the whole earth.

The last information received from the Board informed us that they were about to appoint the final committee of revision, for the New Testament. Most of them, we believe, are appointed already, and have signified their acceptance. So that we may soon expect to have this portion of the work entirely free from the errors and sectarianism of the authorized version.

True, this appointment will increase the liabilities of the Board several thousand dollars. But, that is just what its friends have expected; and we trust will be ready cheerfully to furnish. In this and the adjacent provinces the friends of the enterprise have furnished substantial evidence that it was a cause in which they were deeply interested; and we hope in this emergency they will not withhold their pecuniary aid. The Board have appealed to the tried friends of the cause in these provinces, as it is a rule of the Board not to run the Union in debt. We propose to raise the small sum of one hundred dollars for this special object, by dividing it into twenty shares of five dollars each; and earnestly invite our beloved brethren to take one or more shares; and forward or pay the same to either of the pastors of the churches in this city, or vicinity. Christ expects every one to do his duty. D. N.

## The Mormons and Religious Toleration.

It is evident, by the recent news from Utah, that the time is not far distant when the power of the Federal government in upholding organic law in Utah will be put to the severest test. Brigham Young has virtually ignored