

REV. SAMUEL ALLCORN.

Western Christian Advocate.

Mr Wesley, in the days of early Methodism, was in the practice of sending preachers from England to Ireland, as the wants of Ireland demanded, and as the supply from England could be spared. Among those sent was Samuel Allcorn, a sweet singer in Israel, with a fine, melodious voice; young, of excellent talents, deep piety, a prepossessing appearance, and withal, profoundly skilled both in instrumental and vocal music. He took passage in the packet that sailed from Liverpool to Dublin, not in the great cabin, but in a humbler part of the ship. The cabin was filled with the gentry and nobility of the highest rank. They soon ascertained that a Methodist preacher was on board. The spontaneous and general inference was, that he must be a singer of hymns and psalms. One said "let us send for him and hear him sing." This was responded to at once by the whole company. A message was communicated to Mr. Allcorn, that the gentlemen and ladies in the cabin desired to see him. When he entered the cabin in the herald of the company announced to him the reason why they had sent for him, and employed language something like the following: "Sir, we learned that you are a Methodist preacher. We have been informed that the Methodists are great singers, and this report was confirmed by all that heard them. But we desire to hear for ourselves. And it is our respectful request to you that you would gratify us so far as to sing for us just as the Methodists sing." To this the pious and polite Allcorn immediately responded, that he would sing for them precisely as the Methodists sing. Then with his well tuned and sweet voice he sang one of the best songs of Zion, whether "Wrestling Jacob," or "No room for mirth and trifling here," or the song that ends, "Turn, and look upon me Lord, and break this heart of stone," we are not now prepared to say, as the twenty-four years now past, tinging our head with grey, have dimmed a few of the incidents of the narrative; but the leading facts are indented in our mind, and will be while memory lasts. Allcorn, however, sang, and the Holy Spirit helped him to sing. The spirit was in the song, and followed the words to the hearts of the charmed, and the already convinced audience. The preacher saw and felt that God was in the singing, and before he had half finished his delightful performance, he saw the victory was won, and he calculated in his mind that the door was open and the path plain to proceed; he therefore ventured to enter and occupy the field.

When he had finished his hymn all stood amazed, delighted, yet thunderstruck. He then proposed as follows: "Gentlemen and ladies, I have now sung for you just as the Methodists are accustomed to sing; and as you have been so kind as to listen attentively, with your leave I will pray as the Methodists pray, for they always, when they can, join singing with prayer." To this all assented without hesitancy, and the preacher sent up his petitions to Heaven most devoutly in behalf of his audience.

When he had done praying, he next proposed that with their consent he would preach for them as the Methodists preach. To this they also readily assented. Our preacher improved the opportunity, preached to them the gospel, sang again, and prayed, and concluded his religious exercises in duo form. At the earnest solicitations of the whole company, he continued the exercises of singing, prayer and preaching, during the voyage at such intervals as could be spared from meals and a little sleep. The result was that deep and serious impressions were made on the minds of all present, the consequences of which can be known only in the day of judgment. It was with great regret the distinguished passengers parted with their sweet singer when the packet arrived at Dublin.

But our preacher, like Philip, who after the baptism of the eunuch was caught away to Azotus, proceeded on his errand as Heaven gave him direction. He hastened to the market places, and preached Christ, and repentance, and remission, and holiness, and a present, full, and free salvation to Protestant and Catholic. He would first, standing on a block-stone, chair, or other elevation, sing, and by this means a great crowd would immediately assemble. He would then shut his eyes and pray, regardless of the unseemly missiles which some of the baser sort would throw at him. Then he would preach, and those whom the preaching did not interest enough to stay, would be induced to remain in order to hear the last hymn. Thus he proceeded, sometimes mobbed, but mostly protected by the royal artillery, who voluntarily defended him and his associates in their ministrations.

Shortly after he had landed, he commenced his religious exercises in the market-place in a certain town, the precise one where, memory refuses to tell. The young, dashing Mathew Stuart, of the royal artillery, just enlisted, lately from college, where he had graduated was then quartered in town. He heard one market-day sweet singing, such as he never had heard, at some distance. Attracted by its melody, he pressed through the thick crowds, the voice conducting him as by a thread through the labyrinths formed by stalls and venables. When he came near to the performer, the novel sight struck him forcibly. It was Allcorn, singing his introductory hymn. The crowds were collecting; the friendly dra-

goons, some of whom were truly pious, were drawing near the chair on which the preacher stood, and away at the outskirts the base ones were forming their plan of attack, and collecting their missiles. But the preacher proceeded. He finished his song, sent his prayer up to heaven, fully interceded, opened his Bible, took his text and was preaching in wondrous strains. The hymn, the prayer, and the partly finished sermon, had already cut the young collegian to the heart; he stood beside the preacher, holding his great helmet, with brazen peak in his left hand. His attention was for a moment drawn by the approach of the vile assailants, whose chief led the way, and was preparing to strike the unresisting preacher. But young Stuart, on turning round, perceived the meditated attack, and with the brazen peak of his massy helmet sorely wrecked the assailant's face. With his right hand he then drew his sword, and threatened excision to the ruffian, unless he immediately desisted, which he did without delay. The preacher paused only to say, "Young man, put thy sword into its sheath—our weapons are not carnal, but mighty." The sword was put in its place. The young soldier was thoroughly convinced of sin; within a short time he experienced the power of religion, and immediately commenced preaching Christ. After a few weeks he obtained a furlong, went on Enniskillen circuit, in military attire, horse and all; within a few months he obtained a dismissal from the army, and gave himself up entirely to the minister's work. For upwards of forty years he kept the itinerant field, and died at last in peace, with the harness on, being the instrument of salvation to many thousands of sinners. Allcorn continued his course, and employed his fine powers in singing, praying and preaching for the conversion of souls.

SATURDAY NIGHT.—It is good when the week is ended, to look back upon its toils, and mark wherein we have failed of our duties or come short of what we should have done.—The close of the week should be to each one of us like the close of our lives. Every thing should be adjusted with the world and with our God, as if we were about to leave the one and appear before the other. The week is indeed, one of the regular divisions of life, and when it closes, it should not be without its moral. From the end of one week to that of another, the mind can easily stretch forward to the close of existence. It can sweep down the stream of time to the distant period when it will be entirely beyond human power to regulate human affairs. Saturday is the time for moral reflections. When for the mercies of the week we are thankful, and when our past months and years come up in succession before us—we see the vanity of our youthful days, and the vexation of manhood, and tremble at the approaching winter of age,—it is then we should withdraw from the business and cares of the world, and give a thought to our end, and what we are to be hereafter.—[Anon.]

THE LOSS OF CHRISTIANITY.—With the removal of the Gospel of Christ must be the departure of whatever is most precious in the possession of a people. It is not merely that Christianity is taken away,—though who shall measure, who imagine the loss, if this were indeed all?—but it is, that God must frown on a land from which he hath been provoked to withdraw his Gospel; and that, if the frown of the Almighty rest on a country, the sun of that country's greatness goes rapidly down, and the dreariness of a moral midnight fast gathers above it and around it. Has it not been thus with countries, and with cities, from which, on account of their impieties and impurities, the candlestick has been removed? The seven churches of Asia—where are the cities whence they drew their names?—cities that teemed with inhabitants, that were renowned for arts, and which served as centres of civilisation to far-spreading districts? Did the unchurching these cities leave them their majesty and prosperity? did the removal of the candlestick leave undimmed their political lustre? Ask the traveller who gropes painfully his way over prostrate columns, and beneath crumbling arches, having no index but ruins to tell him that a kingdom's dust is under his feet; and endeavouring to assure himself, from the magnitude of the desolation, that he has found the site of a once-splendid metropolis. The cities, with scarce an exception, wasted, from the day when the candlestick was removed, and grew into monuments—monuments whose marble is decay, and whose inscription devastation—telling out to all succeeding ages, that the readiest mode in which a nation can destroy itself, is to despise the Gospel with which it has been entrusted; and that the most fearful vial which God can empty on a land, is that which extinguishes the blessed shinnings of Christianity.—Rev. H. Melville.

THE BEAUTY OF PRAYER.—O, the easy and happy recourse, the poor soul hath to the high throne of Heaven! We stay not for the holding out of a golden sceptre to crave our admission, before which our presence would be presumption and death. No hour is unseasonable, no person too base, no words too homely, no fact too hard, no opportunity too great. We speak familiarly; we are heard, answered, comforted. Another while, God interchangeably speaks unto us, by the secret voice of his Spirit, or by the audible sound of his Word; we hear, adore, answer him; by both which the mind so communicates itself to God, and bath God so plentifully communicated unto it,

that hereby it grows to such a habit of heavenliness, as that now it wants nothing, but dissolution, of full glory.—Joseph Hall.

BIRDS IN WAR. The heaven was dark and the earth cloudy; grief, and pain, and death were on its surface, whence clouds of fire and smoke went up unto the clear sky; man was contending with man, and both perishing in the struggle. But around them was a realm of peace, the lark soared up into the skies, the nightingale sung in the flowers, and the other songsters of the woods fed their young and practised their melodies; poets, ye too are songsters—like these be pure and peaceful and tuneful, even when storms rage around you.

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Halifax, Dec. 23, 1837.

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