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POETRY.

THE ROCK OF AGES.

BY WILLIAM M'COMB.

Build your nest upon no tree here, for you see God hath
No tree to death, and every tree whereon we
Build our nest is ready to be cut down, to the end we may
Be and mount up, and build upon the Rock, and dwell
In the house of the rock.—RUTHERFORD.

Build not thy nest upon the tree,
For thou to death hast sold the forest;
Mount up, and to the high rock flee—
Thy dwelling-place is there secure.

Set not thy heart upon the flowers,
For canker lurks within the fairest;
And death, when visiting the bowers,
Oft takes the loveliest and the rarest.

Build not on riches; they have wings—
Broad pinions that will spread and leave thee,
Treasures are perihable things—
More glitter, that will soon deceive thee.

On live place not thy fond desire—
Its tender cords are often parted;
And mournful is the broken lyre,
That sighs but to the broken-hearted.

On beauty build not; soon the eye,
That sparkles now with light and gladness,
Shall in the cold grave sightless lie,
And leave thy heart a prey to sadness.

Build not on genius; 'tis a flame
Too dazzling for this vale of sorrow;
Today a meteor-light of fame!—
Neglected and obscured to-morrow.

Build not on princes—Who are they?
The creatures of exalted station;
Forgetful, in their sceptre away,
That righteousness exalts a nation.

Build not on life; to-morrow's sun
May see thee cold and prone to lying;
Two lips be only built upon
Who daily to this world is dying.

As proud philosophy is dead,
Thou build not on its classic pages,
But where thy feet will firmly stand,
On the rock—the Rock of Ages!

Trust in His rich and sovereign grace,
Rest on His free and full salvation;
How of the rock thy hiding-place
Shall be, and Christ thy sure foundation.

AN EMBLEM.

BY KATHARINE MACKENZIE.

O! Mother look at that bright thing,
Flashing so gaily thro' the sky,
Wouldst thou a hawk, and pinion'd wing,
A valiant, happy, butterfly!

Alas! a little fairer gleam,
A trace of beauty and the faintly
A noon, unshiny, woman alone,
Lay resting, to fly to the ground.

Faithful of frail Humanity?
The worm must be consigned to clay,
For the immortal Spirit's free
Tearing its flight to Earth's Day!

CHRISTIAN MISCELLANY.

What a better acquaintance with the thoughts and
Feelings of the Bible and its history.—Ed. W.

Evidences of the Divine Nature of Christianity,
Deduced from its Rise and Progress.

BY THE REV. R. COOPER.

Being the Fifth of a Series of Lectures on the
Evidences of Christianity, delivered
in St. John, N. B.

It is a very rare and precious
work.—Ed. W.

The place and the circumstances under
which we are enabled, and the position
that we occupy, furnish abundant evidence
that we have come together for the performance
of some special, if not extraordinary
duty. The devotional rites in which we

have already engaged; the prayers and
praises that we have offered up to God,
show that we are committed to some great
religious transaction. The services of the
sanctuary are not suspended, nor is the tranquility
of Bethel disturbed. The ark is not
in any imminent danger. The peace of
Sion is not threatened with disruption; and
the burning bush of Horeb still flourishes
unconsumed in fire. Our frontiers are not
invaded, as in the days of Deborah, the
wife of Lapidoth; nor is the country wasted
by fire and sword, as in the days of Jeph-
thah and Gideon. We are convened to-
gether, not to speak with our enemies in the
gates, but to commemorate the triumphs of
peace, the victories of the cross, and the dis-
semination of "the truth as it is in Jesus."
The theme is delightful—the topic is sublime.
Both harmonize with our profession and
character as a part of "The Church milit-
tant."

These views of the duty that lies before
us, would inspire us with joy, if they did
not impose responsibility. And permission
to lift up my feeble voice in defence of
Christianity, would be a privilege indeed,
were it not that deep anxiety is involved,
and great consequences at issue. To unravel
the complicated web of prophecy; to ex-
plain and apply Divine promises; to ex-
pound doctrines and enforce precepts; to
remove the stone from the mouth of the
well, and lead the flock to water; to break
the alabaster box of precious ointment, and
diffuse its fragrance; to point sinners to the
Lamb of God; to condole with the afflicted,
and rejoice with them that are happy. In
fine, "To preach the word, to be instant in
season, and out of season; to reprove, to
exhort, to declare the whole counsel of God."
These are our ordinary duties as ministers
of the true sanctuary; but on this occasion,
we have to perform a special service, and
show that the spread or diffusion of CHRIS-
TIANITY is an evidence of its divine nature
and origin. Finally, that the religion of
the Messiah and his Apostles, came down
like "THE HOLY CITY, OUT OF HEAVEN,
FROM GOD," and hence the glorious event,
of which the text is both an announcement
and a record, "SO MIGHTILY GREW THE
WORD OF GOD AND PREVAILED."

I. Christianity, at its very dawning, had
to encounter the elements and principles
that are essentially opposed to it. It com-
menced with a faint and twinkling ray in
the first promise—the voice of God was then
heard saying, "The seed of the woman shall
crush the serpent's head." In a moment,
"The morning stars sang together, and the
sons of God shouted for joy." And while
the joyful strains of this unworldly concert
resounded throughout heaven and earth,
Faith looked up, and directly over the top-
most branches of "the Tree of Life," she saw
the light of the gospel faintly shining. The
Prince of Darkness beheld with an evil eye,
and a malicious heart, both the object and
the beholder; and evincing his hate and
deadly hostility, he tried to obscure the one
and to spread a veil over the eyes of the
other. This might be called the beginning
of the contest between Light and Darkness—
between Christ and Satan—between the
Gospel of Christianity, and its numerous
opponents. A beam from this celestial
lantern fell upon the heart of Noah, and
landed in him the stored treasure of a
promise upon his eyes, and enabled him to
see him that is invisible, and under all per-
ception, he "offered unto God a more ac-
ceptable sacrifice than Cain," and initiated
that marvellous ritual which is a part of
the Christian system. The opposition which this
provoked, assumed the most appalling form
of persecution. Cain slew his brother.
Man became a registered murderer. The
first victim was immolated by a brother's
hand; and the first martyr was inured to
the crimsoned page of martyrdom. Now,
pursue this enquiry—held your eye on the
pages, where the ancient seers and prophets
depict their torments; follow the Christian
church in her fugitive career; walk in her

footsteps; think of her long and wearisome
journeys; her perils by land and by sea;
her conflicts; her trials; her numerous ad-
versities; her painful and extraordinary
vicissitudes. See her in the ark, floating
over the deep and troubled waters of the
deluge. Behold her fleeing out of Sodom,
and seeking refuge in Zoar. Look at her a
slave in Egypt, grinding under the iron
sceptre of Pharaoh. Look at her a pilgrim
in the wilderness; a sojourner in Canaan;
a captive in Babylon; and an outcast in
Judah.

II. Again, using imagery which the
Lord, the Spirit, suggests and employs,
Christianity in its early stages, and in its
feeble condition, may be compared to a
bruised reed, or a small portion of smoking
flax. Look at this delicate little shrub; it
is growing on the side of a small, but deep
and rapid stream; it yields and bends to
every gust of wind, and while oaks and
cedars are torn up by the roots, or laid
prostrate upon the earth, this little fragile plant
retains its position, and acquires its growth.
On viewing this divine institution under the
other aspect, see a handful, a mere handful
of smoking flax. Consider this emblem at-
tentively. It is lying in a public thorough-
fare; it is exposed to many fatal contingencies;
and one of these, yea, the least of
them, is sufficient to destroy it. The only
spark of fire in it is so small, that it is scarce-
ly discernible; the only sign of combustion
it manifests is a thin bluish wreath of smoke,
forced upward by a feeble effort, and scatter-
ed into indistinctness by the breathing of
the atmosphere. The skies pour down
rain upon this smoking, smouldering type;
the winds blow fiercely upon it; it is crushed,
trampled down, apparently destroyed; but,
suddenly, a thick dark smoke ascends; the
latent fire brightens into a ruddy, glowing
heat, and then bursts out into a flame. This
was the case with CHRISTIANITY. The
bigotry of the Jews; the ferocity of the
Gentiles; the arrogance of the priests and
rulers; the subtlety of the Scribes, and the
violence of the people; the formalism of the
Pharisees, and the materialism of the Saddu-
cees; the rhetoric of wise; the policy of
courts; the power of armies; the wrath of
kings; the enmity of the carnal mind, in il-
literate and philosophical developments, and
under all the forms which its flexible natu-
re is capable of assuming. All these,
induced by the fire of hell, and marshalled
by Satan himself, have carried on for cen-
turies an unremitting, and exterminating
warfare against the religion of Jesus; but
through God's mercy, the little one has be-
come a thousand, and the small one a great
nation. The bruised reed has become a
plant of renown; and the smoking flax has
set nations and kingdoms in a blaze!

III. It is impossible, absolutely impos-
sible, for any reasoning, any right thinking
person, to contemplate the progress of CHRIS-
TIANITY, without being struck with its divine
nature. It bears a striking analogy upon
the evidence of its own divine nature. It
needs no proof, and is not to be doubted.
The vain and trifling devices of worldly
men may suit the inclinations of un-
believers, and the grossness of their
sympathy with the partial slanderer, or the
cross. She requires no trumpet to pre-
sage her exalted pedigree;—no signifi-
cant to announce the nobility of her mission.
Noli. She descends from the regions of
purity and heavenly light, in light, as
with a woman, at. On her head she has a
crown of twelve stars. She is girt about
with a golden sash; her feet are like unto
fine linen; and in one hand she carries the
book of her prophecy, and in the other she

bears her credentials. She lights upon the
earth; she walks forth in grace and love-
liness; her religion consists of christian graces;
her strength lies in the rectitude of her prin-
ciples; her success is secured by the purity
of her motives; and though every step she
takes is disputed; and although obstacles,
hindrances, and enemies are continually ris-
ing up against her, and crossing her path,
still she goes onward, and onward still,
making "The wilderness rejoice and blossom
as the rose;" transforming the thirsty
land into springs of water; healing the dis-
eased, and curing the blind; liberating the
captive, and setting the prisoner free; rais-
ing the dead to life; proclaiming the accept-
able year of the Lord, and preaching "Good
tidings of great joy to all people." Such
are the reflections suggested by the early
progress of CHRISTIANITY; and such are the
blessings which, even then, resulted from its
aggression and diffusion.

IV. But opposers, and even some that
less culpably differ from us, assert that there
was nothing miraculous in the extension of
the Gospel system of religion; and ergo,
that that extension should not be regarded
as an evidence of its Divinity. In support
of this theory, they instance the rapid and
astonishing progress of Mohammedanism.
Here then we join issue. Let us examine
this subject. Let us, in the strength which
God supplies through his Eternal Son, begin
the combat, and fight this battle of the Lord
manfully. This warfare is infinitely more
honourable and glorious than that which
animated the followers of Godfrey or Tan-
cred; and costlier greater results than
the conquest of the Saracens, or the recovery
of the Holy Sepulchre. The doctrines of
the Arabian impostor, it must be admitted,
spread very rapidly and extensively. In
circumstances, very favourable to such an
end, none be noticed in connexion with this
admission. These circumstances are well
attested historical facts. They form, indeed,
an integral part of Mahomet's history; and
when they are duly considered, they show
that, in his success there was nothing either
wonderful or miraculous. The religious,
political, and civil state of the East, says a
judicious writer, harmonized at the time of
his appearance, to favour his pretensions,
and to promote his views. Let us examine
this assertion.

V. In Arabia Felix, the immediate scene
of Mohammed's labours, religion was, at that
time, in a most deplorable condition. The
people were divided into four religious sects
or parties. One consisted of Sabian idolat-
ers, who worshipped the heavenly bodies;
the other, following the Mosaic law, had
fallen into idolatry. The third class was made up of
Jews; and these, being both numerous and
powerful, persecuted the others, and de-
graded their own religion and communion by the
most deplorable and revolting practices.—
The fourth party consisted of the Christians.
These consisted of a variety of assemblies of
sects, constantly warring upon each other;
and so bitter were their dissensions; so im-
phensible were their jealousies, and so cruel
their animosities, that throughout a great
part of the East, the very name of Chris-
tiansity became odious and detestable. This
wretched state of the empire facilitated the
accomplishment of the Jewish Prophecy de-
scribed in Psalm 110, which divided it into two
kingdoms, and a plating sect—the Jews, in-
mortal to a grove; and the profane and
followers of the Messiah, a reproach and a disgrace to the
holy name by which they were called. It is
marvel that he should do this. But, if this col-
lapsed and deplorable state of religion and
morals opened the usual door for the con-
trivance of the power of penetration, the polit-
ical and civil state of the world also favour-
ed his enterprise. The Persian and Roman
Empires were in a state of decline. Arabia
was equally so, and flourishing. The
Arabian people were a free, but at the same
time a poor and ignorant people. They were
independent, and not subject to any separate and in-
dependent.

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