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JAMES ALLISON & CO.,
PITTSBURGH, PA.

Presbyterian Banner.

VOL. XII. NO. 32 PITTSBURGH, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 1864. WHOLE NO. 604

THE PRESBYTERIAN BANNER.

Publication Office:
GAZETTE BUILDINGS, 84 Fifth St., Pittsburgh, Pa.
SMITH, ENGLISH & CO., 23 North-6th St., Phil'a, Pa.

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PAYMENT IN ADVANCE.
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For the Presbyterian Banner.

The Exposition of Prophecy.

The fulfilment of prophecy is one of the strongest proofs of the Divine origin of the Bible. In those prophecies which extend to our own day, we have a miracle addressed to our senses, in their evident fulfilment, sufficient to answer the most obstinate skeptic. One of these is, the dispersion of the Jews. Another is the condition of the cities and countries described in many of these prophecies. The fulfilment of the promises of the Bible is of a similar nature. The preservation of the Church was foretold, and has thus far been accomplished. The philosopher cannot fully explain these circumstances, by assigning natural causes for their existence. He may point out some of these, but they do not fully account for the result. And it is an admitted principle in the Divine procedure, that God works by natural influences, when these exist, controlling their operation, and supplying every deficiency which might render the event uncertain.

We make these remarks to remove an objection to the study of prophecy, whether fulfilled or unfulfilled. When God gave us these prophecies, he certainly designed that we should study them. And great advantages might be expected to result from their careful study. Perhaps one reason of the spread of infidelity in the present day is the sinful neglect of this branch of sacred science.

A prejudice has been created against it by the diversity of views of commentators and ministers; and the extravagances of enthusiasts, who have converted the prophecies of the Bible into a book of fortune, or a political engine with which they may gratify their malice or their pride, or fan their personal vanity by writing sensational books, or further some bookselling scheme. Far be it from the honest expositor to lend his influence to either of these While the whole field of knowledge is open to the Christian and the Christian preacher and author, and no part is to be neglected that can be profitably cultivated, he must beware of using the word with any double intent, or sacrificing the truth to foster the pride of others or save his own. Where he cannot speak decisively, let him give his honest opinion—and beware of any unworthy motive in what he says, or fails to say. We have been led to these remarks by the manifest prejudice which exists in the minds of some, against expositions of the Book of Revelation. Our Church newspaper should be open to all articles which are calculated to throw light on the changes that are taking place in the world and in the Church; to show the people of God, as clearly as it is possible to do—as clearly as it has evidently been the design of God to do—what has been, and what may be expected to be, in the Church's history. The fulfilment of prophecy in the past, enables us better to understand what remains yet to be fulfilled. And while we know there is need for caution in this inquiry, there is no necessity that we should not move at all. R. N.

Letter from the South-west.

Knoxville, Tenn., April 4, 1864.

Mr. Joseph Albree, Treasurer Christian Commission:—Dear Sir:—I left Alliance, Ohio, March 15th, and arrived at Louisville, Ky., on the morning of the 17th. At the request of Mr. Russell, the Field Agent for the Kentucky Branch of the U. S. Christian Commission, I remained four days to labor in that city. The hospitals in Louisville I found in an excellent condition, in regard to order and cleanliness. Most of them are supplied with religious services either by chaplains or delegates of the Christian Commission. The principal part of delegate labor here is in the Exchange Barracks, where large numbers of soldiers are constantly arriving and departing. We held religious services usually two or three times every day, and distributed a large number of Testaments, papers, tracts, &c.

On the 21st, in company with four other delegates, I went to Nashville, where I found several delegates at work. There are a large number of soldiers here all the time, including those in hospitals and barracks, in transit and on duty; besides a large number of prisoners, refugees and contrabands. After remaining here one day, preaching and distributing reading matter, four of us were sent to points beyond Nashville—one to Lookout Station, two to Chattanooga, and myself to Loudon. Stopping one day at Chattanooga, to await an opportunity for transportation forward, I proceeded to Loudon, eighty miles beyond where the Chattanooga and Knoxville Railroad crosses the Tennessee River, and where a fine bridge was burned by the rebels, which is now being rapidly rebuilt, the completion of which will greatly facilitate transportation to Knoxville and points beyond, the want of which has been a serious drawback to the supply of our troops in this department, and also to the Christian Commission.

Being in charge of stores for the Commission Rooms at Knoxville, I was sent forward to this place to secure their safe delivery, and to report myself for duty to the Field Agent in the Department of the Ohio. Next day I went to Mossy Creek Station, twenty-eight miles east of Knoxville, on the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad. This was the front of our lines, and the farthest point then held by our army. At this point I found a large number of regiments, having passed several camps at Strawberry Plains, Newmarket, and other points. Most of these have no chaplains, and but seldom any opportunity of attending religious services or receiving reading matter. I remained here three days, preaching to the 100th and 104th Regts. O. V. I., (on Sabbath day,) visiting and distributing papers to these and other regiments in the vicinity. I invariably found officers and soldiers glad to attend religious services. I found here many earnest, praying Christians. We are making arrangements to establish a station at the front of the lines.

Great destitution and consequent suffering exist amongst the citizens of East Tennessee. Much of the country is a scene of utter desolation. Many of the people have money, but are destitute of sufficient food and clothing. Their money is comparatively useless, at present, as they can find nothing to buy. Many who own large farms are entirely destitute of the necessaries of live. Their fences are gone; their teams, cattle, sheep, hogs, poultry, and everything that might furnish subsistence, are gone. Many are thus unable to plow, plant or sow this Spring; and if they could, they have no assurance that they would be permitted to reap the harvest when it came. Their condition is deplorable now, and must be worse in months to come, unless they are aided from a distance by public and private effort.

In regard to religious influences, and the ordinary means of grace, the privation is equally great with that of temporal things. There is a wide field here for the missionary and the philanthropist, independent of the great work of seeking the welfare of our soldiers.

The Christian Commission is rapidly increasing its usefulness and popularity amongst the soldiers. Our delegates are kindly received everywhere in the army, and their labors appreciated. Day after day, in our prayer meetings, we hear from soldiers such petitions as these: "God bless the Christian Commission;" "God bless the delegates in the field, and those dear friends at home who are aiding in this glorious work." We have reason to believe that their prayers are answered, and by this agency many souls are being led to Jesus. The more I see of the workings of the Commission, the more I am persuaded of its great excellence and usefulness, and the more earnestly do I commend its claims to Christian people everywhere, as an institution worthy of their highest confidence, and deserving of their most liberal support. D. M. Miller.

EUROPEAN SUMMARY.

[PREPARED FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN BANNER.]

The Presbyterians are working indefatigably toward extending their principles in England. Several new churches have been built by them in thriving and respectable neighborhoods in the metropolis, and they have succeeded in gathering together large and influential congregations. The new churches at Clapham and Highbury are magnificent buildings, and the pulpits are occupied by men of superior standing and ability. At present they appear to aim at securing the upper ranks of the middle classes; but there is no doubt that as they begin to feel their position to be strong, they will extend their ramifications far and wide. It is pleasing to see all this religious zeal, and it is to be hoped that other denominations will profit by their example. At the present there is room enough for all.

On Thursday a large meeting was held in Dr. King's church at Baywater, for the promotion of Presbyterian principles and union. This union question, let it be observed, between the Free and United Churches, does not make the progress here in Great Britain which its promoters could wish. Lord Dalhousie, who presided at the meeting, likened this movement to a serious courtship which, he said, he hoped would ere long end in marriage; but, he added, there had been considerable difficulty in drawing up the marriage settlement.

"I must say," observed the noble lord, "that this union between the United Presbyterian Church and the Free Church is no new thing with me. More than ten years ago I attended meetings in Edinburgh with Dr. Harper and others, and ministers of my own Church, having for our object this very union, at a time when, I am sorry to say, a great many ministers and elders of my own Church were not so enthusiastic in such a proceeding as I am happy to say they are at this day. In fact, so little encouragement did we get from within ourselves, that we thought it better to drop the whole matter for a while *sub silentio*, waiting our opportunity, which we now most gladly avail ourselves of, to rush to the front of the battle again, as soon as it should be fairly brought before the two Churches. It is so now, and I most earnestly pray to God that every difficulty may be taken out of the way, and that these two Churches, both of which, first the United Presbyterian Church, and then the Free Church, have borne such signal testimony to their Master's honor, may be united as a body to maintain that honor in these critical times of danger and of difficulty to it."

The rest of the speakers followed in the same strain. Dr. King defended the principle of denominational action as in the end the best antidote to bigotry, when prosecuted in a right spirit. "It is," he said, "in submitting our ecclesiastical constitution to the test of resolute work that we discover its defects, and contract friendship with fellow-Christians on the common fields of Christian beneficence." This is undoubtedly true, and it may be further remarked, that, however zealous persons may be for their own particular denomination, no truly Christian man would like to spend his energies in a field already well occupied.

Dr. Hamilton followed, in his own genial style, advising his Presbyterian friends to exemplify their principles in a practical way, and to be chiefly intent on saving souls from shipwreck. He thought, too, that both the Episcopalians and the Congregationalists had appropriated a good deal of the Presbyterian element into their operations, and he expressed himself quite willing that this should be so. He was followed by Dr. Fry, an active and large-hearted clergyman of the Church of England, who spoke hopefully of the prospects of Christian Union generally. He did not overlook the evils within the Church of England; one of the greatest of them being, in his opinion, the Act of Uniformity. Let them, he said, feel for the Church of England as a sister Church, and endeavor to promote every measure that would remedy the evils which existed in her, especially those which prevented her uniting completely and thoroughly in all Christian efforts, and even in Divine worship, with other denominations.

Following Dr. Fry, came the Rev. Mr. Chalmers, a minister of the English Presbyterian Church. This gentleman made a very practical speech, embodying a large amount of statistical information. According to Mr. Chalmers, there are 169,000 Scotchmen resident in England, only 30,000 of whom are connected with Presbyterian churches. This number ought, he said, to be increased at once to 80,000. The whole of the worshippers in all the Presbyterian churches in England were under 60,000, and the places of worship are so widely scattered that the 4,000 Scotchmen who annually come across the border generally find their way to the communions of other denominations. Those facts are worth pondering, and will, no doubt, stimulate the Presbyterian churches to action. The concluding speech, which was chiefly directed to the question of union among the Presbyterian churches, was made by Dr. Edmond, minister of the Highbury-park church; and the proceedings were brought to a close by a cordial vote of thanks to the noble earl who presided. At the adjournment, the sum of £6,665 was subscribed toward payment of debt on churches connected with the Synod, and for church extension. Mr. Hugh Matheson subscribed £1,000, which was equal to the subscription of the Prince of Wales to the Bishop of London's Fund. Two gentlemen subscribed £500 each, two £250 each, and more than a dozen £100 each. The payments are to be made in five equal yearly instalments.

Eight millions of acres of land belonging to the insurgent New-Zealanders, have been confiscated by the British Government, which shows no mercy to rebels against itself, but is very tolerant of rebels in other countries than its own.

King Maximilian, of Bavaria, is dead. He was carried off by the same disease as that which not long since removed Frederick VII. of Denmark from among men. He was a good scientific scholar, but as a politician few paid much court to him. He had the unfortunate distinction, however, of being the ostensible leader of the German Bund in its attack on Denmark; and he took the *professorial* view of this question. He is succeeded on the throne by his son, Ludwig II., a youth of whom we only know that he is eighteen years of age, and that he has expressed his determination of retaining in his service the men by whom his father was advised. If this resolution be carried out, the change of sovereigns will involve no change of policy, and the event under notice will have only a personal interest. Monarchs are only more than men when they impersonate systems, and when the conduct of nations rests in thear hands. Maximilian was, in this sense, not one of the few monarchs who are more than men; and when it is said that his son reigns in his stead, a fact of the merest insignificance is reported.

Grievous Famine prevails throughout a large part of Hungary. The harvest is a failure, and the valley of Theiss, noted for its abundant production, has become a desert. Thousands of the inhabitants, sick and footworn, are wandering about in search of food. A committee has been formed in Paris to afford immediate relief, and we hope the generous Northern heart of this country will be inspired to follow the example.

The work of restoring the great Cathedral of Notre Dame, at Paris, has resulted in some interesting historical discoveries. In lowering the soil around it, remains of Roman houses were found, and the outline of the foundations of an old church which centuries ago stood here, dedicated to St. Christopher, as well as the plan of another church near by, dedicated to St. Stephen. Several marble columns, with fine Corinthian capitals, have also been unearthed.

The French press proposes that a new nation should be formed on the left bank of the Rhine, or that the provinces there should be united with the Belgium, so as to shield France from Austrian and Prussian pressure.

The Count de Montalembert, one of the most eminent defenders of the Catholic Church, has recently been denounced by no less than sixty-seven Bishops of Rome, for his liberal speech at the Malines Congress. N.

Nearness to Christ.

FROM THE GERMAN OF NOVALIS.

All the charms of earthly pleasure,
Cannot draw my heart from Thee—
I would seek no richer treasure,
Than thy love bestows on me.

Every blessing sent from heaven,
Is to me but as the ring
Which thou to thy Bride hast given,
In remembrance of her King.

Shall the ring, of love the token,
Dearer than the Bridegroom be?
No, the charm shall not be broken,
Which has bound my heart to thee.

The Miscellaneousness of our Scriptures

Is natural, also, because we trace in them, in this very particular, God's wonted method of teaching. The stretching forth of the line that goes out to all the earth, is the likeness of the unwritten Word, that reaches to the ends of the world. Not with square and compasses of man's device has God built the earth and meted out the heavens. His creation is miscellaneous, broken at every point—here a sheltered valley, there a profound abyss; on one side a mountain with its summit in the clouds, on the other a leaping cataract, while off in the distance the waves lift up their voice, and in the depths above the stars move, each on its separate path, and shine, each with a differing glory. When I look into the Bible I behold there the same sublime diversity—on one leaf, as it were, pastures clothed with flocks, and valleys covered over with corn, where all that grows is ripe for use, and the most ignorant wayfarer cannot reach out his hand in vain; and on the next leaf, heights and depths in which are the hidings of his power, and which it may tax the loftiest faculties of successive generations to scale and fathom. I follow the Saviour into quiet home-scenes where kind and familiar words flow as from the lips of any holy son of man, and then go up with him on the mountain where the brightness of heaven glows in his face and gleams from his raiment, and then look on the dread mystery of Gethsemane, the bloody sweat, the agony, the angel that came to strengthen him; and for this blending, alternating, mutual inter-penetrating of the genially human and the ineffably Divine, I trace only the more readily the image of the God whom in part we see and know, as we do the countenance of a brother, yet about whose throne rest clouds and darkness. I mark in the Bible the Divine Providence in the even current of human affairs, unruffled by marvel as in any common history or biography—then replenishing the widow's wasting oil-cruse—then spreading darkness over a whole land, rending its rocks, unsealing its sepulchres—and for this combination of the unemphatic, the quiet, the grand and the terrible, I seem to read only the more natural and life-like record of Him who smiles upon us in the wayside flower, and then moves in storm, earthquake, and tempest, lashes the writhing waves, rides on the wings of the whirlwind, terrifies the nations.

And what though in this miscellany there be much which on a superficial reading we cannot understand—much that transcends our use—much, too, that is beneath the standard of our age and culture? The Bible purports to be the record of the means employed for the spiritual education of men from the birth of Adam to the end of time, and for their education for an inconceivably lofty and expanded sphere of being. In this record there would naturally be some things which had their use and wrought their work long ago, having been adapted to the culture of generations whose condition and habits we know too imperfectly to perceive the Divine adaptation to their needs which may have existed—many things which may develope their full meaning only to generations of higher intelligence and truer faith than ours—many things, also, which, pondered and inwardly digested, will reveal new and growing depths of meaning to their own hearts—many things, it may be, which received into our own minds, yet not fully germinating here, may spring up, and blossom, and bear fruit in heaven.—*Dr. Peabody's Christianity the Religion of Nature.*

The Clay, the Plaster, and the Marble.

At Rome I visited the studio of Bartholomew, of Hartford. He showed me many marvels of art, amongst them the repentant Eve, which made me both proud of my countryman, and surprised that he was not better known. In the outer apartment were many pieces of statuary, finished. Not far from these were workmen engaged in chipping the marble from blocks, in careful imitation of models placed before them. After examining what was to be seen here, we passed into a smaller room within. About it were dispersed many models in plaster. But in the centre was one, still incomplete, in clay. On this the sculptor had been engaged when called out to meet me; and whilst talking about it, he made two or three changes in its details, in a moment, with his fingers. The clay was soft, so soft that it barely held together on the inner frame to which it adhered. The slightest touch indented it.

The statue was of Washington; and since that, I have seen it in marble in the chief street of the city of Baltimore.

The process of the sculptor is this: first the clay, then the plaster, and then the marble. In the clay a change may be made with the greatest ease in the briefest period. If the plaster does not suit, you may break it into pieces and get a new mould from the clay. But when once the statue has been put into marble it endures. At Rome you see many things in marble older than two thousand years. In plaster or clay, not one.

What lessons come from the clay, the plaster, and the marble! Parent and Sabbath School teacher, and minister of Christ, what lessons to you! Childhood is the soft clay; youth, the plaster; manhood is moulded on it; and mature age—and what is *beyond* it—the enduring marble, shaped from the plaster and the clay. When I saw that statue in stone, with the swelling waters of the Atlantic between it and the spot where it was born in *clay*, I had a look into eternity. All there was fixed which here is facile. All there was *done* which here is my *doing*. O sculptor in immortality! look well to the *moulding* of that which, when once it has passed from thy hands, then canst change no more forever! Look well to that which shall endure to eternity! Mould not out of thine own heart of intellect, but after Christ! Remember the clay, the plaster, and the marble!—*The Evangelist.*

The Christian Strife.

O beloved! is it not enough that he died once for us? Were those pains so light that we should every day redouble them? Is this the entertainment that so gracious a Saviour hath deserved of us by dying? Is this the recompense of that infinite love of his, that thou shouldst thus cruelly vex and wound him with thy sins? Every one of our sins is a thorn, a nail, and a spear to him. Whilst thou pourest down thy drunken carouses, thou givest thy Saviour a portion of gall; whilst thou despisest his poor servant, thou spittest on his face; whilst thou puttest on thy proud desires, and liftest up thy head with vain conceits, thou settest a crown of thorns on his head; whilst thou wringest and oppressest his poor children, thou scourgest him, and drawest blood of his hands and feet. Thou hypocrite, how darest thou offer to receive the Sacrament of God with that hand which is imbrued with the blood of Him whom thou receivest? Thou makest no scruple of thine own sins, and scornest those that do. Hear him that saith, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Saul strikes at Damascus; Christ suffers in heaven. Thou strikest; Christ Jesus smarteth, and will revenge. These are "what remain of Christ's sufferings." In himself it is finished; in his members it is not. We must toil, and groan, and bleed, that we may reign. This is the region of our sorrow and death. Here are set upon the sandy pavement of our theatre, and are matched with all sorts of evils—evil men, evil spirits, evil accidents, and, what is worse, our own evil hearts; temptations, crosses, persecutions, sicknesses, wants, infamies, death, all these must, in our courses, be encountered by the law of our profession. What should we do but strive and suffer as our General hath done, that we may reign as he doth, and once triumph in our *Consummatum est?* God and his angels sit upon the scaffolds of heaven, and behold us. Our crown is ready; our day of deliverance shall come; yea, our redemption is near, when all tears shall be wiped from our eyes, and we that have sown in tears shall reap in joy.—*Bishop Hall.*

Invite to the Prayer Meeting.

Many Christians go to the prayer meeting every week, and perhaps never for years invite an unconverted person to go with them. It often happens that months go by, and few or no unconverted persons are present at these meetings during the week. Believers may be quickened, but no souls are converted. Is there not a great loss of moral power to the Church from this strange negligence? Will not our Christian readers aim, like Andrew and Philip, to lead others with them, when they go to meet Jesus? An exchange gives an incident in point:

A wild young man in college was sitting one evening on the fence surrounding the campus, laughing and talking gaily with a circle of thoughtless associates, when a pious student, passing down the walk on his way to prayer meeting, beckoned to young D—— to go along with him. Nothing was farther from his tastes or habits, yet the hand of the Lord was plainly in it. Without a moment's reflection he leaped down from the fence and walked along to the room for prayer. A circle of young men upon their knees at prayer impressed him at the moment, and no doubt many a silent prayer was offered up for him. The next week the student invited him again to go with him, and soon strong conviction of sin seized upon his heart, and he was led through deep waters to cast himself on the mercy of Jesus Christ. He became a faithful preacher of the Gospel, and the church where he ministered was blessed with numerous precious revivals. What a great harvest from a little seed-sowing! Yet it is in the power of every Christian to do as much. They can invite and entreat a thoughtless friend to go with them to the prayer meeting; they can pray earnestly for a blessing upon the exercises, and that the Holy Spirit would bring home the blessed truth with power to the soul. God will give the increase. Will not every one who reads this, take some friend to the prayer meeting?

Life Long Enough.

Life is long enough for the sinner, and for the saint. Seventy years are a sufficient period to try the character. Were the sinner to continue longer in the world, he would still be equally hopeless, and more guilty. Habits of wickedness strengthened through so long a period, admit neither of removal, nor of hope. Whither shall we go to find penitence, after this period is passed? The antediluvian world was immensely more wicked than the present, because men lived a thousand years. Their plans of sin were vastly more extensive, their sagacity in pursuing them greatly superior, their opportunities amazingly more numerous, and their hopes of success beyond comparison better founded. In this manner their evil habits became fixed beyond recall; while death was at such a distance as to make the present life seem not a little like an eternal duration. What existed then, would in the like circumstances exist now. Were human life to be equally protracted, mankind would soon become as profligate as they were before the deluge.

That the present life is a sufficient period of probationary existence to the righteous, will be readily acknowledged by all men. Every person of this character secures within this period an everlasting inheritance beyond the grave. This is the end for which we live, the only end of real importance. * * * Plainly, therefore, the present period of human life is well suited to the circumstances of both saints and sinners, and wisely appointed by God.—*Pres. Dwight.*

Golden Gates.

Oh golden gates, might I but catch
One gleam of shining bars!
Might I but touch the jewelled door
That swings beyond the stars!
A weary pilgrim, toiling on
Through mists of mortal sin,
Oh, might I speak the blessed word
Would give me entrance in!

So thought I, as the sunset hues
In the far West grew dim,
Vain longing for some path of light
To lead the soul to Him.
There were cloudy pillows blazing
With glory of the sun;
There were tints of rose and amber
When Summer's day was done.

And I saw them paling, fading,
Till stars caught up their light;
But the golden gate was hidden
Away from mortal sight.
Then I called through misty shadows,
I could no longer wait;
"Oh, beautiful angel-keepers,
Show me the blessed gate!

"I tread dark places of the earth,
I weary of the strife;
Oh, white-robed angels, bear me up
Into that holy life."
Down floating through the solemn night,
Came spirit-tones to me:
"Thy way is dark! But gates of gold
Are waiting there, for thee.

"Unseen, they swing in every heart,
All sin-stained though it be.
Rouse ye to deeds of love and faith!
The Master biddeth thee.
Thou mayest chime sweet golden bells
Through souls now lost in sin,
So shalt thou walk in white, at last,
So shalt thou enter in."

No more I seek at the set of sun,
Gleaming of golden gate;
Yet somewhere in the future hid,
The watching-angels wait.
Oh, golden gates, ye shine for me
Sometimes through shadows dim,
Yet through your portals winds my path
Onward and up to Him.

—*Boston Recorder.*

Winning Souls.

A few weeks ago a man and his wife, being tenderly admonished by a Christian friend, were persuaded to visit a long-neglected house of prayer. The Spirit of Christ opened their eyes, and they were led to see their need of mercy, and sought and found a God ready to forgive. With thankfulness and love, in conjunction with the friend before alluded to, these new converts sought to bring other careless ones to the sanctuary; and the Lord has been graciously pleased to own and bless these efforts, and two other couples have united themselves with the people of God.

That was a blessed Sabbath when this Christian friend, with these six souls, sat at the table of the Lord, to commemorate his dying love. O, who can tell the far reaching results of this simple Christian effort? This friend did no more than every disciple can do. Who cannot say to his brother, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel?"

"Would you win a soul to God?
Tell him of the Saviour's blood,
Once for dying sinners spilt,
To atone for all their guilt."

These converts are heads of families, all of them having little children to train up in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord." There are now three more family altars in the world. The world is richer, brighter, and purer for these; and when we can estimate the usefulness of a Doddridge, we may learn how to value pious parental example and instruction.

Dear reader! fellow-Christian! follower of Jesus! where is thy brother? Are you earnestly, and prayerfully, and wisely seeking to win his soul? or are you sleeping over his immortal interests?

"Gone, but not Missed."

There are some professors over whose graves it would be difficult for devout men to find great occasion for lamentation. Such persons would doubtless be missed in their families, places of business, and accustomed places of recreation; but, as to her peculiar and noble offices, the Church would be compelled to say of them, "Gone, but not missed." She would not miss their charities for Christ and his poor; she would not miss them in her circles of prayer and benevolence; she would not miss them at the bedside of the sick, nor in the house of the mourner: she would not miss them when great trials were to be borne, or hard labor to be done for the extension of the Gospel. In her Sabbath School efforts and tract distribution—in her endeavors to evangelize our city, our land, our earth, with truth and holiness—she would not miss them, for they had not cheered those labors of love with their presence, their counsel, their charities, or their prayers. Like the on-hangers of an army, they move with the hosts to share the results of victory, but are absent when martyrs are to bleed on the field. The loss of such to the Church by death would be graded by the benefit which their lives confer upon the world; and hence you can judge whether devout men would make great lamentation over them. Stephen fell at his post, and *this* pointed the grief at his loss.—*Dr. Brainerd.*

"Go on, Sir, Go on!"

Arago says, in his autobiography, that his master in mathematics wrote a word or two of advice, which he found in the binding of one of his text books. Puzzled and discouraged by the difficulties which he met in his early studies, he was almost ready to give over the pursuit. Some words, which he found on the waste leaf used to stiffen the cover of his paper-bound text book, caught his eye and interested him. "Impelled," he says, "by an indefinable curiosity, I dampened the cover of the book, and unrolled the leaf to see what was on the other side. It proved to be a short letter from D'Alembert to a young person disheartened, like himself, by the difficulties of mathematical study, who had written to him for counsel. 'Go on, sir, go on,' was the counsel which D'Alembert gave him. 'The difficulties you must meet and resolve as you advance. Proceed, and light will dawn and shine with increased clearness on your path.' That maxim," says Arago, "was my greatest master in mathematics." Following out these simple words, "Go on, sir, go on," made him the first astronomical mathematician of his age. What Christians it would make us! What heroes of faith, what sages of holy wisdom we would become just by acting out that maxim, "Go on, sir, go on!"

Happiness.

Persons are never happier than when in the diligent pursuit of some desirable object with a fair prospect of obtaining it. The pursuit animated by hope is a constant pleasure. Thus engaged, they are much more happy than when the object in view is obtained. The man of business in the pursuit of wealth is much happier than when, opulence being secured, he retires from his wonted occupation. Wealth does not satisfy his soul, and having nothing now to do, with the habit of activity remaining, his mind preys upon itself. Hence you often find such a person entering into business again, to relieve himself from listless hours of oppression. The best remedy for ennui, or heart-weariness, is devotedness to noble pursuits. "Saul," says one, "went out to find his father's asses. Pleased with the humble employment, he made search with a light heart, and an honest one. But, seeking asses, he found a kingdom; and tranquility fled when possession was complete."

[From the Spirit of the Fair.]

The Devotional Poetry of Dr. Watts.

BY W. C. BRYANT.

I have liked Dr. Watts' Psalms and Hymns ever since the time when, scarcely three years old, I was made to repeat, with his book in my hand, and with such gestures as were prescribed to me, the psalm beginning with the words:

"Come sound his praise abroad,
And hymns of glory sing."

The critics, in general, have shown but stinted favor to Dr. Watts' devotional poetry. Dr. Johnson pronounced it unsatisfactory, though he admits that Dr. Watts "has done better than any body else, what nobody has done well." Southey, from whom I expected something different, in that meagre memoir of Dr. Watts—meagre, yet interesting, so far as relate to his theological opinions, which seem principally to have engaged Southey's attention—alludes to Johnson's opinion, yet takes no pains to controvert it. He, indeed, questions Johnson's decision against devotional poetry in general; but takes no pains to show, as he might easily have done, that Watts' book contained a great many very beautiful things.

I maintain, for my part, that Dr. Watts has done admirably well what he undertook to do, and the proof, if I wanted any other that the pleasure with which I always read him, I find in the strong hold which his devotional verses have taken on the hearts of men in all conditions of life, and, I think, all varieties of religious belief. No compilation of hymns for the public worship of any denomination is ever made without borrowing largely from Dr. Watts. He has been in his grave for considerable more that a century, yet have his psalms and hymns lost none of the favor which they had when they were first adopted by religious assemblies for public worship, and I believe are even now, generally speaking, in greater esteem than ever, notwithstanding that such poets as Doddridge, Cowper, Charles Wesley, Barbauld and Heber have written devotional verses of very great merit since his time.

The secret of this popularity lies, as it seems to me, in the union of strong feeling with great poetic merit. In what he wrote there are occasional transgressions against the laws of versification, as in Solomon's Song. There are slovenly lines, and even stanzas, but there is always great fervor and profound earnestness. No poet has ever expressed religious emotions with greater energy. He faints and languishes for the Divine presence; he deplores the waywardness of the human heart; he exults in the Divine favor; he is awed by the Divine majesty; he looks with transport on the works of the Divine hand; he dwells with delight on the vision of a better life beyond the grave; and all these moods of mind find full expression in his verse. Many of his hymns seem to have been dashed out in the excitement of the moment, as if the feeling which had taken possession of him could not be satisfied without expressing itself in poetic forms. His versions of the Hebrew psalms are as remarkable for this as the compositions which he called hymns. He seems to have first filled his mind with the imagery of the ancient bard, and, catching inspiration from him, flung his thoughts upon the page in a form suited to the more mild and perfect dispensation of Christianity.

Some of Dr. Watts' devotional verses show that he possessed imagination in a high degree. What a beautiful picture, for example, is set before us in the hymn beginning—

"There is a land of pure delight."

In this hymn, which is too familiar to all readers to be transcribed here, we have the green fields of immortal life, with their unwithering flowers lying in perpetual light; the narrow river of death, dividing it from the present state of being; and the timorous crowd of mortals on the hither bank shivering and shuddering at the thought of passing through those cold waters. I remember that once, on a fine Sunday evening in the latter part of April, coming out of the harbor of Havana, in a steamer moving uneasily on the tossing waves of the Gulf Stream, which here rush against the reefs of the northern coast of Cuba, I had been driven to my berth by a strong premonition of sea-sickness. A party of Americans on deck struck up this hymn, and when they had ended, sang the scarcely less beautiful one beginning with

"When I can read my title clear,"

and ending with the stanza,

"There shall I bathe my weary soul
In seas of endless rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast."

As they sang, it almost seemed as if the sea felt the influence of the gentle strain and grew smoother, and the waves murmured more softly before the prow that divided them.

I once heard a distinguished literary gentleman instance the following couplet from one of Watts' hymns, as conveying to the mind images which could only occur to a poet of no common genius:

"Cold mountains and the midnight air
Witnessed the fervor of his prayer."

I was able to match them, or nearly so, with a stanza from his version of the one hundred and twenty-first psalm:

"No sun shall smite thy head by day,
Nor the pale moon, with sickly ray,
Shall blast thy couch; no baleful star
Dart his malignant fire so far."

How pathetic is this expostulation in the one hundred and second psalm:

"Spare us, O Lord! aloud we pray,
Nor let our sun go down at noon!
Thy years are one eternal day,
And must thy children die so soon?"

How magnificently is the one hundredth psalm versified, closing with this grand stanza:

"We'll crowd thy gates with thankful songs,
High as the heavens our voices raise,
And earth, with her ten thousand tongues,
Shall fill thy courts with sounding praise."

I might refer to many other examples of like excellence in these poems; but I will mention only one more, the charming little funeral hymn, the eighteenth of the first book, beginning thus:

"Hear what a voice from heaven proclaims,
For all the pious dead;
Sweet is the savor of their names,
And soft their sleeping bed.

"They die in Jesus and are blest," &c.

I know very well that poetry of a very moderate degree of merit not unfrequently obtains great popularity on account of its religious character, but I do not recollect an instance in which it has held that popularity long. The devotional verses of Watts have stood the test of time, and it seemed to me due to him that some of the characteristic merits by which they are recommended to the general mind should be pointed out.

March 17th, 1864.

How Much I Owe.

"How much owest thou unto my lord?"—St. Luke xvi: 5.

When this passing world is done,
When has sunk yon glaring sun,
When we stand with Christ in glory,
Looking o'er life's finished story,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.

When I stand before the throne,
Dressed in beauty not my own,
When I see thee as thou art,
Love the with unsinning heart,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.

When the praise of heaven I hear,
Loud as thunders to the ear,
Loud as many waters' noise,
Sweet as harps' melodious voice,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know—
Not till then—how much I owe.

—*M'Cheyne.*

The Clouds will Break.

A beautiful example of trustful hope is given in the experience of the persecuted Christians of Madagascar. When the missionaries were driven from the Island, they left about two hundred converts. Some of these kept a journal of what befell them, and this, extending to some five hundred pages, has lately come to light. It opens with the words, "Fear not, little flock." These are followed by a hymn, which is literally translated thus:

"Not long will last
The night storm,
Not many days
Bring only sorrow,
Yonder the dawn appears,
For happiness is near.

"The clouds will break,
The darkness vanish,
Accomplished be the Word,
It cannot fail,
But we shall see, ere long,
The land good to dwell in."

It was twenty-five years before the night storm passed away, and many of these early witnesses were its victims. The journal records their persecutions and sufferings. Yet so true and faithful were they, that the good seed was continually multiplied, and when the dawn appeared, the two hundred had increased to seven thousand. In spiritual as in natural husbandry, the night had proved a time of growth, and the day brought the glad harvest.

Oh, will not Christians of this land *trust* God through the night-storm. His word shall be all accomplished. "The clouds will break, the darkness vanish," and we, too, shall see, ere long, "*the land good to dwell in.*"

The Triumph of Christianity.

Millions of men, I know, are still idolaters; millions of men are still Mohammedans; and millions more still worship Brahma and Budha. But a single Christian nation of Western Europe outweighs them all. When these millions will begin, in large numbers, to accept the Gospel, we cannot tell; but we know that they need the Gospel, for they are men. And we know, too, that sooner or later, they must receive it at our hands. Where the Gospel once went, winning its victories, it can go again. In the vast strategy of the Christian centuries of conflict, Asia and Africa were indeed abandoned for a time, but our troops are returning to contest anew the ancient fields of victory, and already enough has been accomplished to make us confident in regard to the final issue.

What we need now first, and most of all, is a better Christendom. Three hundred and thirty-five millions of mankind now answer the Christian roll-call; and they hold in their hands every art, every science, and nearly every resource of strength in existence upon the globe. Their lands are filled with plenty; and their commerce whitens every sea. Already they clasp the round earth in their stalwart arms; and it only remains for them to lift it up, and lay it upon the bosom of its Lord.—*Rev. R. D. Hitchcock, D.D.*

Prayer.

Fill up the void spaces of your time with meditation and prayer.

They are the safest who are most in their closets; who pray, not to be seen of men but to be heard of God.

It is a comfort to Christians apart to think their prayers meet before a throne of grace and their persons shall meet before a throne of glory

There wants nothing but a believing prayer to turn a promise into a performance.

God is a great God, and therefore he will be sought; he is a good God, and therefore he will be found.

The breath of prayer comes from the life of faith.

Whatever you want, go to God by faith and prayer, in the name of Christ, and never think his delays are denials.

They that spend their days in faith and prayer, shall end their days in peace and comfort.—*J. Mason.*

The Soul Undying.

How can it enter into the thoughts of man, that the soul, which is capable of receiving new improvements, to all eternity, shall fall away to nothing, almost as soon as it is created.

Are such abilities made for no purpose? A brute arrives at a point of perfection which he can never pass. In a few years he has all the endowments of which he is capable; and were he to live ten thousand more, would be the same thing he is at present. Were a human soul thus to stand still in her accomplishments, were her faculties to be incapable of further enlargement; I could imagine it might fall away insensibly, and drop at once into a state of annihilation. But can we believe a thinking being, that is in a perpetual progress of improvement, and traveling on from perfection to perfection, after having just looked abroad into the works of the Creator, and made a few discoveries of his infinite goodness, wisdom, and power, must perish in her first setting out, and in the very beginning of her inquiries?

Modesty is to merit as shades to figures in a picture, giving it strength and beauty. —*Drayer.*