

## Pastor and People.

### EVENING SONG.

When all the weary flowers,  
Worn out with sunlit hours,  
Droop o'er the garden beds  
Their sleepy heads,  
The dusky dusk on quiet wings comes stealing;  
And, as the light descends,  
The shadows troop their friends  
To bring them healing.

So, weary of the light  
Of life too full and bright,  
We long for night to fall  
To wrap us from it all;  
Then Death on dewy wings draws near and holds us,  
And, like a kind friend come  
To children far from home,  
With love enfolds us.

But, when the night is done,  
Fresh to the morning sun,  
Their little faces yet  
With night's soft dew drops wet,  
The flowers awake to the new day's new graces.  
And we—ah! shall we, too,  
Turn to a day-dawn new  
Our tear-wet faces.

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

### THE INNER CHAMBER.

BY REV. JOSEPH HAMILTON.

It seems to me that the house where death has entered for the time is hallowed ground. It reminds me of the Jewish temple of old. You know that the temple had three grades of sacredness. There was the outer court of the temple where everybody might go. Then there was the holy place, devoted to sacrifice and worship. Then there was the inner shrine, the holy of holies, where only the high priest might go, and where God's presence was visibly revealed. So the outer premises of the house where death has entered seem to me like the outer court of the temple; the house itself is like the holy place; and the inner chamber of the dead is like the holy of holies. In that holy of holies we come very near to the divine. In that chamber of death two worlds meet. It is the border-land of the seen and the unseen. In that sacred chamber the rude noises of the world may well be hushed, that we may hear the voices that speak to us from the unseen and the eternal. We may well feel there as Moses did when that solemn voice was heard that made him pause, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place where thou standest is holy ground."

Mimico.

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

### TRUE RELIGION.

BY REV. EDWARD ANTON.

There is an inestimable blessedness in true religion. It is indeed the most joyful thing that has ever come to the heart of mankind. It puts its possessor in full harmony with the divine order of things on earth and in heaven. True religion brings a man peace with God, and into gracious relation with his fellows. It is rooted in the deepest convictions of one's own moral and spiritual imperfection. Nay, it begins in a startling overpowering sense of the exceeding frailty of our nature. With this there is a strong, sincere desire to be what in our best moments we wish to be and what an unbiassed conscience tells us we ought to be. And then there comes in faith the belief that in Jesus Christ all sinners have a refuge, the belief that there is grace in Jesus Christ to keep us from falling, that the Holy Spirit can give us the grace of self-control, so that the man with true religion in his heart will not be carried about by every wind of passion, envy, lust and pride. Blessed are the people that know the joyfulness of such a religion as this; they shall indeed walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance.

All the same, all who know the infinite blessedness of true religion will be most forward to denounce and decry religion as it exists in spurious forms. Religion in false

and unreal forms is no friend to the welfare of the men who are swayed by its influence. If there be dead formality, heartless indifference where there ought to be real feeling, quick and true, then our religion is one of our soul's greatest enemies. The exposure of all forms of unreality makes one of the strongest claims upon true religion. Religion in its reality, sincerity and depth is one of the greatest blessings that can be enjoyed by any living soul. But religionism, the spurious and bastard form of the genuine article, is the direst foe to human progress, and is deservedly exposed to the ridicule and contempt of men. We may say with a robust writer who never minced his meaning:

"All hail, religion: maid divine,  
To stigmatize false friends of thine  
Can ne'er defame thee."

One feature of a true and happy religion is well indicated in the second verse of the eighty-ninth Psalm, where the writer declares "thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens." In the very heart of all true religion, there lies our keeping in constant, daily, conscious, living relations with the living God. There can only be true religion when one endures from day to day, as seeing Him who is invisible. The Lord God, says the Psalmist, is a sun and shield. He is indeed a daily sun and shield to every soul that looks up to Him. To many persons, a day without a sight of the sun does not give them a moment's disappointment or regret. But there is a line of life in which thousands and thousands of souls find a living shield from harassment, anxiety and care in a daily sight of the sun. To the masters of the thousands of vessels that are every hour making their way across the trackless ocean, between the hours of ten and twelve, there comes more or less of anxiety until they successfully take the sun. The conditions under which this is done are not easy. Sometimes, the master can see the sun, but not the horizon. Sometimes there is a clear horizon and no sun, sometimes there is neither for days. Without a sight of the sun, its exact height above the horizon at a given moment of time, no master can be sure where he is. He is always more or less in doubt and in anxiety for the welfare of his ship. Not to see the sun, not to have the help of the sun, each day, as a shield from the many grave dangers of the ocean is a distress, and may become a disaster. And herein is an important lesson for earnest and truly serious souls. We know that there are thousands around us who never make it their daily concern to find out where they are and how they are by a look of faith towards God. They steer their bark without any daily reference to the living God. Rocks, icebergs, dangerous sands mean nothing to them. But do we who are identified with Christ's Church, do we see to it that we keep a daily correspondence with heaven? Many, alas, too soon forget their first love, and allow themselves to live, not one day but many days, without sight of the light of the countenance of God. Yet that daily sight of God's blessed sun is a daily shield from daily care to every child of God. When he knows where he is, he is the happiest and most blessed of men. A daily sight of God's own blessed face as we see it in the gracious face of His dear Son will be to each one a daily shield from daily care and anxiety, from fear and danger. That daily adjustment of our course with the unchangeable Standards of heaven will bring every living soul the greatest possible contentment and delight. There can then be no doubt as to where we are in right doing, and thinking, and feeling, and if we have fallen away from the truest course, it can only happen within twenty-four hours. God only requires us so to steer our daily course as to do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with Him, and this can be done by all those who daily see to it that they have a sight of God's gracious face. Such a daily vision is needed, and for each day God will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly.

Surely there are in these simple considerations reasons and an inspiration for the cultivation of a daily walking with God. This is the secret of a happy, joyous religious life. Many are the trials through which we have to go. Distress in our business and death in our homes make sad havoc of our souls. Still, let us through all see to it that we are in constant and right relations with the living God, that we never let a day pass without asking a sight of His face. In this we shall find our only true and sufficient shield from the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, from storm and strife, from sorrow and pain. May nothing disturb our deepest conviction and loftiest faith that, in the words of one who slaved deeply and wrote so bravely and well,

A correspondence fix'd wi' Heaven  
Is sure a noble anchor.

Merrickville, Ont.

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

### A RESTING PLACE FOR WEARY SOULS.

BY REV. JOHN BURTON, B.D.

The excitement of the general election is past, the chagrin of defeat has settled down to the work of opposition (not factious, it is to be hoped), new hands at administration are preparing for work, and the general public are awaiting, not without a tinge of impatience in their expectation, the advent of "the good time coming." Meanwhile the dog days are upon us, and what summer recreation can be snatched from business and from household cares must now at once be taken or forgotten. This is no time for heavy thinking, the heart and mind are craving rest. Yet to the live soul, listlessness is not rest; even while swinging in a hammock under leafy shadows, beside rippling waters, thought will wing its fancy flight or dream its mystic themes. May we venture a sober, quiet theme, a resting place for weary souls?

"There is a stream whose gentle flow  
Supplies the city of our God:  
Life, love and joy, still gliding through,  
And watering our divine abode."

Or, gentle reader, do you prefer the more rugged and stronger:

"A river is whose streams do glad  
The city of our God,  
The holy place wherein the Lord  
Most High hath His abode."

Either or both as you will, with an old English rendering to boot: "The rivers of the flood thereof shall make glad the city of God: the holy place of the tabernacle of the most Highest;" and this latter rendering has its own suggestiveness. The raging waters, the swelling floods, have no terror to those whose refuge is the Rock of Ages; the very streams which from those torrents flow shall make glad: "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Jerusalem, the city of the type, had no living stream. One only fountain there was, brooks whose summer courses were dry, and cisterns supplied the rest. The force of the figure of our Psalm is in the contrast; our Jerusalem has floods of holy influences ever flowing; even the mountain torrent ministers thereunto. Unlike Siloam, a half stagnant, intermittent pool, or the rock-cut reservoirs whose stored up waters foul; or the Kidron rivulet bemired with the city's filth, and dry in summer months; our city has a perennial source of sparkling water, streams of refreshing from even the tempest's overflow. Much more surely than Hotspur could pluck safety from the nettle danger can the Christian find rest in the midst of life's worry and frequent disappointments.

True, too many of us have but intermittent streams in our Jerusalem; some, alas, have cisterns broken; with many the waters are sluggish and dull; but, as a recent writer observes, no Christian has a right to go below par in his spiritual life. What a strange heaven if the angels round the throne did not feel up to the singing or service mark, or the hosts to feel the chill of neglect. We have a river, abiding there we need never be without the water-springs, and

Christian service languishes simply because we turn from the living fountains to the desert of mere earthly wastes and follow the mirage phantoms of our own devices. No age more needs on the part of those who bear the Christian name than this, to keep close in all our living to that river whose streams gladden. We too forsake the living streams and hew out to ourselves cisterns dry and broken where no water is.

"O Thou who keep'st the key of Love,  
Open Thy fount, eternal dove,  
And overflow this heart of mine,  
Enlarging as it fills with Thee,  
Till in one blaze of charity  
Care and remorse are lost, like motes in light divine."

### INFIDELITY AND POVERTY.

A man who had charge of a sort of refuge or shelter for the homeless in Boston, told me that he had about three thousand such persons pass through his hand in one winter, about eighty a day.

"How many Christians did you find among them?" I asked.

"Not one," was the answer.

Among the wild theorists who cry out for land, and wish to confiscate property, you find few Christians. Why? Because Christians usually have all the land they need, and can get more if they want it, as others could, if they would break their bottles, throw away their pipes, serve the Lord, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world.

The principles of Christianity are adapted to the elevation and improvement of the poor. Athelism and infidelity in all forms tend to produce poverty and crush the poor.

The late Bishop Thompson, in his "Moral and Religious Essays," gives an account of an influential, intelligent, and strong-minded infidel in Ohio, who gathered about him a community of unbelievers whose religious views corresponded with, and were largely moulded by his own. He took pride in his benevolence and kindness to the poor.

Soon the drafts on his liberality became so numerous as to awaken the inquiry: "How does it happen that this community is becoming more and more thriftless, while prosperity abounds among people who live near?"

Prosecuting this investigation thoroughly, he discovered that in homes where the Bible is found, and well used, there was no want, but where the Bible was absent he found present or approaching poverty. Soon after an itinerant preacher came to hold services in a school-house, and when "Jewell follows of the baser sort" sought to break up the meeting and drive away the minister, this champion of infidelity defended him and said to his infidel neighbors:

"I have been abroad among you, and find that you who revere the Bible live in prosperity; you who despise it are approaching pauperism, if not actually in distress. I am alarmed at what I have done: I have made you infidels, but in doing so have I not ruined you? Many of you are young men of good minds. I have a family of daughters, but I would rather follow them all to the grave than see them united in marriage to you. Henceforth I will be a friend of the Bible; it is the instrument of good."—Hastings.

A blind and cowardly spirit is forever telling you that evil things are pardonable, and you shall not die for them, and that good things are impossible, and you need not live for them. . . . All things lovely and righteous are possible for those who believe in their possibility, and who determine that, for their part, they will make every day's work contribute to them. Let every dawn of morning be to you as the beginning of life, and every setting sun be to you as its close. Then let every one of these short lives leave its sure record of some kindly thing done for others—some goodly strength or knowledge gained for yourself.—Ruskin.