

# CHRISTIAN VISITOR.

"HOLD FAST THE FORM OF SOUND WORDS"—2d Timothy, i. 13.

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## THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR,

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## Poetry.

### Watch-Words.

Through clouds and stormy seas of Fate

Two golden watch-words guide and comfort me:

Toiling along my path, early and late,  
I cling to Patience and Fidelity.

In all the weary changes of my day  
I strive to follow duty faithfully;

And when I falter, fainting, by the way,  
With subtle influence, Patience strengthens me.

So onward through what suffering God may send,  
I walk with faith, and feet that shall not tire.

Trusting with Patience, strong unto the end,  
To reach at last, O Lord, my soul's desire.

Was Not Roger Williams the Father of Religious Liberty in America?

Since the appearance of my articles of the 15th and 30th of September, the above question with others has been asked me by esteemed brethren.

With your permission I will give my answer, and some of the data upon which it is based.

The honor of having, under God, given Religious Liberty to America, is due to Dr. John Clarke, and not to Roger Williams.

Thomas Lechford, an Episcopalian, who visited New England, "from 1637 till about August 1641, and among other places Providence," says: "At Providence, which is twenty miles from the said (Rhode Island which he had also visited), lives Master Williams and his company of diverse opinions; most are Anabaptists. They hold that there is no true church in the Bay, nor in the world, nor any true ministry."

This quotation bears more or less on the whole question, but it is now given in order to show the distance that Lechford found it to be between Providence and Rhode Island, which may not come amiss to some. Roger Williams obtained a Charter for Providence, and that without the knowledge or consent of the inhabitants. Of this Charter Arnold says: "Under its operation, in every town and hamlet were spread the seeds of discontent and dissension, and nothing but the pressure from without, and the supreme law of self-preservation, kept the discordant settlement from utter destruction and from being absorbed by the adjoining governments." It is thought by some that this charter included Newport and other Islands, and "there was, it is said, adopted with this charter a code of laws, including a Bill of Rights and an appendix upon the public administration of justice according to the laws agreed upon and established throughout the whole colony i. e., Newport." The following is given as a 'word for word' quotation of that Code.

"These are the laws that concern all men, and these are the penalties for the transgressions thereof, which by common consent are ratified and established throughout this whole colony, (Newport and other Islands), and otherwise than these what is

here forbidden, all men, may walk as their consciences persuade them, every one in the name of his God, and let the saints of the Most High walk in this colony without molestation, in the name of Jehovah, their God, for ever and ever."

This Code was not a part of the Charter obtained by Williams, but "adopted from Newport by the General Court." The following was among the written instructions given by a town meeting to the ten delegates chosen to represent the town of Providence, R. I., in the general court.

"We do voluntarily and are are freely willing to receive and be governed by the laws of England, together with the way of administration of them, so far as the nature and constitution of this place will admit, desiring, so far as may be to hold correspondence with the whole colony in that model that hath been lately shown us by our worthy friends of the Island, if the General Court shall complete and confirm the same, or any other mode as the Court shall agree upon, according to our Charter." The words from the word 'colony' to the word 'Island', are all written in capitals in the document from which we quote.

"We have thus found the first legal announcement of religious liberty ever made on earth, and learned from whence it emanated—from the first Baptist Church ever planted on this continent, and the Code and Bill of Rights was drawn up by Dr. John Clark, the pastor of the First Baptist Church in America."

Twenty-eight years after the settlement of Providence, and seventeen years after the union of the Island with Providence, under the first Charter, there was a second Charter adopted by the colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. "The following is among the reasons given by Dr. Adlam, which led to an application for a new Charter."

"Besides the charter obtained by Roger Williams making no provision for any specific form of government, that Charter was scarcely in a single feature acceptable to the inhabitants of Newport and Portsmouth. There were two things especially that must have made it very displeasing to them. One was that in it not the slightest mention was made of freedom of conscience, a thing they prized above and beyond everything else and which they had made so many sacrifices to secure."

Let us now quote an extract upon this subject, from Dr Adlam's lecture on the "Origin of the Institutions of Rhode Island," and close what we fear is already too lengthy an article. "We cannot but regret how wide-spread are the errors concerning the origin of these institutions." After saying that he was reluctant to believe that so extensive misconceptions prevailed on this subject, he adds among other remarks, "A very distinguished individual of this State, published a work in which he gave the credit of certain acts to one individual, while these acts were performed by another. He was written to by one who was probably better acquainted with the early history of Rhode Island than any other man, and the errors, in a most respectful way, pointed out, and as there was the best opportunity of correcting the error, it was hoped that it would be done. But he who committed the error refused to rectify it replying: 'I have taken it as it is generally believed,' and have made no original investigations," and thus gave his influence to perpetuate error, and to injure an individual by depriving him of the honor which was his due. But what we wish to notice is the reason assigned for not correcting the mistake—I have taken it as it is generally believed." He was undoubtedly correct in his statement, but it admits the truth to which I have referred,—wide spread errors concerning the most important facts of our history. For example, how many believe that Roger Williams procured that charter which secured freedom of conscience to our State. Not a few of our more distinguished citizens would think that we wished to detract from his just fame were we to deny this, and yet Roger Williams had nothing to do with procuring that charter. It was by the skill, energy and perseverance of Clark that priceless gift was obtained."

One more article, with your permission and we are done with this subject for the present.

Respectfully, etc.,  
J. C. BLEAKNEY.  
Lawrencetown, N. S., Oct. 21, 1879.

## The Wish of All.

When we look upon the saints of God in their last moments, the voice of our heart says, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." It is not so much the sweet peace of dying nor freedom from anguish at the dying hour, that makes us wish for the word of life, peculiar to the child of God. But that inward nature of ours that takes hold upon the future, and leads us over the river of death, to witness the joys of the blessed on the shores of the Heavenly Canaan. It is this unconscious uprising of an inward nature, which causes us to sigh in soul "Let me die the death of the righteous." We would sink into the arms of Jesus as they do; we would depart as they do; we would resign this world as they do; we would have our hearts supported by that inward quickening as they have; we would enjoy that blessed assurance of peace above, through Jesus Christ that they enjoy.

Death, from the Christian standpoint, is only exchanging sorrow for joy, sadness for gladness, pains for peace, misery for majesty, poverty for plenty, sins for a Saviour's smiles, the woes of the lost, for the blessings of the Redeemer, hell for heaven.

There is grandeur entering in the thought of a Christian death, the door to the mansion of the Redeemer, hearing the glad welcome from Heaven's exalted Prince, waving the victor's palm, singing the song of triumph, are things around which cluster the highest grandeur and the most exalted joy.

Such contemplations make the wish of one the wish of all: "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like His." Man is often brought in close proximity to the future. His inner nature draws him hither, and before he is aware, he enters in mind the land of the departed. This silent nature which leads man beyond the bound of time, if not checked, would develop into hopes and pleasing joy through the influence of truth and the Spirit of God.

Oct. 20, '79. E.

## Life Work, Heart Work.

The preparation for life work is the preparation of the heart. Whatever is not in the heart cannot rule the life to any great extent. The general tone and drift of man will be in accordance with the deep seated principles of the heart. It is not the surges, the ripple, the billows, the raging tempest, which shows the direction of the great sea currents, away deep down beneath the foam and surge of the surface, the water knows no storm. There the general flow of the water rules, and when the wind ceases, and quiet settles over the surface of the sea, the great undercurrent will give direction to the once raging billows. So in man. The life principle of action which is far below the ruffle and surges of the outward life, will finally give direction and tone to the life of man.

Well did our blessed Lord undertake this when he made that bold charge upon Nicodemus. "Ye must be born from above." He understood the power of heart principles upon the life of man. He knew if these were right, all would be right. Hence he brings to bear all the powers of eternal truth to rectify the wrongs of the inner life of the soul.

The spring and spirit of life, action must be from above. So long as they are of earth, they will lead the soul into all error.

But so soon as their source is Heaven, then the whole tone and direction of the life moved by such Heaven born power, must be in the direction of holiness and heaven. To reach the abode of the eternal God, the vital principle moving the inner life of the man must be "begotten of God."

Oct. 15, '79. E.

For the Visitor.

## A Visit.

Old age and early youth present us with similarity. During our recent visits we found ourselves at the house of a lady who is almost 90, and the beginning of Christian life dates back 70 years. At her previous home, and beside her, was a daughter who had just returned with her infant to the homestead to spend a short season with her aged mother. As they sat together, we saw that which is seen under like circumstances, marked resemblance between the grand parent and the grand child. In countenance, in helplessness, and in dependence, they were in a large degree similar.

There is a period in human life bounded by early youth and by old age. The aged one had passed it, the infant had not entered upon it. To the former it is a tried, to the latter an untried way. We are now traversing that path. Short is this period, even when it is continued to its greatest length. Said the aged one, "My life appears to me very brief indeed."

"Our life is like a dream,  
Our time like a stream  
Glides swiftly away."

This period is the time of human activity. What is done of a temporal, and in most cases of a spiritual nature, is accomplished within it. What we fail to do for our own and for the welfare of others in this period, in all probability will be undone in time and eternity.

J. C. COOMBES.  
Queen's County, Oct. 22, '79.

## "Hors de Combat."

While wandering about at night some months ago in one of the most beautiful of our Western cities, we came to a church, the lecture room of which was well lighted, and well filled with what seemed to be a pious congregation. The exercises were generally good. But one brother disturbed our equanimity and upset our equilibrium by forcibly exhorting the people to "rise in their might and go at the enemies of righteousness hors de combat." For a moment we felt as if struck by an equinoctial gale, but soon recovered from the effect of the disastrous injunction, mentally saying, "After all, is that not the way that Christians generally are going at the enemies of righteousness?" Perhaps the man understood his horrible French quotation better than he appeared to do. Certainly we are going at the foes of God hors de combat. We are striking blows with a paralyzed arm, shouting with a voiceless trumpet, and running on crutches. What is the base of operations from which the church advances against the foe? At the present time an alluring worldliness has seized Zion; Christians attend the theatre to witness the most immoral plays, and the church is powerless to enforce a healthful discipline. Children are taken out of the Sunday school almost without resistance, and sent upon the stage to act and sing in "Pinafore," a silly composition over which even many members of the church seem to have become idiotic. Dancing schools, once deemed schools of vice, are now patronized by Christians who send their children to learn manners. And they learn them. The position of the church toward the use and sale of intoxicating drink, the woe and curse of society, is strangely uncertain, and the indifference, of many, appallingly criminal. Church discipline exists in many quarters only in name. Men are allowed to stay in the church that would be excluded from a lodge of Masons or Odd Fellows. We waste time in discussing whether the souls of the saved in heaven will show the scars of sin, while all around are ghastly wounds undressed, and broken humanity weeps and groans with none to help. From such surroundings we go against the enemies of righteousness, and sure enough we go hors de combat. Is it a wonder that infidelity sneers and says that the pulpit is losing its power? Is it a wonder that irreligion prevails so extensively? We are a set of hors de combat warriors. My friend out West was talking better than he knew. Churches that hold the faith lightly, that pervert the ordinances, that neglect dis-

cipline, that tolerate wrong, are hors de combat. Satan laughs at a demoralized church. William Cowper once said that

"Satan trembles when he sees  
The weakest saint upon his knees."

But if Satan trembles when he sees a dancing, theatre-going saint upon his knees, then he must have become a poor, miserable imbecile—Watchman.

## The Pulpit use of Slang.

While some defence may be found for the employment of unwonted methods of preaching, such as familiar and colloquial and anecdotal forms of utterance—partaking of the nature, if not, indeed, formed upon the model of the sensational; we insist upon it that there can be no excuse offered—or none admitted if offered—for the use of slang and slovenly expressions in the house and service of God. These we hear but too frequently, and, while they are occasionally the outcome of defective education and taste, they are more frequently—the more so the pity—the affectation of young preachers who ought not to be allowed to plead ignorance in their defence. They probably would not do so but would claim that the active force of slang phrases reaches the mind of the hearer quicker and more effectively than expressions of a more sober and dignified tone. We grant that this may be true, but they reach the ear of all uncultured persons to offend it and the majority of devout hearers to produce the impression of a levity at utter variance with the solemnity of religious service.

We have had preachers only recently and in pulpits not out of telegraphic reach of Chicago, use such slang phrases as "taking stock," "getting a square meal," "going the whole animal," "keeping his head level," putting his foot in it," "getting a corner on brimstone," "and then he Peter'd," and many others, equally coarse and unfit for the pulpit is no more sacred than the platform. If some young preachers we wot of—and preachers who are not very young no less!—would be a great deal more careful in their utterance, the dignity of the pulpit would not be so often lowered, and possibly they might be more respected in it, and out of it alike.

## Items of Interest.

The Rev. Cunningham Geikie, author of the "Life and Words of Christ," has been appointed to the rectorship of Christ Church, Neuilly, Paris.

Professor Christlieb, of Bonn University, whose address before the Evangelical Alliance in New York gave him an American reputation, has been invited to deliver the Yale Lectures on Preaching in the winter of 1880.

A Father died in New York in 1874 leaving a son lately come of age, nothing to do but spend \$12,000 a year. He had been doing this in dissipation and drunkenness till last week, when coming to his lodging with some boon companions he suddenly exclaimed "I will end it now" and fired a pistol into his brain producing instant death. He was twenty-seven years old. Rich fathers may ponder such a case with profit.

That is a pretty strong illustration which Mr. Spurgeon adopts when he says: "I see it publicly stated by men who call themselves Christians that it would be advisable for Christians to frequent the theatre in order that the character of the drama might be raised. The suggestion is about as sensible as if we were bidden to pour a bottle of lavender water into a great sewer to improve its aroma."

Morgan Park Seminary opens its year under very flattering auspices. The Junior class numbers twenty-five, all but five of whom are college graduates. Whole number seventy.

The nail hit. Mr. Spurgeon says: "We ought to have room for enthusiasts, even if they violate every rule of grammar. A grand, blundering, hammering, thundering, whole hearted Boanerges is worth a regiment of prim, reverend gentlemen, meek as milk and water, and soft as boiled parsnips."

After so many years Edinburgh is to build a memorial to her noblest citizen, John Knox. A monument is to be erected near St. Giles church, and a statue of the great reformer placed thereon.