

AVAILABLE RESPONSIBLE TIGHT BINDING RELIURE TROP RIGIDE

The Christian Watchman

W. DAY, Printer. BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE, BY LOVE UNFEIGNED.—ST. PAUL. REV. E. B. DEMILL, A. M., Editor

VOL. I. SAINT JOHN, NEW-BRUNSWICK, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1861. NO. 51

Original Contributions

HEBREW POETRY.

NUMBER IV.

To illustrate the intense nationality of these poems, and show how they entered into the very soul of the national religion, it may not be out of place to offer a faint sketch of the Jewish worship.

Let us then transport ourselves, in thought, back to that glorious city, and let the time be the days of Solomon—nor of the later Kings, but after the restoration, when Israel was just recovering from the terrific exhaustion of the captivity.

They had come back again, a few thousands at the most, and had gone away, and had labored hard amid sufferings and opposition. At length they had finished the temple, and afterwards, amid still greater difficulties, the walls were built. Then at last, feeling secure, the nation gave itself up to joy.

But it is a joy mingled with many varying feelings. Out of all the people there are but few who have not been born in exile. The younger generations entered with enthusiasm into the delightful task of reviving the old national customs, but the older ones, who think of the former city and temple—when contrasting with the present—weep aloud.

But the prophets Haggai and Zechariah are among them to comfort them with the prophecies of the Lord, and Ezra and Nehemiah have found the Scriptures where the people may read the past, and take comfort.

It is a glorious day, the season of the feast of tabernacles. The people, high and low, have realized that nothing shall be wanting to restore the ancient rites in all their former magnificence, and now the roof of every house is green with vines, made of the branches of the olive and the palm, and as we look from mount Zion, we see the streets swarming with people coming up to the temple. The morning sacrifices, and morning services, have already been performed, but the great services of the day is yet to come.

Look around upon the scene. This is the people who the sorrows of exile and oppression have not broken down. Their fervent patriotism has never been quenched. This is that people who, after seventy years of hope deferred, and agonizing sorrow, and doubt and fear, have left all their wealth, all the new sciences, and friends of that country—where they had dwelt for the blessed privilege of living under the shadow of that Jerusalem, their prominent among all is Nehemiah, who has left the pomp and luxury of a Persian Court, and in his own royal favor, to live in exile in a ruined city, with a pauper people.

But the joy, the laughter, the singing, the music, that arise from every side are not the marks of miserable poverty. For the feelings of this repentant people, no longer self-necked or idolatrous, who came to lay the universal national love upon the altar of their God.

The crowd increases. All the house tops—all the walls—all the surrounding country—are green with arbors and tabernacles. Such a festival has not been seen in the whole history of the nation since the days of Joshua.

All the temple service is completely restored, and for the first time in nearly a century, will be repeated in the ancient manner. For the Levites have been sought out of all their places, and the sons of the singers from all the villages which the singers had builded round about Jerusalem.

The psalm which will constitute the service of this day has been written for this occasion by Ezra—making the nation speak as one man, its degradation before and during the captivity, and its marvellous deliverances are described.

This is that psalm which in after days Luther appropriated for his peculiar comfort, and wrote against his study wall.

"This is my psalm—which I love. Though I love all the psalms and Scriptures, and regard them as my life, yet have I had such experience of this psalm that it must remain, and shall be called my psalm, for it has been very precious to me, has delivered me out of many troubles—and without it neither Emperor, Kings, nor Saints could have helped me."

And now the procession of Levites moves toward the temple. In the words of another psalm, (88th 25—28 verse) in the order of the procession may be known.

"They have seen thy going, Oh God! The goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary."

The singers went before.

The players on instruments followed after.

Among them were the damsels playing on timbrels.

Bless ye God in the Congregations, Even the Lord from the fountain of Israel."

The Levite singers in the procession commence singing responsively—the following formulae:

"Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for he is God, For his mercy endureth forever; Let Israel now say That his mercy endureth forever. Let the house of Aaron now say

That his mercy endureth forever. Let them now say that for the Lord say. That his mercy endureth forever."

The Levite singers of the procession then sung the following expression of the desire of the people to thank the Lord.

"Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will go in and praise the Lord."

To which the Levite singers of the outer court respond,

"This is the gate of the Lord Into which the righteous enter."

Then the Levite singers of the procession sang in the ears of the people the praises of that mercy which raised them up from their humiliation, in the following prophetic lines.

"I will praise thee for thou hast heard me And art become my salvation The stones which the builders refused Is become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, It is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made We will rejoice in it and be glad, Save us now I beseech thee Oh Lord Oh Lord I beseech thee send now prosperity."

After which follows another invitation from the Levites of the outer court.

"Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord We have blessed you out of the house of the Lord God is the Lord which hath shewn us light; Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar."

After which the singers conclude with a resolution to praise God and an invitation to the ancient rites in all their former magnificence, and now the roof of every house is green with vines, made of the branches of the olive and the palm, and as we look from mount Zion, we see the streets swarming with people coming up to the temple. The morning sacrifices, and morning services, have already been performed, but the great services of the day is yet to come.

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slaughtered saints "whose bones lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold!" and their relentless persecutors sang them in the hour of triumph.

They burst from the lips of Huss when in his latest distress; they were hurled by Luther in defiance of his enemies; the stout heart of Calvin found delight in their sound; and they rose to Heaven even from amid the agonies of Ridley and Latimer.

They were heard when the Spanish Inquisition lighted the fires for many an "auto da fe," and when the streets of Paris were redempted with the blood of St. Bartholomew's day. The dungeons of the holy office could not smother their sound, nor could the smoke and fires of Smithfield prevent them from ascending to proclaim on high the constancy of the English Martyrs.

Their lofty strains sounded forth from the Bohemians amid the wild fastnesses to which they were driven, they rose grandly from the Pilgrim Fathers, and drowned the raging of the winter's wind, and the loud roar of the surf that dashed around Plymouth Rock; they were wrung out from the stern Covenanters, as escaping from strife and fierce resistance, amid blood and fire, and battle, he lay dying in his last retreat, and waving his broken sword above his head gasped out his soul to the sound of this terrific music.

We have thus seen the long preparations which the Hebrews had; their long experience, in which every scene surpassed in depth of character that of every other nation, and we have seen that this preparation resulted in a poetry worthy of such a purpose. We have seen too the effect of that poetry on other generations and other hearts than those of Israel.

And what a result was that? What other nation can boast of such? What other national song now remains to be appropriated by other peoples and to influence the heart. We read the Odes of Anacreon—or Sappho—our taste is gratified, but our hearts are untouched.

"Thou art my God and I will praise Thee Thou art my God—I will exult thee. Oh give thanks unto the Lord for he is good For his mercy endureth forever."

Then follow the sacrifice of bulls and goats and lambs, accompanied with many abominable songs, and the visits to the different gates when the wall is dedicated, all of which Nehemiah will afterwards describe for the benefit of future ages.

Lastly there is the evening sacrifice followed by the trumpet call when the day ends by the chanting of the last psalm.

Hallelujah!

Praise God in the Sanctuary Praise Him in the firmament of his power Praise Him for His mighty acts Praise Him according to His excellent greatness Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet Praise Him with the Psalter and Harp Praise Him with the timbral and dance Praise Him with stringed instruments and organs Praise Him with the loud cymbals Praise Him with the high sounding cymbals. "Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord Hallelujah!"

Thus we see how the Psalms were the outburst of feeling on great national occasions, as well as in the closet of the private individual. How they expressed a people's feeling and were the wall of lamentation on misfortune or the shout of joy after deliverance.

They had been written amid great spiritual conflicts by men who had a harder battle to fight than any mortal warrior had ever known. Men who had acted, suffered, known every variety of good or evil fortune who had been tried, tempted, persecuted and forsaken, destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy.

They had probed the human heart to its depths and knew its secrets. These were they who out of the depths cried unto their God, or who, having come forth out of great tribulation sang their songs of joy.

So the Psalmist wrote for the nation and for the individual, and their songs were accepted by both nations and individuals, as no songs were ever accepted either before or since. Of these they may be said to be a sense applicable to no others that they were National Songs. Among the first lessons taught to prattling childhood were the psalms of his nation. Through life he sang them, repeated them, quoted them, and many a hoary headed child of Israel entered the great unscathed land with the last memories on his lips.

Now we quote from Tennyson, Byron, Milton, or all expressive Shakespeare. So the Hebrew found in his Book of Psalms expressions for every event or emotion in his private life—every occurrence in the career of his nature—every hope—fear—aspiration of his heart—as a man—or citizen. These all found utterance.

"From grave to grave—from lively to severe." In the times that have elapsed since the old Jewish days what associations cling around these Book of Psalms—what a history does it possess! The utterance of the oppressor and oppressed, of wolf and lamb. The martyr Protestant sought consolation in its strains, and in its strains too, the priests of Rome uttered their mistaken rage. They were sung by Paul and Silas amid the gloom of their dungeon, they were chaunted by the Christians when cast to the wild beasts at Antioch—they were echoed along the interminable passages of the Catacombs at Rome. They were shouted out as the battle songs of warring sectaries; they were the lullies of those

they were unintelligible. They were altogether unmeaning and full of puzzling oriental imagery. So their sound fell unheeded on our ears. But the Holy Spirit, brooding over the surface of our enlightened minds, said—let there be light! and oh! what a change was there. It was as though we had ceaped from darkness into day. We heard those Divine Psalms. Their music charmed our hearts like the songs of angels. When the Holy Spirit came, did not our hearts burn within us as He opened unto us the Scriptures!

To reign supreme in the national heart, to be the utterance of myriads of noble souls in the past, to have the prospect of universal sway over the heart of the entire world in the future. This might well be deemed a destiny sufficiently exalted even for the inspired songs of the Hebrews. They have, however, a higher destiny than this.

The latest and most favored prophet that stood upon the earth, in the wreat vision, gazed from the bleak solitude of Patmos and saw all the drama of the future played out before him. There he sat—the last of all the poet seers, and before him rose up the grand outline of the "great white Throne" and Him that sat upon it, "before whose face earth and dust away." What was then the sound that burst upon his ears amid the calls of angels—the cries of the lost, the bellings of thunder, and the voice of the eternal? It was the same familiar sound—known to his infancy—dear to his childhood—precious to his whole life—which he had often heard in the temple of Jerusalem—when he stood there witnessing its worship—side by side with the Son of Man. It was the venerable formula of the Temple service, sacred and dear to his human heart by countless associates, the beginning and ending of many a familiar psalm—which reached his ear even amid the terrors which were then unfolded.

Hallelujah! Praise ye the Lord For the Lord reigneth!

So these Psalms shall never die but like Him who inspired them shall be eternal to be heard after heard by those who may be permitted to stand—around the throne.

J.

For the Christian Watchman.

The Imprecatory Psalms.

While one of the contributors of the Christian Watchman is favoring its readers with a series of excellent articles on the poetry of the Hebrews, it may not be out of place for us here, to notice a class of psalms which many have felt to be exceedingly difficult to understand, and whose spirit seems not to harmonize with other portions of the Holy Scriptures, especially with the New Testament. The most difficult of these Psalms is the one hundred and ninth. This Psalm is thoroughly imbued with a spirit which at a superficial glance seems to be in opposition to the principles and aims of Christianity.

We notice the contents of this Psalm. The Psalmist pleads with God not to keep silence while his enemies with perjured lips seek his destruction (vs. 1—5.)

"To the chief musician by David, a Psalm, O God of my praise keep not silence; For the mouth of the wicked, and the mouth of deceit open on me, They speak against me with a tongue of falsehood, And with words of hatred they encompass me, Thus, ceaselessly they make war against me. In return for my love they are my adversaries But I give myself wholly unto prayer. They have rendered me evil for good, And hatred in return for my love."

The Psalmist prays that the destruction designed for the innocent may overtake the false accuser,—that he may be tried by his enemy, condemned and executed,—that his iniquity may be visited upon his children,—that his property may be plundered and his very name forgotten, (6—15.)

"May he also be placed under an evil man, And let an adversary testify against him. When tried let him be found guilty, And let his prayer be deemed sin, Let his days on earth be few, And let another take his office. Let his sons be fatherless, And let his wife be a widow. Let his children be wanderers and beggars, And let them seek bread from their desolate abodes. Let the extortioner lay snares for all he hath, And let strangers plunder his wealth. Let there be none prolonging kindness unto him, And let none be gracious unto his orphans. Let his posterity be cut off utterly— In the generation following, let his name be blotted out. Let the sin of his fathers be remembered before Jehovah, And the iniquity of his mother let it not be forgotten. Let them be before Jehovah continually, And let their memory be cut off from the earth."

This doom the Psalmist invokes upon him for his atrocious wickedness. He was merciless. He persecuted the afflicted, he delighted in the

109th, are only what we might expect, and are indications of a sense of justice, a love for the law, and a zeal for the honor of God, rather than manifestations of a spirit of hatred or revenge.

Madagascar.

At length we are in possession of the truth as regards Madagascar. The letters and papers now received from the Mauritius completely dispose of the stories told by the French at Reunion of the conversion of the new King to Catholicism, and his desire to make his country an appanage of the French Empire. His acts have been entirely consistent with his former professions of Christianity, with the liberal and benevolent ideas which have been attributed to him, and with his attachment to the English. Prince RAMBOLALAM, his rival, has not been killed, but simply banished from the capital, and the accession of RADAMA II. to the throne has been signalled only by acts of wisdom and promise. One of his first was to write letters to the Protestant Missionaries at the Mauritius and the Cape, informing them that the land was once more open to the preachers of the Gospel. He has distinctly repeated his own adherence to Protestant Christianity.

The Rev. Mr. LEBRUN, the aged pastor of the Missionary cause at Port Louis, has received letters both from the KING and from RA HANTRAKA, his Chief Secretary, who is a personal friend of Mr. LE BRUN'S, and once spent some time in England. Both letters are in English, which the KING writes tolerably, expressing himself grammatically. No copy of these letters has yet been received in this country, but we know that they contain, amongst other things, a statement that he is resolved upon immediately instituting schools upon a large scale for the instruction of his subjects of all ages. Immediately upon their receipt, the Rev. J. J. LE BRUN JUN., took ship, with two Malagasy attendants, for Madagascar, where it is believed, he arrived about the end of September. He would at once proceed to Antananarivo, and there await the coming of Mr. LEBRUN.

The KING has also formally announced his intention to the Governor of the Mauritius, and expressed his desire that a more intimate intercourse with that Colony may be established—the result of this letter was the appointment of a mission to the KING, bearing the congratulations of his Excellency, and thanking him for his promise to extend facilities to trade and commerce. The Legislative Council voted £2000 for presents in the shape of horses, furniture, a crystal service, &c., which the mission took with them. The Mauritius Society of Arts and Sciences, and the Port Louis Chamber of Commerce also forwarded addresses, in which they press the KING to send specimens of the valuable and multifarious products of his country to the Great International Exhibition of 1862. England will, therefore, be well represented at his Court, and there is very little reason to fear any preponderance of French influence. If any apprehension could arise on this score, it would be from the fact that the KING retains his old friendship for M. LAMBERT, who is not an Englishman, as the writer of the City Article in the Times supposes, but a Frenchman, and it is to be feared a very unprincipled intriguer. He and a M. LABORDE in favour with the late QUEEN, were suffered to reside there when all other Europeans had been banished, and LAMBERT retained two Jesuit priests in disguise in his house. While making large presents to the QUEEN, and professing great respect for her, he diligently cultivated the acquaintance of the PRINCE, and in the year 1857 induced him to sign a secret treaty offering the Protectorate of the island to France if the EMPEROR would assist him to dethrone his mother. There is every reason to believe that, as the PRINCE was quite unacquainted with the French language he did not at all understand what he had been signing. LAMBERT came with this document to Europe; but the French Government at once communicated its contents to Lord CLARENDON, and refused to take any steps in the matter without the consent of England. LAMBERT and LABORDE afterwards unsuccessfully attempted a coup d'etat, and the PRINCE thought himself especially bound to them for the dangers they had run on his behalf. The KING has now entrusted M. LAMBERT with a mission to the Courts of France and England, to obtain his recognition as King of the Hovas; but he emphatically declares that he does not desire the protection of any Power. He rightly believes that independence will most conduce to the prosperity of his subjects. It is said that the KING has intimated his intention of making LAMBERT his Prime Minister, and that he has already made him a concession of land containing rich mines which are to be worked by an Anglo-French Company.

M. LABORDE, we perceive, has made all haste to return to the island, taking with him a couple of Jesuit priests; but whatever intrigues these people may set on foot, we are now quite sure that Madagascar will be open for the unobscured labors of our Protestant Missionaries, and after so long a season of trial and persecution, in which the power of truth in the former converts has been so signally illustrated, we have every reason to hope that the land will be reclaimed from heathenism, and the teachings of a pure Christianity joyfully embraced by the people.—London Patriot.

THE CHRISTIAN WATCHMAN

Times however has but little hope of such a... (Article text)

must, until her violation of neutral rights is fully... (Article text)

three things which will immediately follow the... (Article text)

Paris, South, New York, J. W. M. L. A. In... (Article text)

MEMORANDA... (List of names and addresses)

MILLINERY... GRAND DISPLAY... (Advertisement for James Manson's)

Allying to the probability of war with the... (Article text)

The Times says, the wisest course of Canada... (Article text)

Great interest excited in Paris; appearance... (Article text)

MEMORANDA... (List of names and addresses)

MILLINERY... GRAND DISPLAY... (Advertisement for James Manson's)

MILLINERY... GRAND DISPLAY... (Advertisement for James Manson's)

These three classes of Men-of-War in reserve... (Article text)

The Liverpool Post gives the rumor that Na... (Article text)

The German press generally takes part with... (Article text)

Arrival of the "Jura"... (Article text)

FOR GENTLEMEN... (List of names and addresses)

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The Morning Post (Govt. organ) says—"It... (Article text)

French journals universally look at "Trent... (Article text)

Excitement respecting "Trent" affair is un... (Article text)

FOR GENTLEMEN... (List of names and addresses)

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THE "DAILY NEWS" says that the depositions... (Article text)

It was rumored that the "Peris" was char... (Article text)

On Wednesday evening, the 11th inst., by... (Article text)

FOR GENTLEMEN... (List of names and addresses)

FOR GENTLEMEN... (List of names and addresses)

FOR GENTLEMEN... (List of names and addresses)

On Friday morning, Margaret, daughter of... (Article text)

On Tuesday morning, at his residence in Pr... (Article text)

On Saturday morning, late, a lingering... (Article text)

FOR GENTLEMEN... (List of names and addresses)

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