

## POETRY.

From the British Magazine.

## THE CHRISTIAN'S RACE.

## I.

He stood beside a dying-bed;  
The lamp burnt pale and low,  
And, dimly seen, an old grey head  
Was battling its last foe,  
It was a father that lay there,  
That gazer was a son;  
I whisper'd, "There is help in prayer"—  
He said, "God's will be done!"

## II.

He stood amid a glittering crowd  
Within the chancel wide,  
And gracefully the ring bestow'd  
Upon a blooming bride.  
"Rejoice, for love is round thee spread,  
And life is in its prime"—  
His smile was solemn, as he said,  
"It is a holy time!"

## III.

He stood beside a healing spring,  
Whence drops of mercy fell;  
And lovely was the new-born thing  
Bath'd in that holy well.  
It was his eldest born: I said,  
"Rejoice my friend, rejoice!"  
"I do!" he cried, with stooping head,  
And with a trembling voice.

## IV.

He stood beside an open grave—  
The funeral rite was done;  
He had returned, to Him who gave,  
His lov'd, his only son!  
"Do not despair, my friend," I cried,  
As all around were weeping;  
He smil'd upon me, and replied—  
"He is not dead, but sleeping!"

## V.

I stood beside a dying bed—  
'Twas *he himself* lay there;  
A smile of holy light o'erspread  
His countenance of prayer.  
He said,—"In sorrow, faith was mine;  
In joy, a holy fear;  
Now both are lost in hope divine—  
Still, Saviour, thou art near!"

## VI.

Such was life! In joy and woe  
His heart was fix'd above;  
Faith was his only strength below,  
His only food was love.  
Teach me, O Lord, his life to live;  
Teach me his death to die;  
May I to thee time's moments give  
Thou me eternity!

## MISCELLANEOUS.

## "BE SHORT."

It is said of Cotton Mather, the celebrated New England divine, that he had conspicuously placed upon the walls of his study the admonition "be short." He was not indifferent to his friends, but while he valued their visits much, he valued time more. He could not consent to spend his precious hours for study in any unnecessary conversation, and therefore he would have his visitors to be short.

Time has lost none of its value since Cotton Mather lived, but it would seem so. How few are the divines now who are anxious to improve their hours. All readily admit the preciousness of time, and realize the obligation to improve it, but still much runs to waste, and leaves them the sad consciousness of having sustained an irreparable loss. There are a variety of ways in which time can be lost, but we do not now design to enumerate them; there is one way, however, which is often noticed but not duly considered. Attention has often been called to it in our religious periodicals, but apparently without effect. It is, Mr. Editor, the habit which many of our brethren have acquired to *be long*:—Yes, Sir, to *be long*. It is not always by long sermons, long speeches, long exhortations and prayers that time is improved; indeed, sir, I know of no more effectual way to kill time than to *be long*. Who that is accustomed to attend public worship, and the religious anniversaries of societies, has not been wearied by the excessive length of their exercises?

Not long since a speaker at one of the anniversaries in your city, actually occupied fifty-five minutes in a single speech, and this too at night when three other speakers sat on the stage ready to follow him.—Truly, sir, I thought before he finished, of Mather's admonition, "be short." Why it is that men can so far forget themselves and their auditors, I know not, except they speak under the impression that the whole success of the cause which they advocate is suspended upon their single effort. It is seldom that we hear the complaint that *sermons are too short*, but how often that they are *too long*!

The sagacious John Wesley said, that after a man has preached thirty minutes, he is in much danger of preaching nonsense, if he continues; yet, sir, a Wesleyan Methodist in our town, uniformly preaches, as I have been told, more than an hour. He needs to be admonished, "be short," lest he more than exhausts his subject. There is an estimable clergyman of our own church, against whom no other charge can be preferred, than that he is *too long*, and from the contortions of the countenances of those who complain, you would get the impression that they consider it a *serious charge*. There is another estimable brother, who seldom reaches his peroration until the patience of his auditors is quite exhausted.

Many who dread his appearance in their pulpit, have made the remark that he would be an *acceptable preacher*, did he not preach *too long*. There is still another brother, who has fallen into the same habit, whether from his devoted zeal, or his love to the sound of his own voice, I cannot tell, but sure it is that he "spins out" his discourses until "sides and benches fail."

When about to preach for my people on a communion day, knowing his *infirmity*, I ventured to whisper in his ear, "*be short*." He remarked, he had selected a short sermon for the occasion. When he had closed, after having preached nearly fifty minutes, thought I, if that brother's *short discourses* are fifty minutes long, how long are his *long ones*?

But why complain of long sermons, for if they teach nothing else, they do always teach an important Christian virtue, patience? We do not complain, but patiently admonish our "*long winded*" brethren, "*be short*." An experienced and successful minister, once said to his younger brethren, *if you wish to succeed in your ministry, "be short."* Let your sermons be short, your speeches short, your reports short, your prayers short; "*be short*," then you will be acceptable.—*Epis. Rec.*

## THE POOR IN ENGLAND.

The suffering of poor manufacturers in England begins to be excessive. We learn from the London papers that in Nottingham, in a single day, about 2000 unemployed hands had been visiting the bakers and butcher's shops, soliciting charity; their imposing appearance intimidated parties to give them what they demanded. Some principle seemed to guide the leaders of the mob, for one baker giving only a penny loaf, it was proposed to throw it through his window; this suggestion was immediately decried; another baker on giving two half-stone loaves, was most vehemently cheered. Four o'clock—the streets full of unemployed mechanics.—*Ibid.*

## CHARITIES OF LONDON.

Within the London bills of mortality there are 50 places of public worship; 4,050 seminaries of education, including 237 parish charity schools; 3 societies for the express purpose of promoting the learned, the useful, and the polite arts; 192 asylums and almshouses for the helpless and indigent, including the Philanthropic Society; 30 hospitals and dispensaries for the sick and lame, and for delivering poor pregnant women; 704 friendly or benefit societies, and institutions for charitable and humane purposes; while several institutions are supported at the almost incredible sum of 750,000*l.* per annum.—*Ibid.*

## SCRAPS.

Be always displeas'd with what thou art, if thou desirest to attain to what thou art not; for when thou hast pleas'd thyself, there thou abidest. But thou sayest I have enough, thou perishest. Always add, always walk, always proceed. Neither stand still, nor go back, nor deviate.—*St. Augustine.*

It were a good strife among Christians to labor to give no offence, and labor to take none. The best men are severe to themselves, tender over others.

Truth feareth nothing so much as concealment and desireth nothing so much as clearly to be laid open to all. When it is most naked, it is most lovely and powerful.

Our blessed Saviour, as he took our nature upon him, so he took upon Him our familiar manner of speech which was part of his voluntary abasement.

That spirit of mercy which was in Christ, should move his servants to be content to abase themselves for the good of the meanest.

Christ chose those to preach mercy who had received most mercy, as St. Peter and St. Paul, that they might be examples of what they taught.

We see ambitious men study to accommodate themselves to the humors of those by whom they hope to raise themselves; and shall we not study to be like Christ, by whom we hope to be advanced, nay, are already, as it were, sitting with him in heavenly places.

## THE CHRISTIAN KEEPSAKE

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