

The Provincial Wesleyan.

Published under the direction of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of Eastern British America.

Volume XX. No. 37.

HALFAX, N. S., WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1868.

Whole No 996

Religious Miscellany.

For the Provincial Wesleyan.

The Master's Dwelling.

By MARY E. HERRERT.

"Master, where dwellest thou?" St. John 1:28.

"I dwell in the high and lofty place, with him who is a Father and a Son, and who is the Father of the Fatherless."

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lean thy head upon my breast; didst sink back with a deep sigh; thou didst—yes, it is all over, thou art dead.

W. I am not dead, and if I see thee, then do I really dream?

W. Thou dreamest not, for thou art awake.

W. Or art thou sent down from heaven to earth, that I should see thee again for a short time, and then ascend through long years of absence?

W. No, henceforth we shall never separate. I am indeed sent to thee, but not down upon the earth. Look around thee here; where upon earth thou hast seen such trees, such waters? Look at thyself; thou didst go about yonder, bowed beneath the weight of years. Now thou art young again. Thou dost not walk, thou dost float; thy eyes are not only open, but so immeasurably far. Look inward upon thyself; has it always been with thy heart as now?

W. Within me is a deep, unfathomable, ever-swelling, and yet entirely still and peaceful sea. Yes, when I look about me here, and when I feel thy hand in mine, then I must say I am indeed, I am in heaven.

W. Thou art.

W. And then I must be actually dead?

W. Thou art. Hast thou not lain sick in that chamber where I died, and whether thou didst long to be brought? Hast thou not by day and night, without leaving thy side, sincerely and tenderly nursed thee? Hast thou not by day and night found upon the blue eyes of thy daughter, in which she vainly strove to hold back the forth-coming tears? Was there not a deep mist, and utter darkness spread over the faces of thy children, and over everything around thee?

W. I am dead! Lord of life and death, upon my knees I thank thee that thou hast fulfilled this so great thing in me—that thou hast led me to such high happiness, to such great honor; dead, and happy to be dead! Thou knowest, O Lord, how often that moment stood before me; how often I have prayed that thou thyself, since I was not able to do it, wouldst prepare me for that hour; that thou wouldst send me a soft, blessed death. Now, O Lord, thou hast heard this, as all my other prayers; thou hast in this, in all things, eternally shown thyself gracious and pitiful. What stood before me is now over—Truly, though dead, I have not yet learned exactly what death is; but this much I know, death is sweet. As one bears a sleeping child out of a dark chamber into a bright spring garden, so now thou bringest me from earth to heaven. But now, loved one, hold me no longer back.

W. Withier wouldst thou go?

W. I had not expected it. That, however, was wrong; only one I have. But the dear soul which I left behind me on earth, I would have some tidings of it; or is the perception of them lost to us until the moment of reunion?

W. This question thou mayst speedily answer for thyself. Look thither.

W. I do so, but I see nothing.

W. Look longer in this direction, and you will surely see. Dost thou see now?

W. Perfectly. The place is familiar to me. It is in the church-yard, where I placed thy mortal part, which was given back to the earth. The place bears dear to me; I often sought it; kneeling upon the grave, I raised my eyes heavenward to heaven, where we both are now. Among beautiful trees and flowers, I thought, may she be wandering there; among trees and flowers shall her body rest. So a flower garden and a wilderness of blossoms spring up, and every beautiful thing which the anniversary brought with it, I see and smell.

W. I know it well. Look thitherward now. What seeest thou?

W. Near thy grave another is open. The church-yard gate stands open, a corpse is borne forward; our children follow. Do ye weep, loved ones, weep so bitterly? Could ye see us as we see you? you would not weep, or at the most only for longing. The body—my body, is lowered now; it is cast a handful of dust upon the coffin.

W. How is it closed, now rests my dust by thee. Go home now, ye loved ones, and may the fragrance of that heavenly peace which we enjoy glide to your souls. But return hitherward and seek the grave of your old parents. When ye meet and pray there we will be near you, and bring you heavenly gifts from the Lord. Henceforth take his hand as ye go. He will guide you safely; your old parents have proved this. And one day will be present with all together again.

W. Amen. That it will surely be.

W. Hearst thou those sounds? What may it be? Strange and wonderful, like the mingled roaring of the sea, and sweetest flute notes, they come from that quarter and float through the wide heaven. Hark! now from the other side melody arises, a wholly different note, and yet just as strange and enrapturing. What may it be?

W. They are angel choirs, which from immeasurable distance answer one another.

W. What do they say?

W. Ever of One who is the theme of eternal and endless praise.

W. For some time already a form moves about there.

W. Observe it more closely and then tell me why it attracts thee so.

W. Pardon me, who am so lately from the earth, an earthly, childish comparison. At the home where I was born—thou knowest it well, though at the time thou wast no longer on earth—I had planted a garden. As the spring came I devoted myself to its cultivation, and I enjoyed myself over my plants and their beautiful unfoldings. There were many trees there, much shrubbery, and many flowers; yet I knew every shoot; I had myself planted and watered it; each in its turn came under my inspection, and when it put on its bright green and blossomed beautifully and grew thrifty, then found I a heart-friend in it. Thus it seems to me that man is to be the gardener in this heavenly garden. He moves hither and thither quietly and in misty radiance; but one can see that every thing here is familiar to him. He casts around on all sides a satisfied and friendly glance, and appears to find joy in all creation here. My heart! I tell this moment I have felt within me only best, soothing emotions; but now heaven with its glory radiates from my sight; I see Him alone! My soul burns with longing to approach

in a much higher circle, and our children also when they left the earth. But then if only once in a thousand years I might be counted worthy to see the Lord, still methought it would be enough for me.

W. Be truthful. Whom He receives, he receives to glory. Knowest thou not by what wonderful way he has called us in his word?

W. Well do I know all that, and I see with that glory and honor He has crowned thee. Between these images in thy last sickness and that which stands revealed to me—between that perishable flower and the heavenly blossom—what a difference! No, this bloom upon thy cheek can never fade; thy light in these eyes can never be dimmed; thy form shall never be the impress of age. Thus ever will thou wander about with me here, thou wilt show me the glory of the heavenly mansions, and also will lead me to those other blessed ones who are dear to me.

W. Thou wilt see them as soon as thou hast seen the Lord.

W. How delightful was it of old when we sought our aged father in his cot. Our carriage rolled up; all came running out before the house, and among the whole troop we sought first his dear honored countenance. How much more delightful to see him here! He whom the smallest fever filled with thanks to the giver, who could find beauty in a single spire of grass, who smiled at brighter sunbeams; who went forth so joyfully under the starry heaven, and adored the Creator of these worlds—what must he experience here, where the wonders of Omnipotence lie all open and unveiled before him? He who in the silent joy of his heart thanked the Lord for his beneficence, and for the least refreshing which was granted him on his way—what thanks will be now pour forth to his Redeemer? "We shall meet again," he said to me in his last sickness, as he pressed my hand with all his remaining strength, "We shall meet again, and together thank God for his grace."

W. Thou wilt soon see him and thy mother also.

W. My mother who loved me with such unspoken tenderness, and whom I have never known! I was but three years old when I lost her. As she lay upon her death-bed, and I was playing in the garden before the house, "We will become of my poor child!" she cried—Good mother! all that a man can be thy son has become an inhabitant of heaven. Through the grace of God has this been effected, and also by the help of thy prayers. Is it not so?

W. It is even so. I have often spoken of thee with thy father and mother.

W. Is X here?

W. Yes.

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him! Yes, he is indeed one known to me, though never before seen face to face. Now he turns hitherward and looks upon us. He appears to rejoice over us. His eyes glisten with tears of joy. I can no longer restrain myself; I must do it. I must say to him that I love him as I never loved ought before. He raises his hands—how? In those hands a mark, and from the mark rays darting forth? Yes, those are the pierced, the bleeding hands. He blesses us! Deep in my heart I feel his blessing. Now know I that I am in heaven. Now know I that this is He!

W. Away, then, to him.—Translated from the German.

Religious Intelligence.

Venice.

A REMARKABLE MOVEMENT.—We insert here, says the *Christian World*, in the hope that they may be copied by our Exchanges, two brief communications respecting a marked religious movement which has been going on for six months in the City of the Sea. Gladly would this Society undertake to respond to so earnest a call, but the greatly extended work has already undertaken for the next year, prevents the doing more than heartily commending this appeal.

The first letter is from Rev. Henry Kendall, D. D., of this city. The second, from Francis Colton, Esq., of Illinois, U. S. Consul at Venice, of whom Dr. Kendall speaks as an educated Christian gentleman, most deeply interested in this movement. Dr. Kendall writes: "There is now no place in Italy where religious movements are so encouraging. Political changes, the completion of Railway connections to the Atlantic through Germany, and other causes are giving this old city new commercial importance. A line of steamers to Alexandria makes the distance to that point, and also to Palestine by sea much shorter than from Marseilles.

During the last eighteen months there has been in the city what in our country we would call a great revival of religion. Three or four hundred people gather to hear the preaching of the Word; and the number could easily be doubled if another preacher and another place were sent to the city. Nearly two hundred persons, after a careful examination, have been admitted to the Church. When the lease of the rooms they now occupy expires, the priests will doubtless take good care that these disciples shall not be able to find any other.

Mr. Colton says: "It is now less than a year and a half since an organized work was begun. In that time hundreds have listened to Gospel truth, and seem still to thirst after more. Only since December has the Church existed. It contains nearly 200 faithful Christians. We have 300 more names on the list as Catechumens, who are being faithfully instructed in the Bible, and from whose number recruits will be made to the Church when they become intelligent Christians.

Our School dates from September last. We have about 80 intelligent and earnest pupils. The Bible is our most common text-book. Music is taught in the Church and School, and if you could hear the musical Italians singing those familiar hymns, you would think you never heard such congregational music before. Mr. Van Meter, your City Missionary, went into the school the other day with me, and after hearing their repeat passages of Scriptures and sing their beautiful songs, he said "I am an old soldier in this work, but this shocks me." I cannot write fully of this work. I can only say we have at present two places of worship, in each of which, two or three times a week, there are religious exercises; besides other meetings connected with the Bible-class, etc. There are generally 200 to 400 persons in each place every evening. We have two ministers and three teachers, and soon will have a high-class teacher and organize a higher grade. The school can easily be increased to 200 or 300 if we had arrangements for school purposes. Our hall is a beautiful building, and we are now in the process of building a new one. It will be difficult to rent in future. We must have a building of our own to render permanent what, under the Providence of God, is placed in our charge. The work has grown beyond our conception. It is considered the greatest religious movement in Italy. We are not prepared for it. The question is, Will Christians in America see this great work fall for want of means? We have an opportunity to buy an old palace, containing sufficient room for a church of 400 or 500, and a hall for 100, and a place for families of two ministers, and the principal of the school; all under one roof admirably adapted to all purposes. All we had for about \$10,000, less than one-third the original cost of its foundation. If we have it, we must have money immediately, and then, under God's blessing, we have a Protestant fortification in the heart of the old city!

We have passed through one crisis, when the day was too dark for mortal sight—when under the piercing eyes of priests—at a moment of great danger, the faithful and noble pastor was struck down, and for days and weeks we feared he would never assume his place again—nearly losing his eyesight at last—his sick wife succumbed to death—both his children buried in one week. Then it was dark, and the priests rejoiced and thought it was all over. But, by the mercy of God, the cloud passed away, and the work is now stronger than ever. Our crisis is now momentary.

General Miscellany.

A Plea for Feminine Adornment.

It is an exceedingly unpleasant at times to be "the observed of all observers." This is a flattering phrase. When you read of one who is placed in that position, you are apt to think it an enviable position, and you are led to wonder if the observed person did not feel pleased to know that he was the object of attention. Not always—my friend, I have heard it said by those who seem to know, that the ladies here to be looked at—that the breath of admiration is to them the breath of life—that in attaining to the position of being "the observed" they feel sufficiently rewarded for any amount of expenditure of money, time and labour upon their persons. Whenever I hear this (what appears to me to be) a derogatory assertion, I indignantly reply: "What means all this fling, dressing, oiling, jewelling, robbing—this incessant seeking after something new and prettier, I reply to that seeming sinner: 'Why, sir, it is indicative—it is just as natural for a woman to be uncomfortable when she is not neat and attractive, as it is for you to be uncomfortable when you are not sobering at, and seeking to injure her. And, sir, are you so thick-skinned as not to see that there is a beautiful philosophy connected with their dressing, which does honor to their modesty?' They know that men will look at them if possible. Hence their native modesty leads them to adorn themselves as such as possible, so that the look may be diverted from themselves to their apparel. Is not this logical? Over ornament the casket, and the result will be, that attention will be diverted from the modest jewel." My interlocutor laughed at me and said, "I was very young. I did not say anything, but I thought that I had rather be very young and possess a high opinion of a woman than be very old (in view) and meek at bar."

Julian Vargas—The Spanish Convert.

A special correspondent, in the July number of the *Christian World*, gives the following account of the imprisonment of a convert in Spain:—"The last number of the *Christian World*, which was made to a young evangelist scholarmaster imprisoned at Malaga, and awaiting his trial. News of the sentence has just been received. Seventeen months' imprisonment—such is the punishment awarded in the nineteenth century by a Spanish Court of Justice (!) on one convicted of the 'crime' of having in his possession a New Testament without notes, and some religious books not orthodox according to Rome!"

"Seventeen months' imprisonment," that is

far as being "the observed of all observers" is concerned, I believe it is joy sufficient for any right minded woman to be "the observed and loved by one true hearted man.—Meth Protestant.

Let the man's name go forth to the world, for he is a Christian hero. It is Julian Vargas, Julian—that name would so badly in Christian ears; but this Julian is no apostate, no forsaker of truth for error. Curiosity would perhaps vainly inquire something about his appearance and character. In appearance he is short of stature, delicate in frame, and ordinary in feature, but with a mild kindly expression of countenance; telling at once that he is in character tender and gentle, one lowly in his own eyes—

Excepting his persecutors, all who know this young man, but less than know him as a meek and unassuming servant of Christ. And yet, when principle is concerned, our Julian can be bold as a lion. He refused to see when warned of threatened imprisonment, for it would have been to acknowledge himself guilty of some crime. Kind friends offered to help him out of prison by means of what open dungeon doors in Spain—money. "Never," was the reply, "will I consent to its being so used for me. I am in bonds for the truth, and not for my reputation and bribery I would be set free. It would be against the will of the Lord. He who has placed me here can find means to deliver me when His will is accomplished, and His will is mine."

And it is on this man, so indefinite and so true, whose one crime is that of being a Christian, that his country inflicts the penalty of seventeen months imprisonment at (we wish to know) the instigation and the command of that which knows no law, has no pity—the Romish priesthood of Spain.