

# THE WESLEYAN.

Vol. II.—No. 37.]

A FAMILY PAPER—DEVOTED TO RELIGION, LITERATURE, GENERAL AND DOMESTIC NEWS, ETC.

[Whole No. 89

Ten Shillings per Annum.  
Half-Yearly in Advance.

HALIFAX, N. S., SATURDAY MORNING, MARCH 22, 1851.

Single Copies,  
Three Pence.

## Poetry.

### A VISION OF WORLDS.

BY MARY CLEMMER.

Lost to the sense of earth's dull sights,  
On new-lent wings my spirit flies,  
And resting on heaven's terraced heights,  
It reads the mysteries of the skies,  
Faint, glimmering beams of distant light,  
Are now no longer all I see,  
Of worlds which measure in their flight,  
The circles of infinity.

Unfathomed depths sweep far below;  
Measureless heights above I see;  
While towering systems from the gates,  
Which shut from sight, the Deity!  
Infinite lengths their folds embrace,  
As o'er all human thought they rise,  
Where mighty deeps of blazing worlds,  
Form the faint outlines of the skies.

Here central suns shoot forth their rays,  
While rolling orbs their cycles keep,  
And forming spheres like isles of light,  
In seas of ether seem to sleep.  
On, with unutterable pace,  
Come sweeping realms of filmy light,  
While o'er interminable plains,  
Lie long eternities of night.

Anthems are sung, and echoes heard,  
Walking the mysteries of sound;  
The solemn hymns of singing worlds,  
Make music in the deep profound.  
O! if an angel's soul were mine,  
With powers divine to grasp each sight,  
No measured lengths of rolling years,  
Should mark the boundaries of my flight.

But, lo! a trembling child of earth,  
I view God's power—his glory here;  
Lost in infinity of sight,  
My human heart is touched with fear.  
In vain my thought essay to rise;  
Inspiration's swiftest pace,  
Grows faint, and slow, when mortals strive,  
The majesty of God to trace.

But we believe that he who formed,  
And rules this vast immensity,  
Will give to an undying soul  
A life of immortality.  
Mysterious whispers in its depths  
But faintly tell what it shall be;  
In the undying light of stars,  
It reads its own eternity.

—Boston Museum.

## Christian Miscellany.

"We need a better acquaintance with the thoughts and reasonings of pure and lofty minds."—Dr. Sharp.

### Preaching Christ.

The living ministry is one of the most powerful instruments used by the Almighty for the conversion of the world. Other means, powerful and effective, are employed; but this stands pre-eminent. Bible Societies may distribute the Holy Scriptures among the people, at home and in foreign lands, and they will do a great work; but without the added voice of the living herald comparatively little will be done in saving souls. The private Christian, maintaining his integrity amidst the prevailing vices of the times, and keeping "himself unspotted from the world," must of necessity be a powerful "preacher of righteousness." But how much more may he do who, called of God "to the office and work of the ministry," feels as he ought the responsibility placed upon him? How powerful in pulling down the strongholds of the enemy, and building up the kingdom of Christ, may be that minister who labours unceasingly, in season and out of season, to allure wanderers from the ways of death; to build up those weak in the faith; to instruct the ignorant; to establish the wavering; to visit the sick and the afflicted, and administer to them in the depths of their sorrow the consolations of the Gospel of peace; to sit by the bedside of the dying, and, as their eyes are no doubt closing on all the scenes of this world, and their tired hearts about to cease their beating, to cause joy to thrill their bosoms in

hope of beholding that "city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is the living God!" O! what good may not such a one do? What a burning light must the faithful minister be who always feels that he is about his Master's business, and can give utterance to the sentiments of his heart in the words of the poet:—

"Happy, if with my latest breath,  
I may but gasp His name,  
Preach Him to all, and cry in death,  
Behold! behold the Lamb!"

But with all his opportunities for doing good, how often does the Christian minister cripple his influence by false modes of preaching. A sermon addressed entirely to the feelings, a mere harangue, calculated to excite the sensibilities without calling into play the higher powers of man, cannot be the means of doing much permanent good, and is certainly very unlike those specimens of early preaching we find in the Acts of the Apostles. Nor can I listen with profit, or even with pleasure, in the sanctuary of the Most High, to metaphysical discussions and dissertations on morality, though elaborated with the skill of the most acute logician, and delivered with the grace and elocution of the faultless orator. This is not what I want to hear. This is not preaching. This is not what was heard in former days. Not so spake Wesley, Clarke, Watson, our own George, McKendree, Fisk, Emory, and many others who were able ministers, of the New Testament on earth, and are now in the paradise of God. What, then, is preaching? I do not think I can better state my views of what constitutes it than by giving the following extract from a sermon by the late Rev. Dr. J. M. Mason:—

"If He who spake as never man spake has declared his own doctrine to abound with consolation to the miserable, then, certainly, the instructions of others are evangelical only in proportion as they subserve the same gracious end. A contradiction not unfrequent among some advocates of revelation is, to urge against the infidel its power of comfort, and yet to avoid in their own discourses almost every principle from which that power is drawn. Disregarding the mass of mankind, to whom the Gospel is peculiarly fitted, and omitting those truths which might revive the griefed spirit, or touch the slumbering conscience, they discuss their moral topics in a manner unintelligible to the illiterate, uninteresting to the mourner, and without alarm to the profane. This is not 'preaching Christ.' Elegant dissertations upon virtue and vice, upon the evidences of revelation, or any other general subject, may entertain the prosperous and the gay, but they will not mortify our members which are upon the earth; they will not untinge calumny, nor feed the heart with an imperishable hope. When I go to the house of God I do not want amusement. I want the doctrine which is according to godliness. I want to hear of the remedy against the harassings of my guilt and the disorder of my affections. I want to be led from weariness and disappointment to that goodness which filleth the hungry soul. I want to have light upon the mystery of providence; to be taught how the judgments of the Lord are right—how I shall be prepared for duty and for trial—how I may pass the time of my sojourning here in fear, and close it in peace. Tell me of that Lord Jesus who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree. Tell me of his intercession for the transgressors as their advocate with the Father. Tell me of his Holy Spirit, whom they that believe in him receive, to be their preserver, sanctifier, comforter. Tell me of his presence, his sympathy, and his love. Tell me of the virtues as growing out of his cross, and nurtured by his grace. Tell me of the glory reflected on his name by the obedience of faith. Tell me of vanquished death, of the purified grave, of the life everlasting—and my bosom warms. This is Gospel; these are glad tidings to me as a sufferer because glad to me as a sinner. They rectify my mistakes; allay my resentments;

rebuke my discontent; support me under the weight of natural and moral evil. These attract the poor, steal upon the thoughtless and the irreverent, and throw over the service of the sanctuary a majesty which some fashionable modes of address never fail to dissipate. Where they are habitually neglected, or lightly referred to, there may be much grandeur, but there is no Gospel; and those preachers have infinite reason to tremble who, though admired by the great, and caressed by the vain, are deserted by the poor and sorrowful, and such as walk humbly with their God."

A little more of this preaching in all our churches would most assuredly make us all wiser and better, and thus accomplish that which Christianity is designed to secure for man—freedom from the power of sin here, and from its curse in the world to come.—*Correspondent of Advocate & Journal.*

### Reminiscence.

I remember with interest, an aged pair, who lived in the neighbourhood of my childhood's home, for they had suffered by the scourge of war, and had lost a happy home and all their worldly effects at the time Charlestown was burnt by the British in 1775. My impressions of them are peculiar as they come before my mind in the singular custom of a former century. The man wore a three-cornered hat, small clothes reaching to the knees, and fastened with small silver buckles, long stockings and nice shoes, with plated buckles. He was quite advanced, and usually walked with a cane, but with an animated step, and remarkable cheerfulness of countenance. The wife wore a bright red cloak in winter, with a cap or hood of the same material, which was drawn over the head instead of a bonnet. They "were both righteous," in the Gospel sense of the term, and their cheerful piety, and strong faith, gave them an elevation which neither the wealth, fame, nor the honours of earth can purchase. They were too far advanced in life to labour—too poor to be comfortable without the aid of charity, and without, too happy to escape the envy of those who, rich in the treasures of earth, had never sought or tasted the "hidden manna" which cheered and comforted these children of God. I have said they lived by faith—one anecdote in illustration will suffice:

One cold winter evening, when a deep snow had fallen, which rendered the roads almost impassable, they found their small stock of wood had diminished until only two or three sticks remained, just enough for the evening.

"Husband, what shall we do," inquired the wife; "we shall burn our last stick of wood before nine o'clock to-night?" "Trust in God, who has always provided for us," replied the good man. Not an hour had elapsed when a neighbour inquired if they would oblige him by accepting a part of a load of wood, which he was obliged to leave as the sled had broken, and he could not reach home with all he had. Most thankfully was the kind offer accepted, and no doubt the incense of grateful hearts ascended with renewed faith that night from the family altar.

"Trust in the Lord and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed."—*Independent.*

### Absence from Church.

The effect which slight causes have in keeping even Christians away from the sanctuary, has been generally noticed. A little inclemency of the weather, when the aspect of the sky is threatening, when there has been a little undue fatigue, or care, or company, these, and like causes, bar the way of thousands, to the house of God on each Sabbath as it comes. No one thing more than this disheartens the true minister of Christ. Witness the following testimony of the late Richard Winter Hamilton, addressed to the people to whom he had long ministered:—"Nothing has so much enervated

my ministry, nothing has so much sunk my heart, as your casual and irregular appearance in the house of God. What can be thought, how can it be explained, that professed Christians, of long standing, can allow every novelty to divert, and every inconvenience to deter? The young and the thoughtless might be expected thus to be drawn away, but better habits of steadfastness may be well demanded of those who, long since, sealed their vows of union with the disciples of Christ. I implore you to cultivate orderly, punctual, unintermitting regard to the services of God!"

### A painful fact.

It is not many years since I entered the dwelling of a widow. I knew her to be the most active, capable, efficient, and devoted female member of a sister church, consistent, and ready to every good word and work. Judge what was my surprise to find her centre-table covered with that class of magazines of the day which are mainly filled with the most exciting romances. In the presence of her daughter, then just verging into womanhood, I expressed my surprise, and gently remonstrated with her; but to my regret, she warmly defended her course, and claimed that this class of literature was necessary to cultivate the taste and the imagination.

I soon sought out her pastor, and he promised to counteract the poison if possible; but alas, in vain. She is now an expelled member of the church, and her Sabbaths are away from the house of God. Are not these the legitimate fruits of an indulgence in such reading? Had her reading been the works of Doctrines and Baxter, and Flavel and Owen, it would require no prophet's ken to tell how changed would now be the scene. An inspired prophet has pointedly inquired, "Can a man take fire into his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? We utter our unsparing reprobation of the man who deals out the intoxicating cup to our fellow-men, but we, alas, take to our bosoms and to our churches the men around us, who poison our families by these blighting and pernicious issues of the press. Let every Christian reader be warned to shun light reading as he would the venom of the still."—*American Messenger.*

### Influence of Holy Living.

A truly Christian life is better than large contributions of wealth for the propagation of Christianity. The most prominent instruction of Jesus on this point is, that we must let men see in us that religion is something real, something more than high sounding and empty words, a restraint from sin, a bulwark against temptation, a spring of upright and useful action; let them see it, not an idle form, not a transient feeling, but our companion through life, infusing its purity into our common pursuits, following us to our homes, setting guard around our integrity in the resorts of business, sweetening our tempers in seasons of provocation, disposing us habitually to sympathy with others, to patience and cheerfulness under our afflictions, to candid judgment, and to sacrifices for others' good; and we may hope that our light will not shine uselessly; that some slumbering conscience will be aroused by this testimony, and excellence and practicality of religion; that some worldly professor of Christianity will learn his obligations, and blush for his criminal inconsistency; and that some in whom the common arguments for our religion may have failed to work a full belief, will be brought to the knowledge of the truth by this plain, practical proof of the heavenly nature of Christianity. Every man is surrounded by beings who are moulded more or less by the principles of sympathy and imitation; and this social part of our nature he is bound to press into the service of Christianity.

He that would pray with effect must live with care and piety.