

# ONTARIO EVANGELIST.

"Go ... .. speak ... .. to the people ALL the words of this Life."

Vol. 3.

ERIN AND EVERTON, ONTARIO, FEBRUARY, 1889.

No. 10.

## POETRY.

### REMINISCENCE.

The flowing stream with rocky banks,  
Meandering through the meadows low,  
Reminds us of our little pranks  
Some forty years or more ago.

When we with "bended pins for hooks"  
And cedar limbs for fishing rods,  
Barefooted waded through the brooks  
Like woodnymphs searching for the gods.

Or when with ruddy, dimpled cheek  
We sported in the old school ground,  
That dear old play, "hide-and-go-seek,"  
And screamed for joy when we were found.

Or when with bounding step and free,  
Like fairies through the forest deep,  
We hand in hand in childish glee  
Ran wildly o'er the mountain steep,

To gather shells, and flowers, and moss,  
To sing and shout, to climb and fall,  
To cry and laugh,—now pleased, now cross,  
To fly the kite, to throw the ball.

Oftimes when early at the school,  
And found the master hadn't come,  
We didn't wait as was the rule,  
But left pretending to go home.

And didn't go, but went to swim  
Down in the pond, or nutting went  
With "Bess" and "Kate" and "Susie Sim,"  
And thus the happy days we spent.

Those childish days have passed away,  
No more with merry heart and free,  
O'er hills, through valleys now we play,  
Nor wade the brooks in youthful glee.

The cares and toils of after years  
Have left their traces on our face,  
We look beyond those cares and tears  
To Him who saves us by His grace.

We hear a voice across the wave,  
In sweet response "O, wearied soul  
Forget your toils, I came to save,  
To heal your wounds, to make you whole."

Step out upon that crested sea,  
Where no returning sail is seen;  
Be not afraid to come to me,  
Though high the billow roll between.

My soul responds, O Lord for choice  
I come, but let my hand in thine be staid;  
I hear the echo of that voice  
Which said "Tis I be not afraid."

H. BROWN.

Warton, Dec. 7th, 1888.

## SELECTIONS.

### IN THE AFTERGLOW.

When feebler luminaries pass from sight, the full measure of our deprivation closes in upon us instantly, but when the sun sinks below the horizon, the day still lingers, in many a gentle vision of beauty that was shut from our eyes by the glory of his power.

The solace of such a twilight is mercifully granted when one in whose strength and constancy we have confidently rested passes forever from our view. Not till the last beam of the afterglow has vanished do we realize that we shall see his face no more; while in the chastened light the familiar lineaments reveal to us rare beauties unsuspected in the flush of manhood's day.

In the consecrated hush of a moment like this, before the mirk of desolation shall chill our kindlier memories to stony grief, it may not be unpardonable to dwell on the final months and hours of our departed warrior since he lay down his weapons, because too burdensome for him to wield.

Surely among the multitudes of stricken ones who have turned to him for consolation in their bereavement there are those who will not be indifferent to the weary hours when he at last stood face to face with the destroyer.

From the time the imperative summons came to abandon his labors, and begin the search for health, I think he never ceased to listen for the knock at the door. Endorsed on the wrapper that sealed his will, written before his departure for Europe, we have just found endorsed a few lines directing the procedure when the news of his death should be received. Addressing the friends who attended his farewell reception here, he spoke freely and unaffectedly of Death as of an acquaintance whom he might meet abroad

and of the Promised Land as a country not far, into which his way might lead at any day.

In a nature so far from despondent as his had ever been, nothing could tell more plainly of a resolute preparation for the end; nor do I believe that in the two years that intervened it could have stirred in him a greater tremor than would a motion to adjourn for recess. "The readiness is all." Yet never, by word or act, did he betray indifference to anything. To the last moment he retained the liveliest sense of responsibility in every interest with which he stood connected.

I think it would be hard to find a parallel to the letters he wrote for publication while abroad. To a man of his age, even in health, it was an arduous undertaking to undergo the hardships of travel so unremitting and laborious. Add to that, great feebleness of body, and constant suffering from untimely severity of climate everywhere, and the production of such letters, which were supplied to me as fast as they could be printed weekly, seems to me to border on the marvelous. He was himself keenly alive to the disabilities under which he labored, and would never entertain the thought of their republication.

It is known to but few that he was the victim of a serious disaster while in Palestine, which was undoubtedly the main cause of his death. The particulars would carry me out of the line set down for these reflections. It is enough to say that, after an exciting runaway, in which he figured on horseback, in an attempt to swing himself from his horse in full motion he received a fall, from the shock of which he never recovered. The most serious injury is believed by his physician to have been at the base of the brain. This was at the beginning of the trip through Palestine. And as I now think of him confronting all the hardships of that jaunt, his waning powers of body taxed with new severity at every turn, I hope I may be forgiven if I am reminded more of the pagan notion of mortals driven by unrelenting fate, than of the beneficent ministrations that should have waited on a frame as worn and frail as his. Yet I doubt if he was ever thoroughly conscious of the stark, grim mockery of such a "search for health." The line once marked down he hewed to it with a sublimity of self-abdication that I have never seen equalled. He has frequently said that from leaving home to his return he felt warm barely twice—once in Cairo, once by the Dead Sea—so unseasonable was the weather everywhere.

On his return, the first sign of trouble appeared in the heart. The seat of this the physician at once located in the brain. The trouble in that organ was soon brought under control, and did not again assert itself there.

While he began to show some indisposition to the labors of the office, his indomitable resolution was unshaken, and in the fall of 1887, he forced himself, with untold fatigue and suffering, to attend the convention at Indianapolis, discharging all his duties as President of the Foreign Society. A severe illness served notice that he was over-drawing his account in the bank of health. Yet in the dead of the following winter—against every protest of body and reason, and in a storm that blocked all the roads in the East, he made his way to Richmond, Va., to attend the sittings of the Sunday-school Lesson Committee. For once in my lifetime, I entered an earnest protest against a decision of his. But it was useless. His absence the year before, while abroad, was to him an unanswerable argument why he should go now. The penalty was a severe illness, from which he had scarcely recovered when he was prevailed upon to attend the Ohio State Meeting at Columbus, and under the inspiration of old associations he spoke at some length, and returned home to realize that an embargo was laid, for a time at least, on all further public exertions. All his appointments were recalled, and in June, 1888, he discontinued his visits to the office.

The suggestion has been made that some expressions I have used seem to imply a censure of those who permitted him to travel in such a feeble condition, or of his companions. Nothing could be further from my purpose. I have indeed failed signally of my object if it has not been made apparent that it was his own unbending will that carried him forward, in spite of

manifold and unmistakable warnings. He was the most considerate of mortals to others, and the most pitiless to himself. It was but a week or two before his departure that Dr. F. H. Schell, of Cincinnati, discovered the source of an excruciating pain he had suffered in his ear for six months, in a decay of the bones of the head, which, if it had not been promptly arrested, must have resulted fatally in a very short time. Yet no persuasion would prevail on him to alter his determination, and he made that arduous tour without waiting for a second examination. The splendid physique which he had built up by a well-ordered life, had borne him so gallantly through years of unremitting toil, that he seemed to rebel against the very thought that its powers were failing. No pen can picture the merciless exertions to which for the last score of years it was subjected. How it was endured without more than mortal help, is a mystery unless it was his burning enthusiasm in the great tasks that lay before him. Perhaps ardor is the essence of immortality after all. He wrought at his work with an energy that was little short of a passion. One who saw the great sculptor, Michael Angelo, in his old age, chiseling at a statue, in one of his inspirations, describes him as attacking the marble with incredible fury, cutting it away with an energy that threatened its demolition, while he hewed to the daintiest curve of the ideal figure that was burning in his soul. Such a species of fury animated Isaac Errett in his life-work, and with a hand as true he shaped it to perfection. As I recall, in the half-light that now rests on these years, his heroic struggle with all that marred the glory of our plea before the world, I can think of nothing in all I have ever learned of men so like the fiery old sculptor battling with the obdurate rock that imprisoned the child of his soul.

And it was this spirit, not one whit abated, that we have seen turned from gigantic labors to toy at last with leisure and recreation. There is an infinite depth of pathos in the thought of one so inured to toil that rest has become a burden and a bewilderment. For twenty-five years he had scarcely known the word, and now it was like freedom to the life-long captive. There seemed to be a species of moral inertia, acquired in a course so long and so strenuous, that forbade him to stop until its force was spent, and hence he pursued his travels with the habitual determination which he had always given to his work.

But now the superhuman strength is spent. The silver cord is wearing loose and thin, and the golden bowl is trembling on the brink. In the immortal man there was no decay, but the poor, wore tenement was tottering to its fall. And now, that the busy world was shut out, and scarcely its distant hum was borne to his ears, he at last submitted to a thorough course of medicine. His untiring spirit seemed to find a half-congenial activity in exploring the difficulties of his physical condition. And they were neither few nor slight. He took a half-whimsical interest in the doctor's skill, as in one organ after another the malignant power of the disease was overcome, only to disclose itself again, in a new form or another organ. And gradually, as medical skill seem to gain the ascendancy, he acquired unbounded faith in its final triumph.

But they were weary hours of imprisonment, these weeks and months of banishment from the great work that was ever supreme in his heart. How very weary we should never have known but for an incident that came in due time. His home lay, quiet and retired, on a breezy level, surrounded by gentle heights on every hand. Here, through the long summer days, he would sit on the wide verandah, or pace gently up and down in a manner habitual to him all his life long. All sights and sounds within his ken were rural, save the rumble and scream and thunder of the trains that came and went the long day through. What thoughts of the strife and clamour and heady conflict of the great world they brought to him we shall never know under these heavens. He who had been the center of an ever-widening circle of animation for two score years now found himself stranded far from the currents, and scarcely ever saw the welcome sight of a companion in arms. For his burdens had grown so great as to compel him to almost

absolute renunciation of social life, and they were but few who had become accustomed to find their way to his retreat. The same moral inertia to which I have referred, forbids much social circulation till currents have had time to become established. Hence, it was weeks before even his dearest friends found their way to his doors, many of them fearing a visit might be untimely. Meanwhile the gentle ministrations of home, to the adequate enjoyment of which his toilsome life had been a constant bar, now assumed their rightful sway, and kind neighbors, people of culture and warm sympathies, were unobtrusively thoughtful in their attentions.

Finally, old friends, men like himself absorbed in public duties, began to plan, in their trips through Cincinnati, to take the time to visit him, and towards the end of summer he began to enjoy once more the companionship that was most dear to him of any on earth—that of his comrades.

The weather began to grow cooler, too, and with improving health, and feeling himself once more nearing the currents of his old life, he began to turn his eyes hopefully to the city again, and to think of resuming his place, not only in his office, but in the missionary work, which was ever uppermost in his thoughts.

None of us suspected how intently his heart was set on this object. He bore his isolation without a murmur, and it was only in the evident relish he showed for the visits of his friends that he ever betrayed how keenly he felt his separation. But as he grew stronger, and extended his walks farther day by day, his craving for his work began to show itself, and he became importunate with his physician for permission to come to town.

All this time he retained unabated his interest in the work. He continued to write as he had strength, and as the time for the great missionary gatherings came on, he reluctantly gave up the last hope that he might be able to attend them. But he was steadily improving in health, and living daily in expectation of the coveted trip to the office.

At last it came, shortly after the conventions. And then broke out all the suppressed fires of the spirit that had been held in check so long: His joy at escape from his imprisonment was simply unbounded. He had no sooner set foot on the deck, so to say, once more, than he cast every restraint aside and resumed his old dominion over his wasted frame. The exertions he underwent that day are scarcely credible, knowing as we now do his feebleness. So resolute and confident was he, so fearless of fatigue, that we all began to indulge the fondest anticipations of his restoration to reasonably good health. Heaven help us, how little we thought it was the last brilliant leap of the flame, before all should crumble into ashes!

The next day he was indisposed to exertion, and it soon transpired that he had taken cold, with an implication of one lung, from which he had not entirely recovered at the time of his death. From this time on he seemed to grow constantly feebler, and after a time required attention day and night. Yet till the last he bore up with the same royal determination, nor in all his illness did he ever remain a day in bed. And till the very last his bodily powers responded to the physician's treatment, and never let us despair of his ultimate recovery.

But the path was sloping swiftly in its descent to the long, long home. The ceaseless cough, due not so much to pulmonary difficulties as to the derangement of the pneumo-gastric nerve; allowed him no relief, and night and day his strength was worn away, and the lines of pain grew deeper in his face. He had little strength to read, yet still his interest was keen in the *Standard* and in the work of missions, and almost his last act was to affix his name as president to certificates of membership in the Foreign Society. To others he said, what he did not say to his family, that he did not expect to recover; and daily he gave what little strength he had to the Master's work as devotedly as ever in the day of his greatest vitality.

We can see him now, calmly and without a tremor, waiting for his summons. His life the same as it had ever been, the family worship

(SEE 4TH PAGE.)