

POETRY.

HYMN FOR CHRISTMAS.

Isaiah ix. 2-7

The race that long in darkness pined
Have seen a glorious light;
The people now behold the dawn,
Who dwelt in death and night.
To hail thy rising, Sun of life!
The gathering nations come,
Joyous as when the reapers bear
Their harvest treasure home.
For thou our burden hast removed;
The oppressor's reign is broke;
Thy fiery conflict with the foe
Has burst his cruel yoke.
To us the promised Child is born;
To us the Son is given;
Him shall the tribes of earth obey,
And all the hosts of heaven.
His name shall be the Prince of Peace,
For evermore adored;
The Wonderful, the Counsellor,
The mighty God, and Lord.
His power increasing still shall spread,
His reign no end shall know;
Justice shall guard his throne above,
And peace abound below.

FOR THE END OF THE YEAR.

Time hastens on, ye longing saints,
Now raise your voices high;
And magnify that sovereign love
Which shows salvation nigh.
As time departs salvation comes,
Each moment brings it near;
Then welcome each declining day;
Welcome each closing year.
Not many years their course shall run,
Not many mornings rise,
Ere all its glory stand reveal'd
To our transported eyes.

MISCELLANEOUS.

ITCHING EARS.

"The desire of hearing is often, we fear, indulged at too great an expense."

The desire alluded to, in the above quotation from the Pastoral Letter of the General Association of Massachusetts, is one of the striking characteristics of the religion of not a few at the present day. And no desirable one either, in the aspect it has often presented itself to our minds. It is indulged at too great an expense.

1. To the hearers themselves. There are many of the disciples who seem to place a good part of their Christianity in hearing. The Pastor must preach three times on the Sabbath, and almost three times three during the week, to satisfy them. They lay mountains of emphasis on the passage 'faith cometh by hearing.' They run from sermon to sermon, from one meeting to another, as if every season of hearing was an indispensable drop in the cup of salvation.

There is an evil in this excessive desire to hear. It leaves no opportunity to think, and takes away all disposition to do so. The mind is not allowed to drink of the living waters of the truth; it is submerged in their overwhelming abundance. It cannot sit down to digest its spiritual food; it must be on the wing for some fresh burden for the already overloaded sto-

mach. There is such a restless, craving, morbid appetite for some thing new, that the soul gets no real and solid good from the spiritual food already taken. Hence, the spiritual system cannot have the vigor and solidity it would otherwise have. That disciple may spindle up into something lofty, but he will not have the strong roots and firm heart of an oak. More. That disciple becomes a spiritual cripple by leaning on his privileges and never learning to go alone. You must nurse him every day with sermons and the like, or he will starve to death. Well, let him die then, if that will kill him. And let him rise out of this spiritual sepulchre, new born, awakened to a kind of spiritual life, which shall have some strong points of contrast to the former. Let him learn to feed himself by his own deep thoughts on God's word, and by communion with him, and by a proper use of a tolerable number of his means of grace. Let him learn to help himself to spiritual refreshment and not be forever dependant on the Pastor, or some one else to put it into his mouth.

2. There is an evil to ministers in this morbid appetite for hearing in their people. They feel, some at least, that they must gratify it. A meeting must be had, and a sermon preached, or something equivalent to it, at the bidding of any and all that call for it.—They must sling morsels, they think, into every mouth that opens itself, though perfectly satisfied that satiety and not starvation is the reason why many birds of the flock open their bills. This effort cuts up time sadly; and thus prevents regular and devoted systematic study. The mind cannot be enriched with knowledge therefore. The streams exhaust the fountain. The well will not bear this incessant pumping. Their pulpit services show at length that they have been flying all over the parish all the week. Instead of preparing 'beaten oil' for the sanctuary, they have been beating themselves as thin as gold leaf, in their effort to spread themselves far and wide, enough to reach all the unreasonable claims upon them. They cannot concentrate their energies in any one direction, however important. Pulpit services, preeminent in importance, the chief work of the Pastor, are diluted, become imbecile, lose their high moral power, do not attract, and powerfully sway the public mind. Sermons become lean, very lean, and not the strong bulls of Bashan, as they should be.—The minds of the people are not roused therefore; for the great agency in doing it, a well sustained pulpit, has lost a large measure of its power.

We could mention other evils of an excessive desire of hearing; but the above must now suffice; intimating that having started the game we should be glad to see others give chase, should they be satisfied, the spoils would pay for their troubles.—Boston Recorder.

"I JUST DID."

Yes, you just did,—and did wrong! How many have had to regret that they just did the very things they ought not to have done.

A little girl just left the baby one minute, sitting alone on a chair, while she went to get a pin. Before she returned, the baby had fallen from the chair, and was severely injured on the head.

The cook just left the street door open one minute while she ran down to the corner grocery, and when she returned, the hall lamp was stolen.

A hack driver, just left his horses one minute, while he went into a store to get a "glass." Before he had half drunk his rum, his horses were frightened and running down the street, broke the coach to pieces and injured many people who could not get out of the way.

A servant girl just left a salver filled with china, one minute on the edge of a table, while she ran to the door. A little girl, standing by, just pulled the salver upon the floor. The china was broken, the little girl badly hurt, and the servant lost her place for her carelessness.

Some boys thought they would just take a little sail in a boat one Sabbath afternoon. A sudden squall of wind struck the sail, upset the boat, and only two boys escaped alive.

A man who had a lighted cigar in his mouth stepped into a barn a minute, and did not notice a spark had fallen amongst the hay on the floor. Half an hour the barn and many loads of grain were all burned to the ground.

How many more such careless acts I might mention, I cannot tell now, but I have told of enough to make you more careful, if you don't only just lay this, lay it down, and think of it no more.—Christ

A GOOD WIFE.

She loves her home, believing with Milton,
"The wife, where danger and dishonour lurks,
Safest and sweetest by her husband stays,
Who guards her, or with her the worst endures."

The place of women is eminently at the home. It is at home you must see her to know what she is abroad; but in the family circle is all-important. It is her to pay a price for other men's opinions. In matrimony, she selects a wife for the applause or wonder of her neighbours is in a fair way toward domestic ruin. Having got a wife, there is but one way to improve her—stand by her. Strive to make her more such a one as you can cordially rely upon. Shame on the brute in man's shape, who can neglect the woman who is to be his partner for life, "for better, for worse, and whose happiness, if severed from his, must be unnatural and monstrous. In fine, can wives.—Epis. Rec.

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