

The Watchman.

"I HAVE SET WATCHMEN UPON THY WALLS O JERUSALEM THAT SHALL NEVER HOLD THEIR PEACE, DAY NOR NIGHT."

VOL. I.

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No. 2.

Poetry.

'TIS HARD TO DIE.

A fair young girl in sadness lay
Upon a downy couch,
Round which the "sunset" brightly lay
Dwelt with a hazy ring of light.

"'Tis hard to die," she murmur'd soft;
"I love the shadowy glade;
I love the fields, the woods, where oft
In childhood I have stray'd."

"My cherished flowers, so sweet, so bright,
I've now for them I sigh,
Their opening buds gave me delight;
Oh! it is hard to die."

"'T is hard to die! my mother dear,
Oh! give me one fond kiss;
Fain would my spirit linger here,
To be with thee in bliss."

The mother bent her sorrowing form,
And strove the tear to hide;
Her anxious heart beat quick and warm,
For well she loved that child.

"Farewell, kind sister! once again
Told me in thy embrace;
Come nearer, come; ah! 't is in vain,
I cannot see thy face."

"Oh! pray for me," she wildly cried,
"Resign'd that I may go
To everlasting hills of peace,
Where healing waters flow."

She closed her eyes in silent prayer,
Hush'd was the last soft sigh;
Her Saviour's open arms were there;
She found it sweet to die!

H.

Miscellany.

PRAYER.

Prayer has been well defined, the offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name or through the mediation of Jesus Christ, by the help of the Holy Spirit, with a confession of our sins, and a thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.

1. Prayer is in itself a becoming acknowledgment of the all-sufficiency of God, and of our dependence upon him. It is his appointed means for the obtaining of both temporal and spiritual blessings. He could bless his creatures in another way; but he will be inquired of, to do for them those things of which they stand in need, Ezek. xxxvi. 37. It is the act of an indigent creature, seeking relief from the fountain of mercy. A sense of want excites desire, and desire is the very essence of prayer. "One thing have I desired of the Lord," says David: "that will I seek after." Prayer without desire is like an altar without a sacrifice, or without the fire from heaven to consume it. When all our wants are supplied, prayer will be converted into praise; till then Christians must live by prayer, and dwell at the mercy-seat. God alone is able to hear and to supply their every want. The revelation which he has given of his goodness lays a foundation for our asking with confidence the blessings we need, and his ability encourages us to hope for their bestowment. "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come," Ps. lxx. 2.

2. Prayer is a spiritual exercise, and can only be performed acceptably by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, Rom. viii. 26. "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is his delight." The Holy Spirit is the great agent in the work of grace, and without his special influence there is no acceptable prayer. Hence he is called the Spirit of grace and of supplication: for he it is that enables us to draw nigh unto God, filling our mouth with arguments, and teaching us to order our cause before him, Zech. xii. 10.

3. All acceptable prayer must be offered in faith, or a believing frame of mind. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: for let not the wavering man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord," James i. 5-7. "He that cometh unto God, must believe that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb. xi. 6. It must be offered in the name of Christ, believing in him as revealed in the word of God, placing in him all our hope of acceptance, and exercising unfeigned confidence in his atoning sacrifice and prevalent intercession.

4. Prayer is to be offered for "things agree-

able to the will of God." So the apostle says: "This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him," 1 John v. 14, 15. "Our prayers must, therefore, be regulated by the revealed will of God, and come within the compass of the promises. These are to be the matter and the ground of our supplications. What God has not particularly promised, he may nevertheless possibly bestow; but what he has promised he will assuredly perform. Of the good things promised to Israel of old not one failed, but all come to pass—and in due time the same shall be said of all the rest."

5. All this must be accompanied with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of God's mercies. These are two necessary ingredients in acceptable prayer. "I prayed," said the prophet Daniel, "and made confession." Sin is a burden, of which confession unloads the soul. "Father," said the returning prodigal, "I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight." Thanksgiving is also as necessary as confession; by the one, we take shame to ourselves; by the other, we give glory to God. By the one, we abase the creature, by the other, we exalt the Creator. In petitioning favors from God, we act like dependent creatures, in confession, like sinners; but in thanksgiving, like angels.

ON CHANGE OF AIR.

The effects which air, pure air, change of air, produce on the health of man; on the discharge of his mental and bodily functions; on his spirits, his temper, almost his disposition; on the vigor of his memory, the correctness of his judgment, the brilliancy of his imaginings; are too important to be passed over without notice.

"The importance of ventilation, much as it has been urged on public attention, is not yet sufficiently estimated. Are not bed rooms still built low and small? Are not beds still surrounded with closely-drawn curtains? Are not bed rooms still crammed with furniture, and their floors covered with carpeting—at times even under the beds, where a carpet is not, cannot be wanted? Do not people sleep with the door and windows of the bed-room closed, with a light, and not unoften that light gas, burning in their bed rooms? Can it be contended that they either understand ventilation, or appreciate its value?"

The atmospheric air, composed principally of two elements, oxygen and nitrogen is changed by respiration: and consisting, before inspiration, of twenty one parts of oxygen to seventy nine parts of nitrogen; it contains, after expiration, probably at the lowest computation, three and a half per cent of carbonic acid, or on an average, twenty-seven and a half cubic inches of carbonic acid are evolved from the lungs every minute, or about forty thousand cubic inches in twenty-four hours, which weigh nearly three pounds, and contain about eleven ounces of carbon.

"Now, the rapidity with which this vitiation takes place, may be conceived by knowing the fact, that at each respiration sixteen cubic inches of air are on an average, deteriorated, and that about twenty such respirations are taken in a minute; therefore three hundred and twenty cubic inches of air are each minute poisoned by every individual, and rendered unfit for the support of life. The consequences which must follow, even on a simple chemical view of the matter, if a man is confined eight hours in a shut-up bed-room, are obvious enough. But this is not all: with the expired air, a large quantity of watery vapour is exhaled from the lungs; a fact which demonstrates itself by the vapour being condensed in cold weather, and in winter, sometimes frozen, on the bed-room windows; a fact which shows itself in the dampness of the clothes, particularly woollen clothes, which have laid all night in a closely shut-up bed-room. Nor is this all: the skin is actively at work evolving its secretions, among the rest a highly volatile, and in some persons, most offensively smelling substance, which, mixing with the air taints it more and more—renders it more and more impure—more and more unfit for respiration."

"The effect of a burning candle or lamp in increasing these evils is precisely that which a second person in the room would cause, seeing that, during its combustion, it takes the oxygen from the air, and replaces it by carbonic acid. The effect of a fire, if it is a very small one, and the room large, is rather favorable to ventilation than otherwise. But this is a nice question, one with difficulty adjusted, and one which, unless the bed-room is particularly large, should

not be tried. For if the room is heated, the air is rarefied, is expanded, occupies a larger space in proportion to its weight, and, therefore, at each aspiration, less air is really breathed; the blood is consequently not so freely and completely aerated. But there is likewise another effect. If the air is heated the body is heated, the vessels of the skin excited, and the result is either an excessive secretion of its fluids, and consequent and unnecessary and injurious exhaustion, or, failing this, a hot, dry and feverish skin. But even this is not all. Blood, when heated, occupies more bulk more space, and the consequence is fulness of the vessels, and pressure on the brain and nerves, and therefore torpidity, lethargic, unrefreshing sleep, or otherwise a restless excitability of system. Both these effects must have often been felt by the man who has indulged himself with a heated bed room. These effects must have been frequently felt by most men in a hot sitting-room.

The bed-room ought not, then, to be heated, but, on the contrary, to be kept as cool as is consistent with the feelings and the health, and means ought always to be taken to secure a constant change of air in it. For these purposes, either the door ought to be left partially open, or the windows opened a little at the top. No fire ought to be allowed, unless under very particular circumstances, if the room is not unusually large, and even then the fire ought to be of as little a texture, and they ought to be as little drawn as possible; the floor only in part carpeted, and there ought to be only necessary chairs, tables, &c. A light ought not to be allowed in a bed-room, if it can be avoided; and, if it is necessary, it should be put into the fire-place."—*Dr. Robertson.*

THE LORD'S DAY.

(From the "Pearl of Days," Essay by a Laborer's Daughter.)

It needs but a glance at the toilsome life of our rural or our manufacturing population to convince any one that the Sabbath, viewed merely in relation to man's temporal well being is of great value to the working man. The important influence which the frequent return of such a day, with all its cheering and inspiring exercises and associations, must have upon the health of those who observe it, is not to be overlooked. The wearied frame is refreshed and invigorated, the depressed spirits revived, and the flagging energy restored, while its public observances call for such attention to personal appearance as cannot fail to have a beneficial effect at once upon the habits and the constitution, as also to form a strong inducement to exertion for the improvement of their condition.—Hence it is, that when we enter the house of the church-going, Sabbath-keeping laborer, we generally find a marked difference between it and the home of him who rarely or never enters a place of worship, and who regards not the sacred claims of the day.

In the house of the Sabbath-observing, church-attending laborer—even though, as is too often the case, he should know little or nothing of the vital power of religion, though its observance be mere outward observance, and his religion but form—we observe useful, though sometimes rude furniture, clothing, and food, cleanliness and comfort, a cheerful fire on the hearth, and a few books on the shelf; everything indicating some little relish for the convenience and comfort of civilized life.

On Saturday evening, there is washing and combing and brushing of flaxen heads, laying out of clean little frocks and pinafores, or jet black shoes set ready for little feet, that, without hurry of confusion, clean and neat, they may be ready on Sabbath morning to accompany father or mother, or, if possible both to the place

"Where Christians meet to praise and pray,
To hear of heaven, and learn the way."

One important advantage which is connected with the observance of the Lord's day among the laboring population, is the influence which it has in elevating the mind, character and condition of the female portion of the community. Where Christianity and its weekly rest are unknown, the condition of woman is a subject in the extreme, but the religion of Jesus raises her from her degraded situation, by calling her forward to engage in the exercises, share the instructions, and receive the influences of the Sabbath. The Lord's day calls her thinking powers into action, gives her a mind and conscience of her own, cultivates her intellectual and moral nature, and gives her to man a helpmate indeed, fitted to become, not merely his slave or his toy, but the companion of his labors and studies, his devoted friend, and his faithful and judicious adviser;

not merely the mother and nurse of his children, but their intelligent instructor and guide—the most efficient assistant in their intellectual and moral training.

METHODISTS, AND THEIR LIBERALITY.

The Methodist congregations, taken as a whole, are more liberal than those of any body. It is probably a fact, that taking them as a whole, every Methodist contributes towards gospel objects, about three times the sum that is contributed by each member of other bodies in the British Empire. Many thousands among these bodies do to their power, and beyond their power; but it may be safely asserted, that a great majority, comprising a large proportion of all the wealthy professors of this country, do nothing, or next to nothing, for the support of the gospel. The great peculiarity of Methodism is, that the scale of contribution is properly adjusted, and universally acted upon. Their avowed motto—the single secret (we speak only of human means) of their prodigious moral power is—"At it all at it! always at it!" In addition to this: the weekly penny, the quarterly shilling, and the annual subscription, all for the support of the gospel; moreover at love feasts, at festival sermons, and at the sacramental table, for the support of their poor; they support their schools in a style that may be termed princely, and they raise for the spread of the gospel in heathen lands a sum so vast, that one would think they had surely directed all the streams of their bounty to this one single object. But how can they sustain such an amount of unceasing contribution? How, after the proper maintenance of their families and credit, can they possibly maintain it? Sustain it! It sustains them! It is impoverishing none! Its great danger at this moment is from the rising respectability of the people. But after all why do we marvel to comfort conscience, and hide culpability. It is easier to wonder than to work! to gaze than to give! The Methodists do much, but they could do immensely more. Take the sum total of their congregations, and divide it by the aggregate of their numbers, and you would find the sum from each is really small. Take an equal number from equal ranks of the population, and compute the sums they spend needlessly, or hurtfully, or sinfully in various ways, and it will probably amount to seven times the sum spent by the Methodists in support of gospel institutions. Mammon has still the loaf, and Christ the crumbs. Selfishness is the antagonist of the gospel, and covetousness the enemy of the Christian church.—*Christian Witness.*

PROSE AND POETRY.

There is a plain line of demarcation between prose and poetry. Nature is the poet's teacher. Man can go no higher than his faculties, and nature is their fountain. But this line of demarcation is more a matter of feeling than demonstration. The poet's sense is pleased, injured to the rigid discipline of geometry, he is apt to regret this. And why so? At all these theories which so well indicate elevation of the Grecian genius based on axioms which derive their value from mankind's verbal perceptions of them? Why not, also, the line of demarcation between prose and poetry should be forever defined by the universal feeling of mankind?

It is said, however, that different men have different feelings; that an object strikes man as poetical, and another as prosaic; this it is obvious to reply, that almost every object may be viewed in a poetical or prosaic manner according to the will of the spectator. "A steam engine, considered as a machine for the easily attaining certain ends, is a prosaic object; but considered as the child of human genius, and multiplying the blessings of the human race, it becomes, for a moment, a poetical character, because, in this view it awakes elevated emotion. But objects are chosen poetical or prosaic, according to their tendency to awake emotion: for instance, a bonfire at sunset, or an old ruin, or school house, is a prosaic object; a cotton manufactory is a poetical object.

Poetry addresses itself to the passions, and to the reason. Poetry, in her high or walk, is adorned with the graces of fancy; in her high-er flights, she is enabled by the creations of the imagination. Prose is attended by the facts of the understanding, and is assisted, and conducted more rapidly than thought—Prose enlightens the human mind, and with images of beauty and goodness, touches the soul with sympathy, and fits it with emulation; and the moral nature of man is thus rendered more worthy of his intellectual.—*Monthly Mag.*