

## POETRY.

From the *Christian Keepsake*.

## THE CAVE OF MACHPELAH—A SCRIPTURE SCENE.

By Miss. Hannah F. Gould.

The sun over Hebron's green plain rising bright,  
His first rays of glory has sent  
To blend with the tears, where the dark eye of night  
Has wept round the patriarch's tent.

For, sorrow and death, with the night, hover there;  
The spirit of Sarah has fled;  
Her form lies at rest, while the soft morning air,  
With Abraham, sighs o'er the dead.

The tall, aged oak, that is guarding the door,  
With arms spread widely away,  
A fresh, living curtain hangs trembling before  
The peaceful and spiritless clay.

And there in his grief does the patriarch stand,  
He looks to the left and the right,  
And forward and back, for a place in the land  
To bury the dead from his sight.

But, thus far away from the land of his birth,  
From all of his kindred and name,  
No spot where his lost one may sleep in the earth,  
The lonely Chaldean can claim.

A field lies before him, with trees green and high,  
A grove that embosoms a cave;  
And this does he seek with his silver to buy,  
To hallow it thence, as a grave.

The people of Canaan, who pass to and fro  
From the gates of their city, draw near  
The tent of the pilgrim their pity to show,  
His woes and his wishes to hear.

Majestic in sorrow he stands, while the crowd  
From o'er the wide plain gather round:  
With reverence now to their chief has he bowed,  
Till his white, flowing beard met the ground.

His accents are firm: in his eyes is there shown  
The wisdom that beams through a tear;  
And thus is the grief of his bosom made known,  
While Ephron, the ruler, gives ear.

"A stranger I come from my home far away;  
The ground of a stranger I tread:  
While death has a place in my dwelling to-day,  
I've nowhere to bury my dead."

"Behold," replies Ephron, in sympathy's voice,  
"We have many sepulchres made,  
Where slumber our dead, and we give thee thy choice  
Of all, wherein thine may be laid."

The patriarch answers, "Can silver procure  
A spot, that to me and to mine  
Shall be a possession, made sacred and sure—  
I ask it of thee, and of thine?"

"The cave, that is there in the end of the field,  
The cave of Machpelah, the earth,  
And trees round about it, I ask thee to yield  
To me, and to name me their worth."

"'Tis four hundred shekels of silver: but what  
Is silver between thee and me?"  
The generous owner replies, "Of the spot  
I give full possession to thee."

Once more speaks the sage of Chaldea: "The land  
I take, but the gift I decline:  
The price duly weighed, putting now in thy hand,  
I make the place righteously mine."

And now, on the fair land of promise is laid  
The first claim of permanent hold!  
A grave is the purchase! the first ever made  
Of earth, with her silver or gold.

Blest Cave of Machpelah! how holy the trust,  
That long has been given to thee!  
Enshrined in thy bosom how rich is the dust!  
How great its disclosure will be!

For when the archangel descending the skies,  
Shall give the loud summons to all,  
Then Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will rise  
From thee, and come forth at the call!

From "Friendship's Offering," for 1838.

## A PRAYER.

Lord! I have bowed with fervour at the shrine  
Of beauty, Fame, and Friendship; but to thine  
How coldly have I bent the formal knee;  
The while my truant heart was far from thee.

But do thou aid my weakness with the strength  
Of thy sufficient spirit; till, at length,  
I burst my bonds, and from its throne is hurled  
That worshipped Dagon of my heart—the World.

H.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

GEORGE HERBERT.

Born 1593; Died 1633.

Mr. Herbert, from the energy and enthusiasm of his natural character, as well as from nobler motives, was a most zealous and faithful priest, and in his private life strict and exemplary. He and his household attended prayers every day at the canonical hours of ten and four in the chapel of the Rectory. "The meaner sort of his parish," says his faithful biographer, "did so love and reverence Mr. Herbert, that they would let their ploughs rest when Mr. Herbert's saint's-bell rung for prayers, that they might also offer their devotions to God with him, and would then return back to their plough. And his holy life was such, that it begot reverence to God and to him, that they thought themselves the happier when they carried Mr. Herbert's blessing back with them to their labours." Mr. Herbert sang his own hymns to the lute or viol, of which instruments he was a master; and, though fond of retirement, he attended twice a week at the cathedral at Salisbury: saying, that "the time spent in prayer and cathedral music elevated his soul, and was his heaven upon earth;" and, to justify his practice, he would often say, "that religion does not banish mirth, but only moderates and sets rules to it." Many anecdotes are told of his piety and charity; and, indeed from the period that he took orders, his life seems to have been one of unreserved dedication to God. He died of a consumptive disorder in 1632. Of "The Temple, or Sacred Poems," Walton says, "Twenty thousand copies were sold in a few years after their publication." It is worthy of notice, that this volume was the only companion of Cowper during his first melancholy eclipse. Herbert's prose work, "The Country Parson, his Character and Rule of Holy Life," is an inestimable little treatise.—*Church.*

## EVIL SPEAKING.

Never believe, much less propagate, an ill report of your neighbor without good evidence of its truth. Never listen to an infamous story, handed to you by a man who is a known enemy of the person defamed, or who is himself infamous for defaming his neighbors, or who is wont to sow discord among brethren and excite disturbance in society. Never utter an evil which you know or suspect of another while you are under the operation of malevolence, but wait till your spirits, are cooled down, that you may judge whether to utter or suppress the matter. Never express the evil which you would say of your neighbor, in terms too strong, or language which would convey an exaggerated idea of his conduct.

## THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

"The cross of Christ," says Luther, "doth not signify that piece of wood which Christ did bear upon his shoulders, and to the which he was afterwards nailed." By the cross of Christ we understand, the doctrine of salvation by a crucified Redeemer, that which St. Paul says was "unto the Jews

a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."—*Rev. H. Blunt.*

## THE CHURCH.

The more our Church is examined, the more her Scriptural nature, and practical excellence will appear. In her constitution she is apostolical; in her spirit she is tolerant; her doctrines are scriptural; her liturgy approximates to inspiration; her articles were written in the blood of reformers; her prayers consoled the hearts of martyrs; her services combine the beauty of order with the charm of variety, and the fervour of zeal with the depth of devotion. Her utility has been proved in seasons of trial, and her excellence has been proclaimed by the voice of experience. "Walk about our Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof; mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; and if with an unprejudiced mind and a devotional spirit you examine her high character, the search will be delightful, the reward abundant. She will appear to you the bulwark of sound doctrine, and the sanctuary of Scriptural pity; and then a martyr's spirit will be exhibited in a martyr's language, which you say, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee."—*Ch. of Eng. Mag.*

## REV. A. FULLER.

It has been remarked, that scarcely any thing passed under the notice of the late Mr. Fuller, without affording a lesson of instruction. Many of his sermons had their origin in local circumstances, which furnished both the topic of discourse and the medium of illustration. Going once to preach at some distance from home, after a heavy fall of rain, which had inundated a part of the road, so as nearly to render it impassable, he had to depend entirely on a guide. He crossed the flood to some distance, when the water reaching his horse's saddle he began to feel alarm, and was unwilling to proceed. But his guide called out, "Go forward; all will be well." Mr. Fuller depended on his testimony, and they landed safely on the other side. This circumstance suggested the necessity of a Divine Guide; and the importance of walking by faith, and not by sight in our progress to the heavenly world; a subject which he soon after illustrated in the earliest, and one of the best of his printed sermons.

## ETERNITY.

The only theme that confuses, humbles and alarms the proud intellect of man. What is it? The human mind can grasp any defined length of time but never vast; but this beyond time and too great for the limited conception of man. It has no beginning, it can have no end. It cannot be multiplied, it cannot be added unto; you may strive to subtract from it, but it is useless. Take millions and millions of years from it, take all the time that enters the compass of your imagination, it is still whole and undiminished as before; all calculation is lost. Think on; the brain becomes heated and oppressed with a sensation too powerful for it to bear, and reason falters in her seat, and you rise with the conviction of the impossibility of the creature to fathom the Creator, humiliated with a sense of your own nothingness, and impressed with the tremendous majesty of Deity.

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