

# Church Observer

A JOURNAL ADVOCATING THE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND IRELAND IN THE DOMINION OF CANADA.

"ONE FAITH,—ONE LORD,—ONE BAPTISM."

VOL. III.—No. 20.

MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 1870.

\$2 per an.—Single copies, 5c.

## Poetry.

### THE MORNING STAR.

In my dream—in a horrible pit I lay,  
Mid doleful darkness and miry clay,  
My fate bemoaning, when lo! afar,  
O'erhead, I spied a lonely star.  
Gazing thereon, I soon forgot  
Myself and all my wretched state,  
Its beauty so engrossed my soul;  
And it seemed, by some starry-strange control,  
Ere long, that I was upwards drawn,—  
Upwards, though severing gulfs did yawn,  
Till the pit and the darkness were left afar,  
And I felt myself mounting towards the star,  
While its rays their soft effulgence wove  
Around me, and a voice of love  
Said, "Fear not, O! rescued one—with me  
For evermore shall thy dwelling be."  
Now, a stranger here I have since become,  
For over the clouds are my heart and my home.

When sorrows of life are sent to me,—  
When smitten I lie 'neath adversity,—  
And plans are crossed, and hopes o'erthrown,  
And I weep for those who to dust have gone;  
And for others, for whom doth estrangement  
Crave  
A sadder memory than the grave.  
The storms soon pass—I heed not the jar,—  
My dwelling is with the Morning Star!

When clouds are wrapped about my head,  
And I hear in the darkness voices dread,—  
Voices that tempt to doubt and sin,  
And my Father's ear I may not win,  
And faith's sweet comforts disappear,—  
The morning comes, and all is clear;  
The storms soon pass—I heed not the jar,—  
My dwelling is with the Morning Star.

And when for me that bolt is hurled,  
As for all who live godly in the world,—  
When calumny blights my fair, good name,  
And friends stand aloof from my stigma of  
blame—  
And they of my household my foemen be—  
Because that they know not my Lord nor me;  
The storms soon pass—I heed not the jar,—  
My dwelling is with the Morning Star.

Or, alas! if, through rashness or blindness, I  
swerve  
From the royal path that hath never a curve,  
I know that repentance, self-humbling and fears  
Shall follow, and long days of darkness and  
tears,—  
As low I shall lie 'neath the rod, self-aborred,  
Yet weeping, meanwhile, at the feet of my Lord;  
But the storms soon pass—I heed not the jar,—  
My dwelling is with the Morning Star.

And when grief and temptation and errors are  
past,  
My Father's allotments I'll bless at the last,  
For all on my way are bringing me home,  
And numbered with those that have overcome.  
By the blood of the Lamb, in my lot I shall  
stand,  
In the end of the days, in the Promised Land,  
When the storms are passed, and ceased the war,  
And the Bride is come to the Morning Star.

H. B. M.

Hamilton, May, 1870.

## Family Circle

### HOW JOHN BERRIDGE DISCOVERED HIS GRAND MISTAKE.

A NARRATIVE FURNISHED BY HIMSELF.

(Concluded.)

If therefore, I am once under the curse of God, for having broken God's laws, I can never after do anything of myself to deliver me from this curse. I may then cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?" and find none able to deliver but Jesus Christ. (Rom. vii. 23—25.) So that if I am once a sinner, nothing but the blood of Christ can cleanse me from sin. All my hopes are then in him, and I must fly to him, the only hope set before me. In this manner, dear sir, I preached, and do preach to my flock, labouring to beat down self-righteousness, labouring to show them that they were all in a lost and perishing state, and that nothing could recover them out of this state, and make them children of God, but faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And now see the consequence. This was strange doctrine to my hearers. They were surprised, alarmed, and vexed. The old man, the carnal nature, was stirred up, and vailed, and opposed the truth. However, the minds of most were seized with some convictions, and the hearts of some were truly broken for sin; so that they came to me, as those mentioned in

the Acts, thoroughly pricked to the heart, and crying out, with strong and bitter cries, "What must I do to be saved?" I then laid the promises before them, and told them, if they found themselves under the curse, Christ was ready to deliver them from it. If they were really weary and heavy laden, Christ would give them rest. If their hearts were broken for sin, and they would look up unto Christ, he would heal them. I exhorted them also to thank God for these convictions, assuring them it was a token for good to their souls; for God must first smite the heart before he can heal it (Isa. xix. 2.) I generally found that they received comfort from the promises, and though they complained much of the burden of sin, and of an evil heart of unbelief, yet they always went away refreshed and comforted. Many have come to me in this manner, and more are continually coming; and though some fall off from their first convictions, yet others cleave steadfastly unto the Lord. They begin to rejoice in him, and to love him; they love his word, and meditate much on it; they exercise themselves in prayer, and adorn their profession by a suitable life and conversation.

And now let me make one reflection. I preached up sanctification very earnestly for six years, in a former parish, and never brought one soul to Christ. I did the same at this parish for two years, without any success at all; but as soon as ever I preached Jesus Christ, and faith in his blood, then believers were added to the church continually—then people flocked from all parts to hear the glorious sound of the Gospel, some coming six miles, others eight, and others ten, and that constantly.

Let me now apply myself to your own heart, and may God dispose you to receive my words in the spirit of meekness. Indeed, dear sir, I love and respect you, else I would not have written to you so freely. Are you, then, in the same error that I was in, for nearly forty years, viz, that you must be saved partly by faith and partly by works? And have you constantly preached this doctrine? Then you may be certainly assured of these two things: first, that you never yet brought one soul to Christ by your ministry; and secondly, that you are not yet in the way to salvation yourself. Oh! be not displeased with me for telling you the truth.

But you will say, perhaps, that you have not only been sincere, but ever zealous in preaching the word of God. So was I; but there is a zeal which is not according to knowledge, and that zeal I had, though I knew it not. You may say further that you have read and prayed much. So have I; but still I knew nothing as I ought to know, until God was pleased to show me that I was blind, and then I cried heartily to Him for light and direction, and he opened my eyes. (John ix. 39.) . . . Dear sir, will you attend to the following advice? It is a very safe advice, be the state of your soul what it may—pray to God to lead you into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Beseech God to keep you in the truth, if you have received it; or if you are in error, to reveal it unto you. If you will do this heartily and constantly, God will not suffer you to abide long in the darkness—if, indeed, you are in darkness. (Jas. v. 1.) I now proceed to give you some further account of myself and of the impediments which kept me from the truth. When I first came to the University, I applied myself diligently to my studies, thinking human learning to be a necessary qualification for a divine, and that no one ought to preach unless he had taken a degree in the University. Accordingly, I studied the classics, mathematics,

philosophy, logic, metaphysics, and the works of our most eminent divines; and this I did for twenty years, and all the while was departing more and more from the truth, as it is in Jesus, and hoping to receive that light and instruction from human wisdom which could only be had from the word of God.

During this time, I was thought a Methodist by some people, only because I was a little more grave, and took more pains in my ministry than some of my brethren; but in truth I was no Methodist at all, for I had no acquaintance with them, and could not abide their fundamental doctrine of justification by faith, and thought it a presumption in any to preach unless he had taken holy orders. But when God pleased to open mine eyes about half a year ago, He showed and taught me otherwise. Now I saw that nothing had kept me so much from the truth as a desire for human wisdom—now I perceived it was difficult for a wise or a learned man to be saved—as it was for a rich man or a nobleman. (1. Cor. i. 26.) I saw that God chose the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, and plain reasons. 1st. That no flesh glory in his presence. (1 Cor. i. 31.) 2dly. That faith did not stand in not produced by the wisdom of men, but stood in the power of God. (1 Cor. i. 24.)

Now I discovered that no one could understand the word of God but by the Spirit of God. (1 Cor. ii. 12.) I saw that every believer was anointed with the Holy Spirit, and thereby led into the knowledge of all needful truths. (John ii. 20.) and of course the every man who had the gift of utterance.

Now I saw that the Methodist doctrine of Justification by faith was the very doctrine of the Gospel; and I did no longer wonder at the success which those preachers met with, whether they were clergymen or laymen. They preached Christ's doctrines, and Christ owned it, so that many were added to the faith daily.

And now, dear sir, let me open my sin and my shame unto you. I solemnly subscribed to the articles of our Church, and gave my hearty assent and consent to them. Amongst the rest, I declared that we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works and deservings; and that we are justified by faith only, as it is expressed in the Eleventh Article. But though I solemnly subscribed to this article, I neither believed or preached it, but preached salvation partly by faith and partly by works. And oh! what dreadful hypocrisy—what shameful prevarication was this! I called, and thought myself a churchman, though I was really a dissenter and a schismatic; for I was undermining the fundamental doctrine of the Gospel, namely justification by faith only.

If you read over the homilies of the Church—if you read over the Fathers of the Church—if you read the works of the good old bishops that were published a hundred years ago, you will there find the Gospel of Christ preached, and the true doctrine of our Church. But since that time, I mean in the last century, our clergy have been gradually departing more and more from our doctrines, articles, and homilies; so that at length there was scarce a clergyman to be found, but who preached contrary to the articles he subscribed. And almost all the sermons that have been published in the last century, both by bishops and curates, are full of the soul-destroying doctrine, that we are to be justified partly by our own works, and partly by Christ's merits.

Do you ask how all the clergy came to fall into this pernicious doctrine? I answer, Very easily. Every man, whilst he continues under the power of the carnal mind, and is not awakened to see his utterly lost condition, is not really disposed to

embrace this doctrine. For not being convinced by the Spirit of God, that all his righteousness is as filthy rags, (Isa. lxiv. 6.) I say, not being convinced of this, he naturally goes about to establish some righteousness of his own, and cannot submit to the righteousness of God by faith. Not being yet sensible of his utterly lost and helpless state, he must have some reliance on himself; and thus, instead of looking wholly to Jesus Christ for salvation, he looks partly to Christ and partly to himself; instead of seeking for righteousness and strength from the Lord Jesus Christ, he seeks for it partly from Christ and partly from himself; instead of seeking to be justified in the Lord, he seeks after justification partly through the Lord and partly through himself. But see what Christ says of this matter (Isa. xiv. 22—25.) And now let me ask how the whole Church of Rome happened to depart from the simplicity of the Gospel, and to fall into this doctrine of works and faith which we now preach? It was owing to the depraved nature of man, which makes him think himself to be something, and that he can do something, though he is nothing, and can do nothing to justify himself in God's sight.

At the Reformation our Church returned again to Jesus Christ, and placed justification on the Gospel footing of faith only. And so it continues to this day; but though our homilies continue sound and evangelical, yet our clergy have departed more and more from both, and are advancing to Rome again with hasty strides; preaching, in spite of articles and subscription, the same pernicious doctrine of justification by works and faith. Which doctrine, I am persuaded, no one can hold, and be in a state of salvation. But I trust God is once more visiting in mercy, our poor distressed Church. . . . I have sent you a couple of books, and a pamphlet, and I make you a present of them. Read them over carefully; and before you begin to read, at any time, look up to the Fountain of wisdom for light and direction. For if you rely on your own abilities, or other men's labour, God may keep you ignorant of His glorious Gospel, as a punishment for your presumption and neglect of Him.

When I sat down to write, I did not intend to have filled more than half a sheet; but when I took my pen in hand, I knew not how to lay it aside. I have written my sentiments with great freedom, and I hope, without offence. May God give a blessing to what I have written. May He enlighten your eyes, as he hath done mine; adored be His name! May He lead you by His Spirit to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and make you instrumental in bringing souls from darkness into light, and translating them out of the kingdom of Satan into the glorious Kingdom of His dear Son. Amen! amen!

JOHN BERRIDGE.

## For the Young.

### GETTING AND EDUCATION.

William was born among the woods of New Hampshire. His parents were industrious people, who found it hard to support a large family on a small farm. The boys were put early to work; and some had, young in life, to leave home and seek their fortune elsewhere.

There was no school-house near; so Will had no schooling, or next to none. But he had a Sabbath school, and the little boy was constant there. It had no interesting library, however, as your has. "We, I dare say, should have thought it rather a poor Sabbath school. But God's Spirit was there, and that always makes a good Sabbath school. Will's teacher was an old man who loved God, and taught his little scholars God's love to them in sending his dear Son, Jesus Christ, to be their Friend and Saviour.

One day he said to the little boys, "We must try to be useful." It is a short and