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Religious Miscellany.

Autumn.
How brightly bright
Is the soft light
Of the dying autumn day,
As the golden west
By the sun is drest
In the robes of a regal way;
And the birds are gone, and the winds are still,
And there floats no sound on the woodland hill,
Save the dreamy buzz of the distant mill,
And the murmuring streamlet's play.

How richly fraught
With the themes of thought
Is the dying autumn grove;
For the woe of its fall
Is the brightest of all
That the dying year has wove.

Even the joyful glance of the dewy Spring,
As she brushed the earth with her fragrant wing,
Brought no such smile as these death-blossoms bring
To the pride of the quiet cove.

In thoughtful grace
Of the dying face
Is the glory of nature seen;
And the Autumn leaf,
In its glory bright,
Has more than its boasted green.

'Tis the highest feston of earth's cold clime,
And the soul must soar with a flight sublime,
Far from the mists and tears of time,
To know what its becomings mean.

'Tis the time of hope
When the buds first open
To the south wind's quickening kiss,
And the teeming plain,
With its waving grain,
Has a burden of healthy bliss.

But a higher and holier hope may rise
From the fading leaf, as it smiles and dies—
More dear than life to the truly wise
Is the scene of a death like this.

The Prophet and the Prophecy.

(Continued from our last.)

THE PROPHECY.

Our introductory remarks preclude the expectation of an announcement claiming the authority of Inspiration, but rather the expression of a strong and decided opinion formed upon mature reflection and grounded upon his views of the doctrine of a retributive providence, correctly drawn, as he believed, from the word of God, illustrated by general history and confirmed by observation and experience. This doctrine, admitted and firmly believed by all orthodox Christians will be regarded by many, perhaps by the most of people, to have been erroneously applied in its case in the case in question. Be it so, there cannot fail, however, to be discovered a remarkable coincidence between the terms in which the utterance was pronounced, and the events which are now transpiring in the midst of the people in respect to whom it was made.

The occasion of the remark, solemnly and very seriously made, was this: The guest of a gentleman who, like himself, was one of the loyalists of the American Revolution, and who left his native land and his family patrimony for his attachment to British rule; both of them at the time near their three-score and ten years, the subject of conversation turned upon the affairs of the neighbouring States—her government—politics, peculiarities and the prejudices of her people, &c., when, in conclusion, our prophet remarked, "Ah, sir, there is a rod in store for them; depend upon it, there is a rod in store for them." Now without arguing the merits of the Revolutionary struggle—whether in its origin—its progress and its various aspects it could or could not be justified upon the ground of strict Scriptural morality as applied to political matters, it is most certain that in the estimation of our prophet the transactions connected with that event richly merited, and would most certainly merit with the infliction of such retributive dispensations and interpositions in behalf of our suffering fellow Christians especially, and suffering fellow men generally, that the blessed God would accomplish his purposes and shorten the days for the elect's sake.

Various aspects of the case present themselves to the mind, but I forbear, and praying for the peace of Jerusalem, I subscribe myself

THE SON OF A LOYALIST.

What are the reasons for these terrible visitations of God's providence?
Scarcely a day, putting out of the question the views and convictions upon which our "Prophesy" was delivered, can any one contemplate the reiterated and terrible judgments inflicted upon Egypt and her gods of old, with the object of compelling from that reluctant monarch and his people, the liberation of Israel from their cruel bondage and servitude, without applying them to present events, and regarding them as a voice from heaven, saying in "most distinct terms," "Let the oppressed go free, for if thou wilt not, and thus will I do unto thee." Now will it obviate the application of this verse of the prophet to the North by saying, they are not slaveholders, nor do they approve of the institution, and yet they are equally suffering with the South. What are the views and the expressed sentiments of the North as uttered by their Government? "Slavery or no slavery the Union must be maintained. If slavery will secure that, then let slavery continue. Nor is the recent proclamation of President Lincoln any deviation from this principle, but it may rather be regarded as a peace offering to the South. Give us, come upon terms and we will comply with your own terms as to slavery; retain it, and extend it if you will, only return to the Union."

We are not of those who vituperate against President Lincoln and his government for not emancipating the slaves. He has not the constitutional power of doing it, nor of giving legal effect to his proclamation. Would the nation free itself from the guilt and consequent penalty of slavery, let their assembled Legislatures proclaim liberty to those oppressed ones. Not until then can they expect to be exonerated from the plagues consequent upon slavery. Would the South obtain their independence, let them extend liberty to their bondmen.

The nations of Europe have suffered immensely in treasure and in blood for the questionable good of "the balance of power." Regarding the other parties of the American continent, may it not be a question to be correctly solved in the affirmative?—Is not divine providence adjusting the matter of the balance of power in these events, and that not only as respects the various portions of the American continent, but also as respects the nations of the old world?

It would be exceedingly gratifying and instructive were some able hand to take up the whole subject of the present state of things in the United States, and produce a treatise—or a series of papers from week to week in your journal: for it is desirable to see a production on the subject of the moral and religious aspects of the case as well as the political. Taking a review of the causes, giving a just and impartial view of the inadequacy of the primary apparent moving cause, the defeat of the South in the choice of President. Going into the previous differences between North and South, their relations to each other—the obligations of the Federal contract, the question as to the possibility of entering into such a contract for all future time, in view of the constantly changing features and conditions of society, and of the new and important interests which are ever arising and changing, rendering it impossible to force conceptions, which may make all present stipulations nugatory. A review of the several steps taken, North and South, since the contest, and strictly guarding against the too prevalent custom of condemning Rulers, Government, Generals, &c., knowing it is much easier to see after results have taken place than to act with wisdom and prudence under complicated difficulties. The hand and design of God's providence, should form a prominent feature of such an in-quiry.

Already having exceeded the bounds intended, yet I cannot conclude without suggesting the important fact which should make the present disastrous times a subject of sympathy and earnest prayer—the blessed God has a people in the midst of this terrible furnace, and from every hallowed closet, from every Christian family altar, and from every assembled worshipping congregation, should constantly ascend supplications and intercessions in behalf of our suffering fellow Christians especially, and suffering fellow men generally, that the blessed God would accomplish his purposes and shorten the days for the elect's sake.

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Our condition by murmuring at it, but we can make ourselves and all around us very miserable. God knows we can do most for him, and he puts us in that very place that is best for him and for us. It is a hard trial, one of the hardest on earth, for an active and devoted servant of Christ to be rendered unfit for work. But we are very unwise to murmur at it. Those who are deprived of the privilege of laboring for Christ may suffer for him, and by their suffering in a Christian spirit do more good than they could in any other way. "The Dairyman's Daughter" did a far nobler work for Christ by suffering upon her couch than if she had possessed perfect health. She might have been a good maid, and know how to make fine butter and cheese, and been a faithful daughter and sister and Church member; but who would ever have heard of her beyond her little circle. But from her sick bed her feeble voice has gone out through all the earth, and her words to the ends of the world. She is preaching in the language of almost every civilized nation. She little thought at the time of the greatness of the work she was doing. No one ever does who is doing a great work. She simply did her duty, and suffered meekly and humbly and cheerfully for her precious Saviour at that he saw fit to lay upon her. She lost her will in the divine will; and this is the secret of happiness and usefulness.

"Not my will, but thine, O God, be done," was the utterance of the happiest and most useful Being who ever trod the earth in human form, and it came from the deepest darkness of sorrow, and was the increase of a crushed and bleeding heart. The more we resemble him the happier we shall be, and the more good we shall do. When our wills perfectly harmonize with the divine will—when we can feel as well as say "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"—then nothing can disturb us. Everything will please us, because it is the ordering of our heavenly Father.

Dr. Payson wrote near the close of his life: "O what a blessed thing it is to lose one's will! Since I have lost my will I have found happiness. There can be no such thing as disappointment to me, for I have no desire but that God's will may be accomplished. I can find no words to express my happiness. I seem to be swimming in a river of pleasure, which is carrying me on to the great fountain."—Presbyter.

Withholding.
"There is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."
Striking and varying are the many incidents in the providence of God, which might be adduced to illustrate and confirm the foregoing principle. God has ten thousand ways and means by which to strip of their property those who withhold from the poor and his cause more than is meet.

There was a rich farmer of our congregation who walked by the rule, "Get all you can, and keep all you get." He regularly attended church. Every Sunday he and his family were there, but he would pay nothing toward the support of the minister. When asked to do so, he said: "I hold by the good old book—the Bible—which says to ministers, 'Freely ye have received, freely give.' I have no skill of them gentlemen persons. Peter and Paul could preach as good as the best of them, and they fished and made tents for a living, and parsons now-a-days ought, as did they, to work for their bread."

The late Rev. Dr. Abel, when about to return a second time to China, visited our church to take up some matters and things in China, and tell us a collection to aid the mission there. He was a rich farmer, and he had taken from you more than the doctor had to say about China, but at the close, when the collection was taken up, he took his hat and walked out of the church.

The same night a knock was made on my window.

"Who is there?" being asked,
"It is Mr. G.—" (the rich farmer), "Mrs. D. is dying, and wishes to see you immediately. I was soon dressed, and off in my cutter, with all speed to the bedside of the dying lady. We had gone but a little way when he said:
"I have met with a great loss to-night."
"How?"
"You know," said he, "that noble yoke of oxen I lately bought of Mr. S?"
"Yes, what of them?"
"Well, as I passed the creek on my way for you, I found one of them had got out of my barnyard and lay dead in the water."
"I am sorry for your loss, but not at all surprised at it. Sir. Last evening you kept back your offering from the cause of God, and before the morning light he had taken from you more than you withheld. When the collection was to be taken up, you left the church, and shall a man rob God and prosper?"
"Poh!" said he, "do you think God takes notice of such little things?"
"I do: nor are you the first who has read his sin in just such a punishment as you have received."
"That man may breathe, but never lives. Who much receives, but nothing gives. Whom none can love, whom none can thank: Creation's blot, creation's blank."
—N. Y. Examiner.

Public Prayer.
The most common fault in public prayer is carelessness. A well-meaning brother wishes to pray without that careful weighing of thought and words which he would feel to be proper if he were about to commence a speech. His utterance words which are expressive of his feelings, but which fail to arouse that sympathy and unity of feeling which should be manifest in a praying congregation. The congregation may realize that he is leading in prayer, but they cannot realize it to such an extent as to follow him. His carelessness leads him into the utterance of a succession of stereotyped common-places sayings, which a few moments of earnest thought before he commenced his prayer would not in themselves be good and desirable petitions, but that they have fallen so often on the ears of those who are being led in prayer, as to lose all that life and earnestness which should be the characteristic of every prayer offered to God.

In public prayer we cannot be too earnest; we cannot be too direct and pointed in our petitions; and we need not be afraid of making our

Religious Intelligence.
Conversion of a Rabbi.
When I had been two years in office as a Rabbi, the Lord, in His unfeigned mercy, gently knocked at the door of my heart. In the Jewish congregation at B—, in addition to the appointed Christian authority, and was very often visited by the Protestant clergymen of the place, who was inspecting. This circumstance led to an intimacy between him and myself, and, of course, we could hardly avoid conversations on Christianity and Judaism.

My pathway to the New Testament was now opened, and I was powerfully affected by many of the discourses of Christ, especially the Sermon on the Mount, as well as the epistle "Our Father," which I often adopted as my prayer in the Hebrew version. So that, as may be supposed, this book occupied my attention so far as it bore upon the Jewish religion, which I had framed for myself.

The Jewish congregation at B— manifested a singular esteem and affection for me. I married the daughter of the President, who ministered to our maternal comfort in every imaginable way. This I wanted for nothing. I had an official position, and that in a congregation who loved me; I had a gentle wife, endowed by the Lord with all grace; I had her parents, who were always ready to give every wish of my heart; and yet I had no inward peace.

Then I was led by the providence of God to reside in the house of a converted Jew. My taking this step excited much conversation among my hearers, and some of them said that I must take care that Mr. H— did not convert me to Christianity. But I sought after truth and peace—blessings which I was ready to receive, even from Christianity, if I could but obtain them.

Although I lived under the same roof with H—, for a long time I avoided all intercourse with him: But I was so much the more careful to observe his conduct, though he was not aware of it. He had a flourishing business, which fully occupied him, his wife, and two or three assistants. What similar establishments in G— were usually open on the Sabbath, H— kept his closed, and put aside all secular concerns during the whole of the Lord's day. He himself was accustomed to spend his Sundays at a neighboring place to hear the preaching of an awakened Christian minister. Morning and evening he assembled his family for domestic worship. He took the liveliest interest in Home and Foreign Missions; and all this made a powerful impression on me. I could not help saying to myself, "This man surely possesses the peace of God." In a brief conversation I had with him on one occasion, he asked me what the Israelites had in place of the sacrifices which ceased after the destruction of the temple? I answered "Prayer," and evaded further questions. "What are the essential contents?" I now asked myself of the Jewish prayer-book? Almost on every Sabbath, when I was at the table, I would find him taken up with the restoration of the temple and Jerusalem. "What then, is the use of sacrifices?" "To atone for our sins," echoed loudly in my soul; and my disquietude increased day by day. I now began to read the Old Testament with a terrified conscience, and was soon convinced that "the Lord" only "giveth wisdom," and "out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." (Prov. ii. 6.) My religious system, which I had built on the sand, was perfect, and especially among the Jews, who were so much dependent, too much to listen to my entreaty that he would consider the things belonging to her peace. Indeed, when her parents, upon being informed of his change of views, and of my intention, withdrew all further assistance from me, in an unhappy moment she actually resolved to leave me and return to her former home. But when she was about to carry this resolution into effect, the Lord moved her heart by laying me on a bed of sickness. It is now a period of one life had always been very happy; and now the mournful prospect of being left for ever by my beloved wife, the faithful mother of my five little children, broke down my spirit and brought on an attack of fever. But my helpless condition excited such pity in the heart of my poor wife, that she abandoned her purpose. She nursed me in my illness with the most devoted care and affection, and when by the goodness of God I was restored, she vowed that she would never leave me, come what would.

"The God shall be my God," she said, with pious Ruth. And the Lord gave her grace to keep her vow. She now consented to receive Christian instruction, attended the church very regularly, and by degrees became so fully persuaded of the truth of the Gospel, that she at length determined to be baptized with me. On August 24, 1860, this rite was administered to us and our dear children, in St. Matthew's church, at Berlin, by the Rev. Dr. Buechell, in the presence of Herr Kleist-Retzow, Dr. Hengstenberg, and other Christian friends.

On looking back upon my past life, and on the way the Lord has led me, I must acknowledge with the apostle Paul, that "I obtained mercy." I also was a "chief sinner." It is true that I never persecuted any Christian church; but I confess with deep contrition, that, as a Rabbi, I have very often attacked Christianity in my discourses, without knowing anything whatever about it. Like most of my erring brethren, I looked upon Christianity with special contempt; and hence I was, in the strict sense of a word, a "chief sinner." But, "I obtained mercy." The Lord led me to know my sinful condition, uncovered all my inward wounds and bruises, and showed me the "balm of Gilead," the Physician who took our sickness on Himself and healed it, the Saviour who came into the world to save sinners. I will openly praise His mercy, the Lord as long as I have breath; and I cannot but speak with sincere gratitude of the great kindness and readiness with which Christian friends came to my assistance, who unwearingly aided me by word and deed, and whose spiritual counsel and instruction removed every obstacle that separated me from the Lord. May God bless these valiant men, and grant me grace so to order my walk and conversation that it may give them much joy.

May the Triune God bless all faithful friends of Israel; and enable me, by His grace, very soon to preach the Gospel which has brought me peace, among my erring Jewish brethren, in the glory of His holy name, and the justification of those who send me! Amen.—Methodist Magazine.

Week of Prayer—1863.
The following invitation to observe a Week of Special Prayer at the commencement of the ensuing year has been issued by the British Evangelical Alliance. They thankfully acknowledge the valuable aid rendered by the various Missionary Societies and other institutions in kindly undertaking to transmit copies to the address of their respective stations and agents abroad.

Former invitations to observe a Week of Special and United Prayer at the beginning of the year have met with a very extensive and hearty response. From almost every country in every quarter of the globe did such prayer second to heaven; during that hallowed week on behalf both of the Church and of the World.

The manifold blessings by which these seasons have been marked render it imperative upon us to regard them. Christians of every country and name are, therefore, affectionately recommended to set apart the eight days, January 4—11 (inclusive) of the ensuing year, for simultaneous and earnest supplication with thanksgiving to Him who has commanded—"Pray without ceasing." In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

The following topics are suggested as suitable for a prominent place in our meditations and intercessions on the successive days, the general adoption of which would give a character of agreement to our services highly acceptable to the Lord (for so he has taught us), and animating in the consciousness of it to our own hearts.

Sunday, Jan. 4.—Sermons on the Dispensation of the Spirit.

Monday, Jan. 5.—Humble Confession of our manifold Sins: As Individuals, Families, Churches, and Nations. Prayer for the Lord's Blessing on the Services of the week.

Tuesday, Jan. 6.—The Conversion of the World: especially those of our own Families and Congregations—Large success to all the means employed for the Evangelisation of different Classes of the Population, and for checking every form of vice and immorality.

Wednesday, Jan. 7.—Increased Spirituality and Holiness in the Children of God; leading to their closer union and sympathy with each other, and more marked separation from the world—a richer baptism of the Holy Spirit on all Ministers and the fellow-labourers in Christian lands, to quicken their love and zeal, and make them "wise to win souls"—a blessing upon all Seminaries of sound learning and religious education—a large increase of devotedness, self-denial and liberality on the part of the people at large.

Thursday, Jan. 8.—The Conversion of the Jews—the more extensive and successful Preaching of the Gospel among the Heathen—the revival of pure Christianity among the Ancient Churches of the East—the overthrow of every form of anti-Christian error—the comforting and liberation of them who are in bonds for the Gospel's sake—the prevalence of peace among all Nations—a blessing upon the souls of all Brethren and Sisters engaged in Missionary labour among Heathen and other unevangelized populations.

Friday, Jan. 9.—The Word of God: The universal recognition of its Divine inspiration and authority—the power of the Holy Spirit to accompany its circulation and perusal. The Lord's Day: The acknowledgment of its sanctity and obligation—a blessing upon all efforts for promoting its better observance at Home and on the Continent.

Saturday, Jan. 10.—Thanksgiving for our numerous Temporal Blessings and Spiritual Privileges—Prayer for Kings and all in authority—for all who suffer from war, scarcity, or any other affliction—for all sorts and conditions of Men.

Sunday, Jan. 11.—Sermons: The Church—"praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching therewith with all perseverance."

May the Spirit of grace and supplication be abundantly poured out upon all who respond to this invitation! May their prayers come up with acceptance before God, the Father Almighty, through the Priesthood of His Blessed Son! The Lord "will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry: when He shall hear it, He will answer thee."

The Committee will be obliged by editors of journals and other friends giving publicity to the above invitation, and they expressly request that persons into whose hands it may come kindly promote the holding of Prayers-meetings during the week mentioned in their several neighbourhoods.

Obituary.
FRANCIS COOK, ESQ., OF CANNO.
"The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."
The tribute of a friend to the memory of Francis Cook, Esq., of Canno, who departed this life in the faith and hope of the Gospel, on the 8th April, 1862.

The design of the writer of this notice is simply to record such particulars as are illustrative of the more prominent features of his distinguished character and life of our now sainted brother, and which will reflect an easily recognized portrait of him to all his acquaintances, as well as the sentiments of material other than that obtained by personal intercourse, render this course as much a matter of necessity as of preference.

I. He became religious at an early period of life. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth" is a command that has always been too much neglected by those to whom it is addressed, notwithstanding that it is issued by a high authority, by "The King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and is enforced by the most powerful motives. The rising generation in general neglect its kindly admonition, viewing the meretricious charms and delusive pleasures of the world through a deceptive medium, they attach a degree of importance to them which they ill deserve, and anticipate in their enjoyment that happiness which they are unable to bestow. But a few in every age have acted a wiser and a nobler part, to this distinguished case Mr. Cook belonged. When he was quite a youth he is believed to have been greatly impressed in listening to the gaily extortions and earnest prayers of Mr. Joseph Toby, a devoted Christian layman, who, in the absence of ministerial supply, conducted religious services on the Sabbath in the neighbourhood of Gyraboro' for a lengthened period. He has long since gone to his reward, and natural instrumentalities were nurtured by the Rev. Arthur McCurt, so that during the pastorate of the Rev. M. Cranwick, when the membership of the church became increased, Mr. C. was appointed to perform the important duties of a Leader—in which responsible position he continued to labour with diligence and success until the close of his active life. He was a zealous and faithful adherent of the words of God "Those that seek me early shall find me," and "I will set him on high—because he hath known my name."

2. His religion was scriptural, uniform and earnest. In the estimation of many, Christian experiences is only another name for enthusiasm, and in their opinion the possession of it proceeds, either from imbecility of intellect or depravity of heart. It is evident from the nature and design of the gospel, as from our moral state and character, that the genuine Christian has not only a theoretical acquaintance with the great verities of religion, but experiences its saving power upon the heart, absorbing from sin, communicating new views of divine things—implanting holy principles in the soul, and giving a decided bias to the temper, words and actions. From the time the Holy Spirit convinced him of his sinful state, Mr. Cook diligently sought the blessings of the new covenant, and soon obtained a personal acquaintance with our Lord Jesus Christ—nor did he ever make shipwreck of justifying faith.

Whatever alterations he experienced in his spiritual enjoyments he "held fast the beginning of his confidence." He was not only an inward or experimental, but a practical Christianity, his profession was justified by the work of faith, and by the labour of love, by pureness and by knowledge. He was exemplary in his attendance upon the means of grace, both public and private, he lived in the spirit of prayer, and was indeed "fervent in spirit serving the Lord." Nor was his service one of prayer and profession merely, the temporal interests of the cause of God, employed his thoughts, called forth his efforts, and was largely sustained by his contributions. His house, and his purse like his heart were ever open in the service of his Redeemer and his neighbor. He was not forgetful of his affectionate care for the poor, and his benevolence was manifested by him on one occasion especially, when his race was well nigh run, and when none could expect that his mind would be otherwise than absorbed in the matter of his own personal sufferings—nor would it have been but for the force of gracious habit, which evinced its existence in the performance of acts of kindness to ministers and Christians, and all others so far as it was practicable, to "assist every one to do good." "The love of Christ" manifestly constituted the spiritual and temporal welfare of his fellow men—long will his Christian zeal, labors and liberality be remembered with admiration by those who survive him.

His patience and submission to the Divine will formed a prominent and amiable feature in his character. He was not without afflictions, but these were sympathetic and personal. But his faith and hope were in God, and he has been heard to say "Though he slay me yet will I trust in Him." The disease which caused his death was most distressing—it was cancer on the tongue. By some it may be regarded as very mysterious that such a disease should be permitted to fasten itself upon such a man, that the tongue which had so frequently been employed in prayer and praise should be thus visited and destroyed. But the works of God like himself are "wonderful and past finding out," and shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Some are permitted to glorify him by their actions, and others by their passive obedience—it was the lot of our departed friend to do both—it is consoling to know that whether we do or suffer the will of God, if we glorify Him we shall not lose our reward. There are now many prominent anomalies in the dispensations of Divine Providence which will be explained hereafter. "Now we know in part, but then shall we know even as we are known." God did not forsake his servant during his affliction, his strength was equal to his day, and he was honored with a complete victory over the last enemy. Frequently would he, when it was too painful for him to speak, lift his hand to heaven, and seem to rejoice in hope and victory. Thus he entered into his rest.

"Sweet of God will dwell,
Thy God will dwell,
The Lord's strength, the Lord's love,
And these are better than all."

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