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THE

# ONTARIO EVANGELIST.

"Go ... .. speak ... .. to the people ALL the words of this Life."

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No. 9.

## POETRY.

### A BAPTISMAL SCENE.

On a beautiful summer's day,  
A little group of Christians stood,  
Where Erie's waters calmly lay,  
A sparkling, lucid flood;  
These spacious waters were their quest  
To honor Jesus' high behest,—  
To glorify our God.

Three maidens still in early youth,  
Had owned the Saviour they adored,  
And to obey the sacred truth,  
In faith and full accord,  
With placid men and hearts so brave,  
Were laid in the baptismal grave,—  
Were "buried" with the Lord.

By faith we sought to realize  
That angels from the realms of light  
Were looking on with joyful eyes  
To view the sacred sight;  
That He who in the Jordan's wave,  
His own Divine example gave,  
Would bless the holy rite.

Delightful as the ambient air,  
With odors from the sweetest flowers,  
Is piety in early youth,  
Refreshed with heavenly showers;  
Thus fragrant may their virtues prove,  
To serve the Saviour whom they love  
With all their ransomed powers.

Ridgetown. E. SHEPPARD.

### THE NEW YEAR.

Behold! the new year beckons like a flower  
Hid in its roots among the untrodden hills:  
God show thee how its sweetness every hour  
Grows only as His breath thy spirit fills!

Behold! The new year beckons like a star—  
A splendid mystery of the unfathomed skies:  
God guide thee through His mystic spaces far  
Till all His stars as suns within thee rise!

The new year beckons. He, too, beckoning nears:  
Forger not thou that all His gifts are His;  
Take from His hand all blessings of the years  
And of the blossoming, starred eternities!

Lucy Larcom.

### DUTY.

I held a flower in my hand;  
'Twas night, I could not see;  
And judging from the perfume, thought  
The flower must ugly be.  
But when the morning came, and light  
With its transforming power,  
I did forget all else, except  
The beauty of the flower.

God placed a duty in my hand,  
Before mine eyes could see  
Its rightful form, that duty seemed  
A bitter thing to me.  
The Sun of Glory rose and shone;  
Then duty I forgot,  
And thought with what a privilege  
The Lord has blessed my lot.

Sunday School Times.

## ORIGINAL.

### LETTER FROM CHINA.

In September we had the great triennial examinations for the second literary degree, and took advantage of the students being here to distribute scriptures and tracts to them. The orthodox manner of producing officials for China is through sifting out the talent of the country by means of literary examinations. The subjects of examination are the ancient classics and history and other literature of China. There are four main degrees to be attained. The first is called "Sice Tsai," or "budding talent," and is often compared to our bachelor of arts, and the examinations for this are local, in districts equal, perhaps, to our townships. The second examination is for a degree called "Gei Rin," translated "promoted man," and is held at the provincial capitals. That far Nankin includes two provinces, and selects the literary talent out of about 60,000,000 of people. About 20,000 men compete in this literary contest, and somewhat more than one hundred attain the degree;

and, unfortunately, some of these few gain the honor by bribes or influence; but many fairly win their laurels. The examinations are held in a large enclosure in the heart of the city, and not far from my dispensary. In this enclosure are long rows of cells with passages in front for the scrutineers to promenade and keep watch against cheating. Each cell holds a student, and in his little brick apartment with its tiled roof he has a seat and a table in front of him, and a shelf above. There are other buildings for the examiners, the head ones being men specially appointed from Peking. The students all over the Empire enter on the evening of September 8th and stay in their cramped cell till the night of September 9th and write essays on questions given them. Those who send in fair papers this first time are admitted again on the morning of the 11th, while the poor men are rejected. They are dismissed on the 12th. On the 15th, much diminished in numbers, they enter again and write the final essays, and by noon of the 16th all must have left the hall. The papers must have no names affixed on presentation, and are copied in red ink by special copyists before being examined. We, representatives of the Nankin missions, six foreigners and several natives, took thirteen large cases of books and tracts and waited at the doors of the hall, or on passages and streets leading from the doors, and taking arm loads of books from our boxes, dodged through the crowds who tried to snatch, and gave bundles of books to the students, whom we knew by their bags for pens hung from their necks and a servant carrying their baggage used in the cell. We succeeded, without any row, in distributing all our books, and thus we gave copies of scriptures, tracts and works on civilization which go to the literati of two large provinces. Under the blessing of God no one can compute the good that will be done.

The successful candidates, for further honors must go to Peking, and there receive the third degree, called "Ysin Sz," or "entered scholar," and the fourth degree, "Han Sin," if successful for the third. Some of the second degree become officials, but the third and fourth degrees are greater honors. By this series of examinations officials are taken from among the learned, though offices are often purchased where money is plentiful and brains scarce. Though it must necessarily be weak on account of the cramped learning of China; yet there are a great many things to admire in the literary system of China. We do not make special efforts to gain the learned and wealthy for Christ as a rule, yet this is a special occasion and we must take advantage of it. There were Pharisees and priests who turned to Christ, and there may be some Paul among those who received books, and a great truth may shine on him from the perusal of his gift of books.

Yours sincerely,

W. E. MACKLIN.

Nankin, Oct. 29th, '88.

## SELECTIONS.

### THE TEMPERANCE REFORM.

A great duty rests with increasing force of obligation on this nation—with the weight of mountains; we mean upon all those who have a conscience, who believe in God and fear him; on all who understand and care for their own best interests, and who have a real sympathetic regard for the welfare of their fellow beings. This duty is, to labor incessantly, and with all the power that is in them, for the suppression of the liquor crime.

The preoccupation of the public mind for months with the absorbing issues of the political campaign that has just closed, has for the time being checked the full activity of the host of true men and women in the mighty controversy with this huge and vast iniquity. We recognize the great importance of the political questions which have so powerfully agitated the entire people and so deeply absorb the attention of our statesmen. It would be fanatical extravagance to deny the momentous consequence to our nation of the prominent questions of controversy between the great political parties. Still we hold that these national conflicts, so far

as the parties who rule the nation are concerned, have in a singular, we feel like saying in a criminal manner, almost totally ignored one of the chief questions of national concern, if not the chiefest. Now, however, as the great political battle is for the present decided, it becomes all good men to address themselves with renewed zeal to the holy warfare for the salvation of the individual, the home, society, the nation, from the terribly destructive influence of strong drink. We can not say that the political campaign through which we have passed has taught us anything new concerning the evil power of the liquor traffic; but it has powerfully confirmed all our previous convictions and fears concerning it. This fell Satanic Power, has now once again everywhere made itself felt as a most potent, dreaded element in politics, and therefore in the destiny-controlling influences of this nation. The election result in the greatest State in the Union now demonstrates to us, with awful reality, the character, the purpose, and power of this Prince of Darkness, of this apocalyptic Apollyon, in our land. When it has come to this—as it has—that the most eminent gubernatorial magistracy of this Christian nation has been staked and won in the express interest of the saloon, with all its Satanic iniquities and horrors, we may well pause to reflect, and to realize the gravity of the situation. Such victories as these—leaving out of regard altogether their political, party character—are a challenge to the good people of our nation to more serious reflections and to more determined action. We desire to have it distinctly understood, and sincerely so, that in our discussion of this subject, and in our concern in this great cause of humanity, we have no regard whatever to the political party divisions in our land. We are not speaking for one or against the other, but are looking only at this monstrous, portentous iniquity itself, and considering only the great

What the American people have now to do—those among them who care to do anything—is to get her, apart from all party concern or prejudice, to look at this vast evil in all the reality of its destructive power, of its horrible hideousness, its utterly cruel, brutal inhumanity, and determine with holiest purpose and firmest resolution to war, for God and man, a righteous warfare against it. Let now every good man, whatever his party affiliations—especially since the great political contest is over—give his heart to a cause that is pure and holy, about which there can be no reasonable controversy among Christians and philanthropists.

No right minded man can any longer, in the presence of the light which illuminates the whole question, justify even for a moment the sale and consumption of intoxicating liquors as beverages. The day when good men—Christians—could do this has gone by, and forever. There is but one course, but one duty, now left for us, and that is, to do all in our power to banish this sale and consumption from the land.

The destructive spirit of the Liquor Sin has not become weakened, its awful horrors not lessened, where it yet rules. We have before us a three days' record—only three days—of the work of the saloons in Cincinnati, and this record embraces several cruel murders, with other horrible bloody affrays. This in a single city! and what a world of untold crimes, brutalities and sufferings behind these awful deeds of blood! The leading journals of our land, with every recurring day, are dark and red with the details of the history of the Liquor Crime. Daily, from all parts of the land, come these tidings of murders, or of other violent deaths, and of bloody scenes, all eternally coupled with the saloons. No, friends, there is no possible mitigation of this saloon business; the sale and consumption of intoxicating drink is evil, necessarily and only and terribly evil, continually. In the extermination of this awful double sin alone is our hope. This truth we have now learned so well that it can no longer be a question of dispute. And to this conviction all good men everywhere must come.

But we feel that some things must now be insisted on in the good cause of temperance reform, and with special emphasis. And to these things we desire to call attention in another paper.—C. L. L., in *Christian Standard*.

### THE NEW CREED TYPE.

The creed has fallen in our time upon evil days. Once occupying a majestic and terrible throne in each ecclesiastical organization, the church was to it a kingdom and every member, lay or cleric, a submissive vassal. Opposition to its decrees meant inevitable revolution. Sacred as the ark of God, the creed must not be touched under penalty of death.

"But yesterday the word of Caesar might  
Have stood against the world—  
Now none so poor as to do him reverence!"

It is becoming a somewhat difficult matter to find the creed of some of our creed churches and when you have found it, you must hunt up the sexton who carries the key. When you have at last discovered the creed and the sexton has brought it forth from its dim and cobwebbed seclusion, you see an antiquated, crazy, barbaric looking structure, a confused intricacy of crow-bars and braces, with cleats nailed on awkwardly here, and broken joints mended with twine there.

The fact is there is such a rushing to and fro in the busy religious life of today, such crowding of the courts with workmen, such haste and vigor in the work that the creed is always getting in the way and some big priest stumbles over it and gives it a kick, which is sure to break some of its brittle and intricate machinery, or some reckless young acolyte breaks up a lot of it to make kindling wood for a revival fire.

Now, the nineteenth century is a business and practical century, and will not long tolerate anything that is *in the way*. Consequently the creed being found to be very much in the way, the most appalling and sacrilegious propositions are being made in regard to it, "Saw out this piece! Cut away that cable! Knock that brace off! Overboard with the whole business!" Such are the cries that fill the air at every conference, association, church, congress and general assembly.

The first expedient to meet the difficulty was the ingenious but dangerous one of "Substantial Interpretation." "Do you believe in and subscribe to this creed?" says the stern examiner to the young candidate for ministerial orders. "Substantially, I do!" answers the young man who is in reality prepared to make deadly war upon the most essential dogmas of that very creed.

Professors in theological colleges subscribe to the creed "substantially," and teach it "substantially," and in this manner manage to teach whatever they please. The great lights of the pulpit ride over the creed whenever it gets in the way, break through it, or deliberately drag it forth to be baited and trampled on before their audience, leaving it broken and mangled at the end of an elegant discourse.

"Butchered to make a Roman holiday!" But this will never do! This is anarchy. This substantially annihilates the poor creed, and the creed must not be destroyed. Men and brethren, what shall we do?

Perhaps an answer to this question may be found in a recent deliverance from the committee of the London Baptist Association which met in September last, to see what could be done to reconcile Mr. Spurgeon with some of his brethren who had, according to that great man, been altogether too "substantial" in their interpretation of Baptist standards—and there are not lacking Baptists in this country who will bring the same charge against Mr. Spurgeon. One of the crucial points in question was the dogma of future punishment of the wicked.

After long deliberation and debate, the committee put forth unanimously the following declaration on this point: "The unbelieving and wicked, being condemned, shall suffer the punishment due to their sins, according to the Scriptures!"

Here, now, is a declaration which includes all three doctrines of future retribution, eternal punishment, future probation and annihilation. You pay your money and take your choice. The real meaning and outcome of this declaration is to relegate the whole question to the Scriptures. But at the same time the form of a creed is preserved.

Surely in this little formula is the type of a creed which will exactly meet the wants of our

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