

The Protestant

AND EVANGELICAL WITNESS.

"PROVE ALL THINGS: HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."—1 THESS. v. 21.

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A HYMN.

The following Hymn was written by a patient in the New Jersey State Hospital for the Insane—to be used on occasion of services held on laying the Corner-stone of a new Hospital, established in Western Pennsylvania, July 19th, 1859. D. L. D.

When prompted by their love of Thee,
Thy grateful children gladly raise
A fair and godly edifice,
Wherein Thy name to praise,
By "deeds and acts,"—best offering,
Thou smilest on each gift they bring.
Give us Thy blessing, Lord, this day,
Upon the work we undertake,
And bless the stone which now we lay
For Thine afflicted children's sake.
We lay, oh Lord, this Corner-stone,
Depending on Thy help alone.

Regard this House! let it be blessed
To every suffering, care-wrecked mind;
Let many a troubled soul find rest,
And lonely hearts here friendship find,
And those, for whom Redeemer's sake,
Whom Thou dost wish to take.
How can we thank Thee, Lord, enough,
That home and friends to us are given,
While many sad, afflicted ones
From all dear ties are riven.
Our "offered thanks," this House shall be
A sign, oh Lord! 'twixt us and Thee. M. M. R.

ANOTHER HYMN.

The following was written by another patient in the above mentioned Institution, for the same occasion.

Bless, O Lord, our joint endeavor—
Ours our efforts with success;
May Thy Holy Spirit's favor
On our work of mercy rest.
Thou hast promised to assist us,
If we trust thee to the last;
Now we, hoping on Thy bounty,
Bread upon the waters cast.
We would raise a place of refuge
For the weak, of health bereft;
May each stone come by its power
From a rock of healing cleft.
God of life, and light celestial,
Send rich blessing from above,
May both givers and receivers
Share the tokens of Thy love.

Forty Thousand People at a Prayer-meeting.

The Edinburgh Witness gives the following account of a very remarkable prayer-meeting, probably the largest ever held since the dawn of the Christian era. We presume that the numbers are somewhat exaggerated, as other papers do not place them higher than from twenty to thirty thousand.

"A great union prayer-meeting, in connection with the present remarkable movement, was held in the open air in Belfast, Ireland, on Wednesday forenoon at half-past eleven o'clock. In order to accommodate all parties, the use of the spacious grounds of the Royal Botanic Gardens was obtained for holding the meeting; and as it was well known that many persons from the surrounding country were desirous to be present, special trains of unnumbered length were run by the different railway companies. Some idea of the interest felt may be imagined when we state that it is computed that no fewer than fifty thousand individuals arrived in Belfast, and that from thirty-five to forty thousand persons in all were present at the services. The leading streets of the town presented, during mid-day, a most remarkable aspect, particularly after the arrival of the trains. The footways were literally thronged with well-dressed and respectable looking people from the country—not passing along with the negligent and easy-going air of pleasure-seeking excursionists, but with a solemn and earnest demeanour—the younger as well as the older; and the majority with files or hymn-books in their hands, as if proceeding to Sabbath services. On they passed towards the place of meeting, passed the glittering rows of gorgeous shops, and through the fashionable thoroughfares. Thus the living stream—such a stream as was never before witnessed in Belfast—poured onwards for at least two hours, along both sides of the streets.

"The scene in the garden grounds is said by the *Dunfermline Herald* to have been one of the most striking, as well as impressive and animating, ever witnessed in the province. The whole space within view from any point was as closely packed as it was well possible for it to be. Even the branches of the trees were taken advantage of by numbers of the junior members of the audience, as the most suitable situations for sitting and hearing; and there, while the sounds of praise were rising from the multitude below, these young worshippers were heard joining in the song of thanksgiving. Nothing of holiday levity—nothing of the thoughtless mirth of youth—was manifest among those; their attention was as marked, and their conduct as well ordered, as that of any persons in the vast assemblage. Both as regarded its magnitude, and the deep solemnity and earnest spirit that pervaded it, the meeting is said to have recalled

the historic days and scenes of the signing of the 'Solemn League and Covenant.' The Rev. John Johnson of Tallish, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Irish Presbyterian Church, presided, and he was supported by the ministers of the different Protestant denominations in and around Belfast. After prayer, the Chairman read a chapter from the Holy Scriptures, and then gave out the 100th Psalm; and never before in Belfast did so many voices unite in such hearty accord in singing this favourite song of Zion. Scarcely had the first note been raised on the platform, when it was caught up by the immense assembly, the majority of the voices combining in surprising and unexpected harmony; and, as each stanza closed, the dying away of the cadence in the far distance of the throng, had an effect at once solemn and thrilling. Short addresses were delivered by ministers and converts; and also by Mr. William Dickson of Edinburg, and Mr. Peter Drummond of Sterling. Prayers were also offered up, and verses from hymns sung. As it was impossible for the speakers on the central platform to make themselves heard by the whole of the vast multitude, clergymen and others scattered themselves among them, each forming the centre of a large congregation which immediately gathered around, joining in devotional exercises.

"At one time there were no less than twenty of these subordinate meetings, numbering from five hundred to one thousand each. Every here and there throughout the immense multitude, while the hymn or the prayer was rising on high, persons were being struck down under a sense of deep and overpowering conviction of sin. Inside of some of these circles there could not have been fewer than twenty persons—chiefly females—apparently under the influence of spiritual visitation, at the same moment; some of them prostrate upon the sward, and others reclining upon the laps of friends. These were affected in various ways—some weeping bitterly, but silently, under a deep conviction of sin; some crying piteously for mercy; and others unable to utter a word, so thoroughly were their physical faculties in abeyance. In many parts of the garden groups of boys and girls, who had retired from the body of the congregation, formed in the shrubby little meetings for prayer and exhortation among themselves. Some of these were ragged little boys, who had evidently belonged to the outcast classes. One of these cases was that of a little boy, about eleven years old, who, in a very retired part of the garden, engaged in prayer, surrounded by about twenty lads of the same age and class. This lad was, it appears, neglected by his parents, and he had obtained a scanty livelihood by hawking ballads through the streets; and the tattered garments in which he as well as his companions were arrayed on Wednesday showed that, in that respect, their prospects in life had not much improved.

"At the close of the general meeting, one of the ministers of the town, who has served a great deal among the juvenile population, was surrounded by a large assemblage of boys, who ultimately formed themselves into a procession, and marched into town, singing.

"O! that will be joyful!
Many of these children evidently belonged to the lowest classes of society. A portion of the procession, which divided from the rest, on arriving at the Pound district, ceased to sing till they had passed its dangerous precincts, and resumed their song when they passed into Townsend street. The immense concourse of people left the gardens in the most orderly manner—the majority of them evidently impressed with the conviction that it was 'good for them to have been there.' A few manufactories and other places of business were closed for the day, in order to allow the workers to join in the above services."

The Religious element the greatest power in the world.

Our own is an age when the moral or religious element is the strongest power. I understand the established government on earth, superior to all considerations of religion in the earth and the subjection of the heart and mind to the power of truth. When the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world, there was great significance in his declaration that he came not to send peace on earth but a sword. It was the avowed object of those whom he commissioned and sent forth to preach in his name, to subdue the world unto him. The conflict has been one of opinion. The sword is but an emblem of the power with which the truth, sharper than any two edged, is to be carried forward, slaying all who oppose themselves, and subjecting one nation and kingdom to another, until the earth is in captivity to Jesus Christ.

This fact is coming to be felt in every department of human enterprise. Those nations that are now exerting the mightiest influence upon the destinies of the world are the people with whom the true gospel is the ruling sentiment.—On the map of the world, mark those countries where the religion of Jesus Christ is the dominant moral sentiment, and you have those nations from which there is now going out into the earth the light of the gospel and science diffusing the principles of liberty, civilization, and truth among the people of the globe. Those nations where as yet the gospel has not become the ruling sentiment, are comparatively weak and inefficient. They may be self-sustaining, but they are not propagating; they may be able to enjoy and maintain their own independence, but they are not aggressive; they make no contributions to the advancement of the civilization of the world. The same is true of individuals within these nations. The power of religion is exhibited in the efforts which men make to extend the blessings which he enjoys to those who are destitute of them.

There is no strength for good in anything that has not the moral and religious elements as its basis. Every scheme for human reform, every attempt to ameliorate the condition of mankind, every project to save men from vice and poverty, that has not in its composition the element of moral improvement, under the power of religion, is impotent, inefficient, and futile. It may exert a superficial and apparently healing influence, but the grand cause of the evil is not touched, and feeling below, even though the surface may appear to be healed and whole. To make men happy in this world, they must be made good; to make spirits wholesome, it must be bathed in waters of spiritual regeneration. But to make this world to bloom again in the beauty of Eden, and fill it with the light of that morning when the Maker walked and talked with his creatures, as friend with friend, it must be filled once more with

that glory which is to be reflected only from hearts freed from sin, and made new again in the beauty of holiness. God has promised this as the future condition of the earth. Nothing short of it will satisfy the desires of one who believes in the promise of our Heavenly Father, and regards the prophecy of His word as sure to be accomplished in the days to come. It is a blessed privilege to live and labor in advancing that time when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters fill the sea.

Believing intensely the great fact that there is no power in philosophy, in science, in government, competent to make men good and happy without the gospel, we have no confidence whatsoever in any scheme of reform, in any combination of influences, in any system of doctrines, in any labors of philanthropists, in any schools of theology, which are not pervaded and energized with the religion which Jesus Christ lived and died to exhibit, and which should be regarded as destined finally to triumph over the hearts of mankind, and to make the world happy only in subduing it to him whose right it is to reign. Therefore, with every prayer that is offered for the extension of liberty and happiness in the earth, with every prayer for the nations now groaning under despotic governments, or involved in the darkness of barbarism, paganism, moral corruption, and social misery, we would pray with the poet—

"Oh come, and to thine other crowns add this,
The crown of all the earth! Thou who alone
Art worthy!"

—N. F. Oberweis.

The Coptic Church at Alexandria.

Close by the shore of the eastern harbor, stands the convent of St. Mark, the only Coptic church, so far as I know, in Alexandria. The low, narrow-looking entrance gate leads into a small quadrangle, around which are the crazy apartments of the convent; and beyond it is the place of worship—small, dingy and dark, and much more resembling a barn than a Christian church. The evening service was going on when I entered. The officiating priest occupied a small pulpit, elevated only a few feet above the ground. Around him stood the congregation, consisting of sixteen or eighteen persons, all males. Those nearest to him held lights in their hands to enable him to read the service. He chanted it in the Arabic language, in a low, plaintive, melancholy tone, not unlike some of the cadences of the Gaelic psalmody of our own northern Highlands. At certain parts of the service, all present joined in a confused hum. Portions of the service were read by a youth not more than twelve years of age, and who displayed no great proficiency, having frequently to put him right. The accommodation for females was concealed by a screen, but I rather think that none were present. In a small aisle in the back part of the church were shown the tomb of the Apostle Mark, surrounded by a sorry pile of stones; the founder of the Alexandrian Church. And this was all that remained to represent it! There was something in this view, singularly touching in the sight of this handful of poor people, gathered together in the dusk of the evening, in this decayed and miserable building, celebrating their worship almost in the dark—a state of things, it is to be feared, but too emblematic of their own religious ignorance, and of the ruinous condition of the once renowned and flourishing Alexandrian Church. In Cairo the Coptic Christians are generally more numerous, amounting, it is said, to nearly 20,000. The whole number in Egypt is estimated at 80,000, and they are scattered over the entire face of the country, from the sea coast of the Mediterranean up to Assuan, on the borders of the Nubian desert. A revival of divine light and life in the Coptic Church, would be a great event for Egypt. Their own tongue is a dead language. Their priests are taught to read it, but it is believed that few of them really understand it. Were such a work done for the Coptic Church in Egypt, as the noble American Missionaries from the city of God, of accomplishing for the Nestorian and Armenian Churches in Asia Minor, a light would be kindled that ere long might be blessed to illumine the whole dark valley of the Nile.—*Baltimore's Herald*.

Irish Romanists and the Revival.

In some of the mills where Roman Catholics have obtained a preponderance of numbers in Belfast, Ireland, the Revival has been going on for some time; meetings have had much to endure from Romanist overseers and fellow-operatives since the present (revival) movement commenced. This is, doubtless, bad enough, but the opposition has latterly manifested itself in open and violent violence. This is the more intolerable, as the humble Protestants specially abstain from all that is calculated to offend their Romanist fellow citizens, whether in word or act. Several outrages have occurred in localities where Roman Catholics are "kings of the caseway," and hitherto—a matter on which we demand explanation from the police authorities of both Belfast and County Down—with perfect impunity to the offenders. Ministers of the gospel have been assailed by infuriated Romanist mobs, and their personal safety has been endangered; and this state of affairs is becoming more the more patiently it is endured, and the less notice that is taken of those who are sworn "guardians of the peace," but whose sympathies are, in many instances, evidently with their disturbers. We can point to localities in which it is as much as a Protestant missionary's life is worth.

On a recent Saturday, the Rev. Thomas Prentice, of the Independent Church, after conducting an open-air service in that spiritual desert, Mustard street, was attacked by a crowd of the lowest ruffians, and stoned out of the street. Happily, however, he did not receive any serious injury. On Monday, one of the meetings held in connection with the Presbyterian Church was sent for to visit a Presbyterian woman in the notorious "Pound District," and while engaged conducting religious service in her home, the place was beset by a mob of Roman Catholics, who displayed a desire to use him in the most brutal manner, if they could lay hands upon him. He was advised to keep within doors till the police were sent for, but no sooner did he reach the street than the crowd, who had been shouting to "turn him out," followed for a considerable distance, and pelted him with stones, one of which struck him on the head. The constabulary at Albert crescent were notified of the intentions of the mob, and a party of them arrived at the spot in time to witness part of the outrage; but they made no effort

whatever, as we are informed, to arrest any of the assailants. We leave them to say why—and to account for their neglect of duty to Inspector-General Brownrigg.—*Belfast Banner*.

THE FRANKING PRIVILEGE.—The Philadelphia Bulletin speaks of seeing the following articles lying among the mail-bags at the post office, as franked matter, directed to a member of Congress at Washington: One wooden box about a foot square, labelled "Dr. —'s Universal Remedy." One jointed fishing-rod, carefully done up in brown paper; and one "Old Dominion Coffee Pot." These being rather inconvenient to send in the bags with letters, were permitted to go into separate parcels. They were for one of those who voted themselves a salary of \$3000 a year and mileage. To send a pound of valuable needs to one of our subscribers, we prepay 90 cents for short distances, and \$3.30 to the Pacific Coast; and a strong effort was made at the last Congress to raise the charge to \$1.00 per pound for the shortest routes! Comment is necessary.—*An. Agric.*

PROTESTANTS AND ROMANISTS IN GERMANY.—A comparison of the religious statistics of Germany in 1840 with those of 1858, shows that the number of Protestants in nearly every state has increased in a larger ratio than that of Roman Catholics; whole congregations of Catholics, or at least a majority of them, have, in a number of instances, become Protestant. Rome has lost to Protestantism four times as many priests as she has gained proselytes from the Protestant clergy. The whole number of Protestants in the States of the German Confederacy is at present 20,000,000; that of Catholics, 29,150,000.

Treasury.

"The Eleventh Hour."

A young man was very ill, and apparently dying. A minister visited him; and on seating himself beside him said to him:—
"You appear very ill, my friend."
"Yes; but I hope to recover," he replied.
"You surprise me," rejoined the minister. "I understand your medical attendance has given you up. Why cherish delusive expectations? You are a dying man, and you ought to prepare for eternity. Have you ever thought seriously about your soul?"
"Not much; but I hope to get out next Sunday and go to your chapel,—we have a seat there."
"Go to chapel next Sunday? I wish, my dear man, you may be in another world by that time. Besides, you are a guilty sinner, and need forgiveness; you have a hard and polluted heart which must be softened by the Holy Spirit and purified by the blood of Christ, or you will sink into hell. You must be inwardly changed, to repent of your sins and give glory through the blood of Christ, or you will soon, I fear, have no opportunity of seeking salvation."
"Such things give me no concern. Death and eternity I regard with perfect indifference. I do not feel the least disposition or desire to prepare for a future state."
"Are you not anxious about eternity, you ought to be; and if you do not quickly become anxious you will repent when it is too late. Your soul is of infinite value; and it will be a dreadful thing if you lose it, and appear at the judgment-seat only to be condemned for the overruling torments of hell."
The minister then asked if he should pray; but on receiving no answer, he knelt down and poured out his heart to God on behalf of the poor lost sinner before him, and left.

A few mornings after he was summoned to see him, and was told he was crying for mercy. As he entered he heard him crying out:—"Lord have mercy upon me!"
"I am thankful," said the minister, "to find you thus anxious about salvation; you have but little time to live; continue to cry for mercy, and believe in pardon through the merits of Jesus Christ. God is able to save you, and he is also willing."
While thus addressing him, he sank into a kind of stupor, but on again recovering he continued his cry. "Lord have mercy upon me! Christ have mercy upon me!" The minister endeavored to instruct him in the way of life, but had to leave in order to preach at a distant village that evening.

On the following afternoon he was told that the young man recovered a little, and was seeking the Lord with all his heart. "O, Mr. Wright, I have good news to tell you. The Lord has forgiven all my sins; the fear of death is taken away; and I can rejoice in prospect of heaven. Afterwards he said, "O, if I had known the value and blessedness of true religion, I could not live so long without it." He held the beginning of his confidence steadfast until the end, and departed in the full assurance of a glorious eternity.

Reader, in such a world as ours, where we are but a step from death, is it not wise to come to Jesus at once, and be at all times prepared for eternity? "Come unto me," says Jesus, "all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." O, be persuaded to embrace his gracious invitation now; and "boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth!"

Mortification of Sin.

"If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." "If ye?" The believer is not a typhur in this work. It is a matter in which he must necessarily possess a deep and personal interest. How many and precious are the considerations that bind him to the duty! His usefulness, his happiness, his sunny hope of heaven, are included in it. The work of the Spirit is not, as some have designed to be, a substitute for the personal work of the believer. His influence, indispensable and sovereign though it is, does not release from human and individual responsibility. "Work out your own salvation."—"Keep yourselves in the love of God,"—"Building up yourselves," are exhortations which emphatically and distinctly recognize the obligation of personal effort and human responsibility. The reasoning which bids us defer the work of battling with my heart's corruptions, of mortifying the deeds

of the body, until the Spirit performs his part, argues an unhealthy Christianity, and betrays a kind of truce with sin, which must on no account for a moment be entertained. As under the law, the father was compelled to hunt the first missile at the profane child, so under the Gospel the believer is to cast the first stone at his corruptions; he is to take the initiative in the great work of mortifying and slaying the cherished sin.—"If ye do mortify."

Let us then be cautious of merging human responsibility in Divine influence; of exalting the one at the expense of the other; of cloaking the spirit of indolence and indolence beneath an apparently jealous regard for the honour of the Holy Ghost. How narrow is the way of truth. How many diverging paths there are, at each turning of which Satan stands, clothed as an angel of light, quoting Scripture with all the aptness and eloquence of an apostle! But God will never release us from the obligation of "striving against sin." "I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection," was Paul's noble declaration.

Is no self-effort to be made to escape the gulf of habitual iniquity, by flushing the sinning beverage from the lips? Is no self-effort to be made to break away from the thrall of a companionship, the influence of which is fast hurrying us to ruin and despair? Is no self-effort to be made to dethrone an unlawful habit, to resist a powerful temptation, to dissolve the spell that binds us to a dangerous enchantment, to unbind the chain that makes us the vassal and the slave of a wrong and impious inclination? Oh, surely God deals not with us as we deal with a piece of mechanism,—but as reasonable, moral and accountable beings. "I drew you with the bands of a man." Identification, therefore, is a work to which the believer must address himself, and that with prayerful and resolute earnestness.—*Orestes Winslow*.

The Gospel Salvation.

John iii. 16.

I must say that I never had so close and satisfactory a view of the Gospel salvation, as when I have been led to contemplate it in the light of a simple offer on the one side, and a simple acceptance on the other. It is just saying to one and all of us,—there is forgiveness through the blood of my Son; take it; and whoever believes the reality of the offer, takes

It is not in any shape the reward of our own services; it is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is not given because we are worthy to receive it, but because it is a gift worthy of our kind and reconciled Father to bestow. We are apt to stagger at the greatness of the unmerited offer, and cannot attach faith to it till we have made up some title of our own. This leads to two mischievous consequences. It keeps alive the presumption of one class of Christians, who will still be thinking that it is something in themselves and of themselves which confers upon them a right to salvation; and it confirms the melancholy of another class, who look into their own hearts, and their own lives, and find that they cannot make out a shadow of a title to the Divine favour. The error of both lies in their looking to themselves when they should be looking to the Saviour. "Look unto me, all the ends of the earth."

The Son of man was so lifted up that whoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. It is your part simply to lay hold of the proffered boon. You are invited to do so; you are entreated to do so—nay, what is more, you are commanded to do so. It is true you are unworthy, and without holiness no man can see God; but be not afraid, only believe! You cannot get holiness of yourself, but Christ has undertaken to provide it for you. It is one of those spiritual blessings of which he has the dispensation, and which he has promised to all who believe in Him.

God has promised that with His Son He will freely give you all things (Rom. viii. 32)—that He will walk in you, and dwell in you (2 Cor. vi. 16)—that He will purify your heart by faith (Acts, xv. 9)—that He will put His law in your heart, and write it in your mind (Heb. viii. 10).

These are the effects of your believing in Christ, and not the services by which you become entitled to believe in Him. Make a clear outset in the heart, and understand that your first step is simply a confident acceptance of an offer that is free, most frank, most generous, and most unconditional.—*Dr. Chalmers*.

The Religious Education of Children.

Reader, see to it that you mind the religious education of your children. Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It was the wish of Crates that he were upon the top of the highest mountain in the world, that from thence he might cry out against monstrous parents who told to leave their children great estates, but take no care what manner of persons they should be who should enjoy those estates.

I doubt not but ye are careful to breed your sons gentlemen, or to bring them up to trades, that they may know how to be able to live a few years in this world; but, alas, how few of you are solicitous to have them "born again," and made "new creatures," and to have them taught the great business of Christianity, that they may know how to live for ever, in the other world!

I cannot condemn the education of Children, according to the rank of their parents, nor their being brought up to particular callings, (I am sure the latter is a duty); but your greatest and first care should be to seek the kingdom of God for yourselves and your children; and then you have the Saviour's assurance that all other and secondary things shall be added unto you. Religion first; business next. Elisha wept when he saw Hazeel, and forewarned that he would stay young men, and dash the children against the wall. Do not some of you give far greater occasion of weeping, than in the midst of so many means and services, you make the souls of your dear children, by not only neglecting their religious instruction, but also positively teaching them, if not by precept, yet by your example, to live like heathens and atheists!

Believe it, God who committed to you the charge will call you to give account for all the souls in your families; and let us ask you the solemn question, What will you do when God shall thus deal with you?