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Poetry.

For the Wesleyan.

SERIOUS MEDITATIONS.

Ye just! beloved of the Lord!
Ye think of death without a fear:
To you 'tis but a change of homes,
When call'd to leave this earthly sphere.

Ye know that in your Father's house,
Are many mansions, bright and fair;
Meet dwellings for the pure in heart,
Prepar'd by his paternal care.

Innumerable worlds that roll
Through the infinitude of space;
Unknown abodes of sentient life,
Each filling its appointed place.

Oh! ye far-off communities,
Inhabiting those upper skies;
Arrang'd beneath that concave vast,
Oh! let with yours, our praises rise.

We know that God hath made you worlds,
And that His hand hath plac'd you there:
But of your state we nothing know,
Nor of God's bounty free, your share.

But soon there shall a period come,
It hastens with gigantic stride;
When we the encumbering mortal robes,
Our souls now wear, shall cast aside.

Through ether's realms we then shall soar,
And all that now remains conceal'd
In mystery's closely-woven folds,
Be clearly to our sight reveal'd.

But, thinking over life and death,
Time past, and dark futurity;
We feel our kindred with ye all,
Howe'er remote your dwelling be.

Resplendent globes! assembled spheres!
Ye widely-scatter'd families!
Ye sing with us His mighty power,
Who holds of all the golden keys.

Yea, evermore ye sing with us,
All glory to the mighty Lord!
The God of heaven—the King of earth—
Creating all things by His word.

Great Spirit of the universe!
Transforming by His sovereign will,
Chaos to order, gloom to light,
And death to life eternal still.

Earth's trembling children! would ye learn
To meet Omnipotence unaw'd,
When death shall summon ye to stand
In presence of this awful God?

Cling to Religion—ne'er forget
This world is but a stranger-land,
Through which we journey, till at last,
We meet again our own home-band.

Approach the death-bed of the just,
About to quit this mortal scene:
That bed whence he no more shall rise,
He knows it—yet is all serene.

A heavenly halo crowns his brow;
He feels he has not been deceiv'd;
While with the Apostle he can say,
"I know in Whom I have believ'd."

Oh! great and glorious guarantee,
'Gainst all the terrors that can roll
Athwart that gloomy valley, where
God's pity is our refuge sole.

He dies! his spirit enters in
At heaven's bright gate, that angels ope;
With us is left the memory
Of all his love, his faith, his hope.

Oh! would'st thou like the righteous die,
Like him with calmness yield thy breath?
Live thou his life—and feel secure
That thou shalt, surely, die his death.

Cling to Religion! trust it well—
Love it as the last link between
The child and parent, death and life,
This world, and the great world unseen.

Shelburne.

A. B.

Christian Miscellany.

"We need a better acquaintance with the thoughts and reasonings of pure and lofty minds."—Dr. Sharp.

The Christian Traveller.

BY A CANADIAN MERCHANT.

Having tarried a few days in a beautiful village of the West, I embarked in a vessel which was crossing one of the great lakes. Three other individuals had taken passage, and night coming on found us waiting for a breeze.

About nine o'clock, as the sails were hoisted, another passenger came on board. When

we had cleared the harbour he entered the cabin, and seemed to suppose that he was alone, for we had all retired to our berths. The lamp was burning dimly on the table, but it afforded sufficient light for me to discover that he was young. Seating himself beside it, he drew a book from his pocket and read a few minutes. Suddenly, from on deck, was heard the voice of the captain uttering oaths, terrific beyond description. The youth arose, laid his book on the chair, and kneeling beside it, in a low whisper engaged in prayer. I listened attentively, and though his soul seemed to burn within him, I could gather only an occasional word, or part of a sentence, such as "mercy," "dying heathen," "sinners," &c. Presently he seemed in an agony of spirit for these swearers, and could scarcely suppress his voice while pleading with God to have mercy on them. My soul was stirred within me. There was a sacredness in this place, and I was self-condemned, knowing that I also professed the name of Jesus, and had retired with my fellow-passengers to rest, not having spoken of God or committed myself to his care.

Early in the morning I was waked by a loud voice at the door of the companion-way,—"Here! what tracts are these?" followed by other voices in threats and imprecations against tract distributors, Bethels, temperance societies, &c.

I thought of the young stranger, and feared they would execute their threats upon him; but he calmly said, "Those tracts, sir, are mine. I have but a few, as you see; but they are very good, and you may take one if you wish. I brought them on board to distribute, but you were all too busy last night." The sailor smiled and walked away, making no reply.

We were soon called to breakfast with the captain and mate. When we were seated at the table, "Captain," said our young companion, "as the Lord supplies all our wants, if neither you nor the passengers object, I would like to ask his blessing on our repast."

"If you please," replied the captain, with apparent good-will. In a few minutes the cook was on deck, and informed the sailors, who were instantly in an uproar, and their mouths filled with curses. The captain attempted to apologise for the profanity of his men, saying, "It was perfectly common among sailors, and they meant no harm by it."

"With your leave, captain," said the young man, "I think we can put an end to it."

Himself a swearer, and having just apologised for his men, the captain was puzzled for an answer; but after a little hesitation replied, "I might as well attempt to sail against a head wind as to think of such a thing."

"But I meant all I said," added the young man.

"Well, if you think it possible, you may try it," said the captain.

As soon as breakfast was over, the eldest and most profane of the sailors seated himself on the quarterdeck to smoke his pipe. The young man entered into conversation with him, and soon drew from him a history of the adventures of his life. From his boyhood he had followed the ocean. He had been tossed on the billows by many a tempest; had visited several missionary stations in different parts of the world, and gave his testimony to the good effects of missionary efforts among the natives of the Sandwich Islands. Proud of his nautical skill, he at length boasted that he could do any thing that could be done by a sailor.

"I doubt it," said the young man.

"I can," answered the hardy tar, "and will not be outdone, my word for it."

"Well, when a sailor passes his word he ought to be believed. I knew a sailor who resolved that he would stop swearing; and did so."

"Ah!" said the old sailor, "you've anchored me; I'm fast—but I can do it."

"I know you can," said the young man,

and I hope you will anchor all your ship-mates' oaths with yours."

Not a word of profanity was afterwards heard on board the vessel. During the day, as opportunity presented itself, he conversed with each sailor singly on the subject of his soul's salvation, and gained the hearts of all.

After supper he requested of the captain the privilege of attending worship in the cabin. His wishes were complied with, and soon all on board, except the man at the helm, were assembled. The captain brought out a Bible, which he said was presented to him in early life by his father, with a request that he would never part with it. We listened as our friend read Matthew's account of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection; and then looking round upon us he said, "He is risen—yes, Jesus lives; let us worship him."

It was a melting scene. Knees that seldom bowed before now knelt at the altar of prayer, while the solemnities of eternity seemed hanging over us. After prayer we went on deck and sang a hymn. It was a happy place, a floating Bethel. Instead of confusion and wrath, there was sweet peace and solemnity. We ceased just as the setting sun was flinging upon us his last cheering rays.

The captain, deeply affected, went into the cabin, lit his lamp, took his Bible, and was engaged in reading till we had retired to rest.

After this, for three days, we regularly attended family worship, and had much interesting conversation on various subjects; for there was nothing in the religion of the young stranger to repress the cheerfulness of social intercourse. From his familiarity with the Bible, his readiness in illustrating its truths and presenting its motives; and from his fearless but judicious and persevering steps, we concluded that he was a minister of the gospel. From all he saw, he gathered laurels to cast at his Master's feet, and in all his movements aimed to show that eternity was not to be trifled with. A few hours before we arrived in port we ascertained that he was a mechanic.

Before we reached the wharf, the captain came forward, and with much feeling bade him farewell; declared that he was resolved to live as he had done no longer—his wife, he said, was a Christian, and he meant to go and live with her; and added, "I have had ministers as passengers in my vessel Sabbath-days and week-days, but never before have I been so touchingly reminded of the family altar where my departed parents knelt." As we left the vessel, every countenance showed that our friend had, by his decided, yet mild and Christian faithfulness, won the gratitude of many, and the esteem of all.

(To be continued.)

The Earlier the Easier.

There are some who tremble and some who sneer at youthful conversions. Knowing the early impressibility of the young heart, they fear that early religious impressions may prove only as "the morning cloud and the early dew." But a proper rational view of his subject can scarcely fail to convince the most sceptical, that the earlier children are converted after they reach the period of personal accountability, the easier is the work wrought. It is a fatal mistake to reason, that when the pleasures of life have been exhausted, when growing age shall have dimmed the senses, when the appetites shall have been palled by satiety, it will be easier to devote the heart to God. All experience and all philosophy deny it.

The religious instruction imparted to the young in this age, especially in the Sabbath school, makes them early familiar with the fundamental truths of the gospel. The prophecy is becoming fulfilled, "There shall be no more an infant of days, for the child shall die an hundred years old." All the knowledge necessary to conversion may be attained early in youth.

In youth the affections are most ardent. It is peculiarly the season of love. The

young are capable of the strongest and most self-sacrificing affections. The strongest appeals of Christianity are made to the affections. The only word which sums up the whole of piety is love. Therefore youth is the best season for commencing a life of piety.

In youth the hopes are most bright. Then the future is adorned with the most brilliant and attractive hues, and Christianity presents the most gorgeous scenes in glowing imagery to the imagination to induce a life of piety.

Faith is most confiding in youth. The young are trusting, ready to believe. Religion demands implicit faith; youth most naturally and easily gives it, and is therefore the best season for commencing a life of piety.

The mind is most docile in youth. As years advance, men become more and more tenacious of their own views and opinions. Entire submission to the teachings of inspiration is necessary to piety, and this is most easily given in early life.

The habits are most yielding in youth. How important then, when they are forming, that they should be directed aright!

Youth is most submissive to authority. It is the season of obedience. The unquestioning obedience which God demands is most easily rendered in early life.

The energies of youth are most active. Young hands for labour. Years deaden the energies. Religion requires the exertion of all our energies to resist evil and do good. These are most active and most easily diverted in youth.

The judgment in youth is most easily fitted to appreciate the claims of piety. The judgment of impenitent age is prejudiced, and blinded, and warped by sin. One who has long indulged and loved sin, cannot so easily as the more unpolluted mind form a correct judgment of the guilt of sin. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye who have been accustomed to do evil, learn to do well."—*Christian Reflector.*

A Pen of Solid Fire.

We know but little of the mysterious connection between soul and body. But one thing we know, that the habits of the soul act upon the body, and the habits of the body act upon the soul. A worldly man thinks very little of this; a man of sin and pleasure thinks of it very little; and yet it may be in this very way that he is engraving the letters of his own future judgment on his own being. No man knows, when in a course of sinful indulgence, no young man, in a career of sensual passion, no middle aged man, in the pursuits of ambition, or the greedy grasp of gain, what lines he is tracing, as with the pen of a diamond, or burning in, as with a pen of solid fire, upon his spiritual being, hidden perhaps now, but by and by to come out, and to be read through eternity. It is said that the wicked shall be driven away in his wickedness; and so the wicked soul may be launched away into eternity, seared and scorched in the sight of all the universe, with the deep burnt engraving of his own sins, so that no book of judgment would be needed to read them out of, either to himself or to angels.—*Dr. Cheever.*

Stated Seasons for Prayer.

Stated seasons, returning at regular periods, are peculiarly necessary to preserve this duty in its full vigour. He who prays at such seasons will always remember the duty; will form his schemes of life, so as to provide the proper place for performing it; will be reproached by his conscience for neglecting it; will keep alive the season of prayer from one season to another, so as to render the practice delightful; and will be preserved uninterruptedly in the practice of the strong influence of habit. He who prays at accidental seasons only, will first neglect, then hate, and finally desist from the duty.—*Dwight.*