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Poetry.

ALL THINGS EARNEST.

Time is earnest,
Passing by—
Death is earnest,
Drawing nigh.
Sinner, wilt thou trifling be?
Time and death appeal to thee.
Life is earnest,
When 'tis o'er,
Thou returnest
Nevermore.
Soon to meet Eternity,
Wilt thou never serious be?
Heaven is earnest!
Solemnly
Flout its voices
Down to thee.
O thou mortal, art thou gay,
Sporting through this earthly day?
Hell is earnest!
Fiercely roll
Burning billows
Near thy soul.
Woe for thee, if thou abide
Curse-d, unsanctified!
God is earnest,
Kneel and pray,
Ere thy season
Pass away;
Ere he set his judgment throne,
Vengeance redden mercy gone.
Christ is earnest!
Bids thee "Come!"
Pull thy spirit
Priceless sum—
Wilt thou scorn thy Saviour's love,
Pleading with thee from above?
Thou refusest!
Watched one,
Thou despisest
God's dear Son!
Madness! divine sinner, turn,
Lest his wrath within thee burn.
When thy pleasures
All depart,
What will soothe thy
Fainting heart—
Friendless, desolate, alone,
Entering a world unknown?
O, be earnest!
Linger,
Thou wilt perish,
Linger,
Be no longer. Rise and flee;
Lest the Saviour waits for thee.
—Independent.

Christian Miscellany.

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

Communion with Saints.

In studying the holy deeds and writings of prophets, apostles, martyrs, and reformers of all ages, we enjoy a true spiritual fellowship with them. While we meditate upon the history of the people of God, the struggles and piety of men of former ages, we imbibe their spirit, and become wiser and holier by their example. And in proportion as we do this, do we enjoy the true communion with saints. Ever when, from time to time, we bend weeping over the remains of those whose virtues we have known, and below their coils with our tears, and resolve to follow their faith, to imitate their example, and to worship as they also worshipped, we enjoy this fellowship and communion. Who has not felt the influence of a pious mother or father, a sister or wife, animating their devotions, long years after their departure to the skies? Robert Hall lost his theological materialism in praying by the grave of his father. How often are the sins of Christ erased by the hope that the eyes will one day gaze upon the departed friends, upon apostles and prophets, whose example they have followed, and whose deeds have encouraged them, and

Paul the logician, Peter the zealous, John the beloved, Moses and Elias, Samuel and David, Daniel and Isaiah, the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, and the noble army of martyrs. And these hopes shall not be disappointed. Our eyes shall gaze upon them. Even now are they worshipping as we worship, all forming part of that "general assembly" to which we also belong. With all, from the saint most newly arrived in the kingdom of bliss, whose life and sufferings we have witnessed, to the holy apostle who leaned on the breast of Jesus at the last supper, we have fellowship—a true and living communion even now; it is our privilege as saints, our birthright as Christians.

How little of this do we realize? How far below it do we live. The tendency of the age draws men to live only in the present, and to forget the past. This affects even the temper of our piety. There is too often a forgetfulness of the maxims and experience of those of our Christian brethren and friends who have fallen asleep before our very eyes. "The righteous perish, and no man layeth it to heart." The saints of Christ die, and their memory seems lost, almost before their bodies are cold. They fall asleep in Jesus, their spirits fly to the throne of God, but what of faith follows them? They are put into the cold, damp earth, and then, O! how soon are their labours and piety forgotten!—*Curtis.*

How to make a Minister a Good Pastor.

A minister who has no agency in his appointment, goes to his field of labour with some peculiar feelings, not knowing whether his coming is pleasing or displeasing to the people he is appointed to serve. Therefore the members of the church should rally around him, and give him a hearty welcome. All on his family, show in ways not to be mistaken that they are glad to see him, and they will lift a great weight from his shoulders. Let the stewards ask him for his bill of travelling expenses, and pay it, and put some of the needful in his hands to begin housekeeping with, that he may not be compelled to try his credit among strangers. Save him from that mortification!

In the next place, remember that he cannot call on all his society the first week, and if his society is large he will not the first month; and when he comes do not salute him by saying, "I did not know that you were ever coming to see us;" and as one sister said to me the first pastoral visit I made to her family, "I hope you will do better than our last preacher did; he did not call on us more than seven or eight times for the whole year!" It is a great cross for a minister to call on a family, especially when he is comparatively a stranger, if he has reason to believe the family will give him a severe reprimand for not calling sooner or more frequently, but encourage him by saying, we are glad to see you. Invite in your family, and ask him to pray with them, make his visit as pleasant as possible, and you may rely on it he will call again.

Let the stewards, or any of the members, inform the minister of any who are sick or in trouble as early as possible, that they may be visited. I have known some good men helged up in their work for the whole Conference year, by a cold reception for the first month, and by whispering behind his back, that they were afraid he would not answer for them; this coming to his ears weakens his energies. How can he call as frequently as he otherwise would upon these complainers.—*Correspondent of Zion's Herald.*

Moral Symmetry.

Symmetry is the appropriate notation of the parts; and moral symmetry is the harmonious combination of the various graces and virtues to each other.

In the human body, if any of the members are unduly large, the proportion and symmetry are destroyed; and however im-

portant that member may be, its want of conformity to the other members makes it a blemish to the whole.

Now the various principles of divine truth should have their due and proper influence on the mind, producing moral symmetry in the new man.

Hence a Christian is not to be all head or knowledge; or all mouth or utterance; or all heart or emotion; or all bowels or sympathy; or all feet or activity; or all shoulders, or endurance; but all these must be exhibited in their due and appropriate proportions and beautiful symmetry.

How numerous are the instances of moral deformity, which are constantly passing before us!

The religion of one, is precision in the reception and retention of truth. Of another, rigid and scrupulous exactness of conduct. Of a third, an ardent and bold profession. Of a fourth, an unwavering reference to joys and comforts experienced. Of a fifth, a glowing, benevolent activity. Of a sixth, a fervent devotion. And of a seventh, a constant glorying in the cross of the Lord Jesus.

The religion of the New Testament is the whole of these; displayed in their mutual connexion and harmony with each other.

Knowledge, however accurate or profound, cannot dispense with faith; or faith, however vigorous, with love; or love, however ardent, with obedience; or obedience, however cheerful, with patience; or patience, however elastic, with prayer; or prayer, however instant, with praise; or praise, however exalted, with humility; or the whole, with an entire recumbency of the soul on the Lord Jesus Christ, as "the way, the truth, and the life."—*Dr. Burns.*

The Prime Business.

The prime business is to secure the safety of the soul. To be able to say, "I know whom I have believed; for me to live is Christ;" and as intimately identified with this—so intimately, that it is only polemical subtilty or an evil heart which can separate them—to depart from all iniquity, and to perfect that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. And the secondary business is to arrange every worldly matter so as to leave all compact, explicit, honest, and, as far as is allowed to mortal frailty, completed and conclusive. On Saturday evening well conducted families set the house in order—everything is provided which the morrow may require; and when once all the implements of industry are put aside, and all the furniture is fitly arranged, the devout spirit feels a Sabbath tranquillity stealing over it, and is glad that to-morrow will make it the worshipper and the guest of God. And this, brethren, is our Saturday night. This life is the preparation, and the eternal Sabbath draws near. And what shall our preparation be? Shall we bespeak a shroud and a coffin? Shall we give orders for the digging of our grave? Shall we bid them toll funeral bells all day long, or hire some monitor to chant perpetually, "Memento mori?" Shall we do as the old anchorite did? Shall we procure a death's-head and meditate over the hollow orb, and repeat, "Weep and lament to-day, for you die to-morrow?" This is what we shall do if we are pagans, or if, under our Christian profession, we retain our inborn pagan gloom. But if we are Christians, if to us Jesus has abolished death, if we have got a clear glimpse of that immortality which He brought to light, our preparation will be very different. Our preparation will be directed, not to the intervening night, but to the following morning; we shall prepare, not for the body's slumber meanwhile, but for the spirit's jubilee in the presence of its God. Our preparation will be theirs who set the house in order, because to-morrow is the Sabbath, — a preparation serene, hopeful, and tinctured with the blessedness beyond. Instead of the death's head we shall take for the object of our contemplation a page of the open Bible,

and shall read in it, "He that believeth in me shall never die." Instead of a hireling crying, "Memento mori," we shall hear the voice of Jesus saying, "Let not your hearts be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions." And instead of bespeaking our funeral attire, we shall find an occupation more rational and more Christian in providing the robes of immortality, in surveying the righteousness of the Redeemer, and considering whether it be to us precious as it is precious to God, and in acquiring those tastes and habits which are heaven begun. And if our house be thus in order, we shall not need to mind which of many messengers our dear Lord sends to warn us of his coming; and provided it opens the gate and lets in the Saviour and the Sabbath of his own immediate presence, we shall not have any quarrel with the grim door-keeper, whether it be a stormy billow or an exploding engine, a palsy or a pestilence, a slow consumption or the rapid and much-dreaded cholera.—*Rev. James Hamilton.*

Holiness of Heaven.

How vain must be our hope of entering into heaven if we have no present delight in what are said to be its joys. A Christian finds his happiness in holiness. When he looks forward to heaven, it is the holiness of the scene and association on which he fastens as affording his happiness. He is not in love with an Arcadian paradise, with the green pastures, the flowing waters, and the minstrelsy of many harpers. He is not dreaming of a bright island, where he shall meet his buried kindred, renew domestic charities, and again live human life, in all but its cares, and tears and partings. "Be ye holy, for I am holy"—this is the great precept, conformity to which is the business of a Christian's life on earth—perfect conformity, to which shall be the blessedness of heaven. Let us take heed that we deceive not ourselves. The apostle speaks of "tasting the powers of the world to come," as though heaven were to begin on this side the grave. We may be enamoured of heaven, because we think that "there the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest." We may be enchanted with the poetry of its descriptions, and fascinated by the brilliancy of its colourings, as the Evangelist John relates his visions, and catches the scenery on which he was privileged to gaze. But all this does not prove us on the high road to heaven. If it be heaven toward which we journey, it will be holiness in which we delight; for if we cannot now rejoice in having God for our portion, where is our meetness for a world in which God is to be all in all, forever and forever?

Choice Sayings.

Well may those sins draw tears from our eyes which drew blood from Christ's body. If we cannot make others better, it should be our special care that others should not make us worse.

As the blood of Jesus alone can free us from guilt and sin, so his Spirit alone can cleanse us from the filth of sin.

It is our duty to know God; our safety to fear him; our glory to resemble him; our stability to trust him; our sincerity to love him; and our felicity to enjoy him.

Many professors will plead debt, and finally expenses, when anything is desired of them for a pious and righteous use, though they have enough for their pleasure and pride; surely this is one of the worst kinds of sacrifice.

Speech is only then good when it is better than silence.

Desire God's presence and you shall not be denied; if you long for it, you shall not be long without it.

It is the peculiar wisdom of a Christian to pick arguments out of his worst condition to make him thankful; and if he is thankful he will be joyful.