

The Provincial Westman.

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HALIFAX, N. S., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 1863.

Whole No. 711.

Religious Miscellany.

The Southern Cross.

For the Provincial Westman.
On it we've raised my eye,
To admire the star-like skies,
And to look the Southern Cross,
True to nature's silent speech,
Those bright orbs their course display,
And of earth's divisions teach
Pointing out the fourfold way.
Quivering stars whose welcome light
Shines the gloom of night to cheer;
Beaming with a lustre bright
O'er the Southern Hemisphere.
Fiducially to the west design
Who arranged night's dome in space,
With bright rays they shine
Each in its appointed place.

John, the Idiot.

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But, as if to prove the words of Solomon, "The heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil," John, as is usually true of imbeciles, early gave evidence of a violent temper. By some means he had acquired a knowledge of that dialect which better betides the devils in the shape of woe than men who have an account to render to the holy God; and when angry, one would almost shudder at the dreadful oaths which he would utter.
One of the few kinds of labor by which John was able to assist his father, was that of driving the cows to and from the pasture.
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But the grace of God was able to reach even the heart of poor John, and he became a new creature in Christ Jesus.
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As spring approached, and he remembered that what he before him, he seemed to shake from his wonted duties, and the following colloquy was overheard, when he knew not that any one was listening:
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Rev. J. Lathe, made the adoption of the Report. In his address he referred to several points mentioned in the Report. He said the opening sentence and sentiment. "By the Cross we conquer." This is the sentiment which all the friends of Missions, all friends of the Saviour must be animated. The Missionary could tell the untold stories of the greatness, power, and goodness of God; but what cared he for such feeble arguments as man could urge upon these people, when he could listen to so many more powerful voices. The opening sentence, the rolling thunder, the soothing lightning, the awful stillness of the forest and the deep sounding sea, told him in tones of irresistible power of the majesty and grandeur of God. But the missionary changed his theme, and spoke of the incarnation of Deity, of his humiliation, sufferings and death; then the astonished savage exclaimed in that tone? "Can that be true? and melted into contrition under its power. He said he had learned with surprise and pleasure that according to the last census, the number of Indians is increasing instead of being as he had imagined, and has been generally improving, rapidly diminishing. This was a very interesting and important fact. "Then the gradual approach to the habits of civilization," referred to in the Report, was a very encouraging thing. To induce them to change their wrong, wandering habits, is exceedingly difficult. He cited a case also that this is not on account of anything peculiar to the Indian constitution, but the result of training and power of habit. Instances without number might be cited to prove that the common saying, "you can't tame an Indian," is as true of the white skin as of the red, if it has been trained and nurtured in Indian habits and savage life. But though the transformation be difficult, it is not impossible. "The Cross can conquer." "With God all things are possible." Of this the speaker gave a striking instance in the case of "John Sundry," an Ojibwa convert, and a very worthy missionary, who some years ago visited England. Some of his friends had doubted him to appear on the platform in Indian costume; but to "When I was a heathen," said he "I was clothed in a blanket, with a painted face and feathers interwoven with my hair. But now I am a Christian. I cannot go back to these things." "Old things are passed away, and behold all things are become new." The giving of the Scriptures to the Indians in their own language, is another thing to read, there is in a work of insuperable importance. He had intended to make this the principal topic of his remarks. But he had already occupied so much time upon the other points, that he must content himself with but a passing notice. "We had every reason to believe that the blessing of God would accompany the diligent pursuit of his word. Times of distress and anguish would come upon the Indian heart as upon our own, when the great truths of Revelation alone would be adequate to cheer and console. An untold sorrow had his family been once reduced to great straits for food. In his extremity he looked up to the great Spirit for help. His blanket, his tomahawk, his gun, and finally himself were successively brought forward and laid upon a log as propitiatory offerings to the Great Spirit. When he had brought himself, and laid the offering down by the others, light and peace broke in upon his soul, and he felt assured that his prayer was heard. Immediately an animal started by him was brought down by the sharp crack of his rifle. He and his family were saved, and he felt sure that his offerings had been accepted. Time passed and the poor man heard for the first time of the Saviour of mankind, and resolved by that pine log in the wilderness, rush over him with renewed power. He could scarcely restrain his emotions. "I, I, am the man," he exclaimed, and rejoiced believing in the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Thus as we have every reason to hope and believe will be to his others. Your missionary may not live to see it, but others will. A faithful devoted missionary toiled on to the end of his life among the Micmacs, and he died in the arms of his Lord. He had scarcely entered into his rest, when he had scarcely entered into his rest, when the showers of divine mercy broke over those islands, and now the converts are to be numbered by thousands. "He that toucheth forth and weepeth bearing precious seed will doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."
"Our space will not admit of our giving other interesting speeches delivered at the Anniversary by Rev. Messrs. Watson and Rand, and by Dea. Geer. The President, J. W. Ritchie, was absent, owing to indisposition. His place was well supplied by Dr. Avery."

John, the Idiot.

John was one of those poor unfortunate whom Providence sometimes permits to live and grow up even to manhood, while the mind still remains as in infancy.
But, as if to prove the words of Solomon, "The heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil," John, as is usually true of imbeciles, early gave evidence of a violent temper. By some means he had acquired a knowledge of that dialect which better betides the devils in the shape of woe than men who have an account to render to the holy God; and when angry, one would almost shudder at the dreadful oaths which he would utter.
One of the few kinds of labor by which John was able to assist his father, was that of driving the cows to and from the pasture.
Many of the boys in that community, as well as in almost every other, were ready to verify the language of Solomon, above quoted, and would resort to various methods in order to provoke poor John, that they might enjoy his outbursts of anger and hear his dreadful oaths.
"Alas! how and a commentary this upon poor fallen humanity!
But the grace of God was able to reach even the heart of poor John, and he became a new creature in Christ Jesus.
"O wondrous grace! transcendent love! which, while it makes the sweetest notes, and rises in highest strains around the throne of the Eternal, may enter the heart of the most unlearned, and soften the most obdurate will of those almost idiotic!
John's conversion occurred in the winter, at a time when he was necessarily but little exposed to provocation from the boys.
As spring approached, and he remembered that what he before him, he seemed to shake from his wonted duties, and the following colloquy was overheard, when he knew not that any one was listening:
"John go drive cows—boys laugh John—John swear." Then, conscious that he should thus grieve the Saviour whom he loved, he went forth to the most violent grief. After weeping for some time he would again repeat "John go drive cows—boys laugh John—John swear—Jesus no love—John swear—he would break forth into the most violent weeping.
Suddenly a smile irradiated his usually expressionless face, and with almost joyful tones he said, "John go drive cows—boys laugh John—John swear." John no longer swore, and again he repeated these words, evidently rejoicing in the belief that "no prayer without ceasing" was his only hope, his only safety.
Well may the intelligent Christian blush at learning such a lesson from one who scarcely seemed to possess intellect sufficient to render him the laborer and the sower.
Does the eye of any one fall upon this simple story who has long indulged in some sinful practice, but who has just learned to love this same blessed Saviour? Does the voice of the tempter, even now, sometimes lure to sin? Let the example of this poor unfortunate youth never, never be forgotten.—*Tristram Journal.*

Who Will be a Soul-Gatherer?

An old woman who spoke as if she feared the Lord, was asked if she had ever tried to bring others to Him. "I'm afraid not," she said. "And are you happy in Christ?" "Yes," she said. "Well, I may say I have sought Him these fifty years, but I have not found Him yet. Only, they say doubts and fears are good for people, and I just try to bear with them. Fifty years walking after the Good Shepherd, never ever coming up to him on the road! Could it be? The old woman had lived a wicked life. Her husband had died, and she had seen at Christmas time the windows of the south room wide open, its inmates warm in the sunshine, the flowers sending in a sweet smell. "Yes," she said. "And then across the passage, within a step of that bright room, others lay in the north room wrapped up, close by the fire piled with wood, throwing in a fire now and then to keep up the heat. "And so with you dear friend, if indeed you are Christ's and do live in his house, you have got to carry a name on the house and the service of our kind Master when we will live out of the sunshine in chambers, dark and shut out." "Alas, for the rangers of the love that prompts them to carry the lantern from their sickly and weary eyes under cold, and yet they are God's children all the while! Psalm 11:16.
Men—Will you not break with Satan. Leave them his service at once, and enter Christ's. Harlan Page, the carpenter, died at forty-three, saying, "I have evidence that more than one hundred souls have been personally instrumental through my own direct personal instrumentality, more fervently to the task. Five minutes—prayed for, watched for, and not let slip when followed—long enough to tell a friend, a fellow-workman about his danger and instant salvation through the blood of the Lamb. Few words are needed when the heart is full. They will not often give offence, if the love that prompts them comes up from the heart's depths.
"Warning.—When the storm howled round the Fern Light House, who could have blamed Grace Darling had she only lit the lamp in the tower, and left it for strong men to look out for wrecks. She might have turned her bed down, knelt to pray for the poor sailor, and slept a blameless sleep, dressing of her robe, her hair, her choice was to give the rope to her waiting carrier the lantern from her father's cottage at his side, and take the car of the life-boat. Then a wild and the best interest of life, the highest enjoyment of earth, and the fullest reward of the skies.
It is true that the religion of Christ does lay down these moral equivalents for all the demands that it calls us to meet. It claims our "bodies as a living sacrifice," but secures to them "rest and food." It utters forth the word of command, "Son, give me thine heart," yet vouchsafes to the giver a new heart, sprinkled and cleansed. It demands our talents, but only to add to the original gift. So true in all things is the Christian religion to the best interests of those who embrace it.
"God loves a cheerful giver," and, like love, the more we give the more we receive.
Our motto let us make this: "We only love what charity we give."
—Central Advocate.

Sacrifices.

Largely they give, gracious Lord,
Largely thy gifts should be restored;
Freely they give, and thy word
Is their reward.
He only who forgets to be
Heard, is heard of thee.
Every system of religion, whatever may be its merits or its claims to inspiration, comes to its vicarious demands upon their persons and their property. No religion can retain a hold upon the minds of men without its visible sacrifices, its outward and external show. The Christian religion, though simple in its form and unostentatious in its tangible connections, is no exception to this general rule. This material part of religion, if such an expression may be allowed, is always the measure of the sacrifice and consecration of earthly possessions on the part of the church. There is no system proposing to meet the religious instincts and wants of man's nature but comes with demands on his material wealth; yet we may safely assert that none offer benefits so extensive and full on terms so equitably and easy. For while Christianity demands to control our being and command our purse, it assures to us, as an offset, the best interests of life, the highest enjoyment of earth, and the fullest reward of the skies.
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Religious Intelligence.

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