

The Watchman.

"I HAVE SET WATCHMEN UPON THY WALLS O JERUSALEM THAT SHALL NEVER HOLD THEIR PEACE, DAY NOR NIGHT."

VOL. I.

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Poetry.

AS THY DAY, SO SHALL THY STRENGTH BE.

When sorrow's tear is trembling in the eye;
When grief's pale shadow on the brow is cast;
When in some much-loved breast life's lingering sigh,
Faint and more faint, is heard—till all is past—
How dark and cheerless seems our future lot.
On life's lone track our weary way we wend,
Till Jesus sweetly whispers, "sorrow not,
In me you have a never-dying friend."

When riches take them wings and flee away;
And, in a moment,—as a vision past—
Our cherished joys all wither and decay,
Beneath adversity's chill, withering blast;
Oh! then 'tis sweet to raise the drooping eye
To that dear Saviour, who hath made us seek
Treasures that perish not—beyond the sky—
While thus he disciplines our faith so weak.

When the fierce Tempter seeks the unwary soul,
And seems about to overwhelm it quite;—
When waves of waves, in quick succession roll,
And the thick storm cloud gathers, dark as night;
Oh! then, like bursting sunshine, bright and clear,
Comes some sweet promise, by the Saviour spoken;
The gracious Word proclaims his promise near,
The subtle Fowler's snares at once are broken.

And worse, when recent sin's dark shadow lies
Upon the soul, like some funeral pall;
When its transgressions seem to reach the skies,
And in loud accents, for stern vengeance call;
'Tis then our Surety speaks, and at his voice,
The parting clouds disclose the smiling heaven;
The saved sinner cannot but rejoice,
For God Himself hath sealed the pardon given.

And when the soul is brought to Jordan's brink,
And sees the waters rolling darkly by;
When trembling nature makes it backward shrink
From the cold passage to Eternity:
Then "precious faith" shows how, beyond the stream,
Canaan's fair fields in brightest sunshine glow;
The Ark, mid-channel, sheds its cheering beam,
And the now joyful soul is fain to go.

A CHILD'S GRAVE.

It is a place where thankfulness,
Its tearful tribute giveth,
That one so pure hath left a world
Where so much sorrow liveth;
Where trial, to the heavy heart,
Its constant cross presenteth,
And every hour some trace retains
For which the soul repenteth.

Miscellany.

INFIDELITY AND CHRISTIANITY COMPARED IN THEIR PRINCIPLES.

"What is truth?"—John xviii. 38.

A greater question was never asked: applied to things secular, it is interesting, and, even momentous; but regarding things sacred, it acquires an importance truly infinite. In religion, then, what is truth? Who, what can answer? Reason? We see what it has done, and still does, for the heathen—is idolatry truth? But the heathen are not civilized. If reason does not civilize, can it religionize? Allowing that it can do the former, has it done the latter? For four thousand years mankind were left to its unaided guidance; what was the result? To say nothing of the more barbarous, even in the most polished and enlightened Pagan nations; not excepting those countries where Homer lived and Plato taught, where the harp of Virgil resounded, it Mæonian strains, and Cicero pleaded for the rights and liberties of mankind—countries which gave birth to paintings which modern art cannot approach, and produced statues which are still the masterpieces of the world,—the most superstitious notions and idolatrous practices obtained and prevailed. And is reason more instructive now than it was then? If we turn to the Hindoos, in mathematical science among the most accomplished people in the world, we find they have not less than three hundred and thirty millions of gods!—if to the Chinese, to whom pertains the discovery of the mariner's compass and of gunpowder, the most ingenious people, perhaps, under heaven, they have gods in every house and grove; for the modern traveller tells us, that he saw upon sign-boards, in China, "gods made and repaired in this house;"—nor do other heathen nations disclose anything better, but much worse; as it is written, "Darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the people." If, then, reason with the light of nature, alleged to be sufficient

for the purpose, could not, cannot answer the question, what can? Every man of sense will admit that a revelation was not only possible and probable, but absolutely necessary to the enlightenment and happiness of mankind. That a revelation was possible, none who believe in the existence of a supreme, all-wise, almighty Being, can doubt; that a revelation was probable, appears clear from the fact, that a revelation had been given in the first instance, though lost in the second: for how, otherwise, was the first man instructed? and why did ancient philosophers, feeling their need, expect a revelation; and, that a revelation was necessary, the condition of the world demonstrated.

Without revelation how could the character of God have been determined? We will not at present have to do with the atheistical, we seek only a comparison with the deistical sceptic—the man who believes there is a God, but disbelieves that the Bible is a revelation of that God. Discarding, then, the sacred volume, we ask, what is God? And, lest reason should take a tinge from revelation, put the question to parties ignorant of revelation—the Athenians, the Egyptians, the Grecians, the Romans. What is their reply?—what was their practice? The mere tyro in history will tell you, those nations were given over to idolatry: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things," Rom. i. 22, 23. So much for the discovery of reason and the light of nature! But, replacing the book of God, inquiring of revelation, an answer to the question is immediately returned: "God is a spirit; God is light; God is love."—descriptions of the Deity which at once commend themselves to every man's enlightened and unprejudiced understanding.

Without revelation, what opinion could we have formed as to the end of our present existence? What am I? who sent me here? what is my business in this world? what will become of me when I go hence?—are problems which reason may institute, but which reason cannot solve. Ah! well might Hobbes, a celebrated infidel writer, exclaim, when dying, "I am going to take a leap in the dark!" Poor, weak reason! thy light accompanies me to the tomb, but leaves me there; nor does nature, with definite certainty, tell me of aught beyond,—

"Shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it;"

and considering man's intellectual and moral capabilities, which his present limited and imperfect condition is so far from satisfying, which is more probable, the infidel's annihilation or the Christian's immortality?

Without revelation, how could we have been relieved from the criminality of our position? I am guilty—my conscience tells me so; nor are the accusations of that inward monitor to be charged wholly on revelation—the same conviction possesses those of our species who never saw or heard revelation. Else why their immodulations? on what other principle are they to be accounted for? And am I, indeed, guilty and distressed? How am I to expiate my offences to relieve my soul? "What must I do to be saved?" Who what can answer? Reason? She is nonplussed. Nature?—She is dumb.—Revelation?—Ah! yes; the cross exhibited to my view: I am directed and assured, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Against the system of Christianity, however, as contained in the Scriptures, another system has been set up, usually denominated infidelity; a comparison of which systems we shall now institute, in relation, more particularly, to the principles of the one, and the doctrines of the other: remarking—

1. That the principles of infidelity are heterogeneous and doubtful; the doctrines of Christianity are uniform and certain.

One infidel writes, there is no God; another acknowledges that nature had a beginning; another contends that it never had a beginning, for that it existed from eternity. One declares the world came into being by chance; another maintains there is no such thing as chance. One concedes a hereafter, and, by sequence, the soul's immortality; another ridicules such notions as superstitious and absurd. It were easy to multiply their contradictions. Let any man examine the writings of Bolingbroke, Hume, Hobbes, Blount, Herbert, Shaftesbury, Woolston, Tindal, Chubb, Voltaire; and we defy him clearly and definitively to make out a statement what they believed. Now, the inspired writers are not so. You meet with no such irreconcilable statements in the Bible. True, there are seeming discrepancies: as where, for example, St. James says a man is justified by works, and St. Paul says a man is justified by grace; but a Sunday-school child

will tell you, that the one speaks of justification evidentially, the other meritoriously—so they agree. The contradictions of the word of God are more apparent than real; they vanish research: "the Scripture cannot be broken." But the more you canvass the productions of the writers alluded to, the more puzzled you become. If, then, infidelity be the truth, what is the truth in infidelity; for truth is one—truth cannot deny itself? We leave the sceptic to answer.—But ask, What is truth in Christianity? and one harmonious reply is returned. Nor does the infidel gain ought by asking, "Why, then, are not Christians agreed amongst themselves?" It were more consistent if he told us, first, why are not infidels agreed amongst themselves?—For Christians are agreed in the main; the things in which they differ being only minor, not essential. Are infidels so agreed? Let their writings testify.

TO BE CONTINUED.

TRIALS.

Every one that gets to the throne must put their foot upon the thorn. We must taste the gall if we taste the glory. Whom God justifies by faith, he leads into tribulations also. When God brought Israel through the Red Sea, he led them into the wilderness; so when God saves a soul he tries it. He never gives faith without trying it. The way to Zion is through the valley of Baca. You must go through the wilderness of Jordan, if you are to come to the land of Promise. Some believers are much surprised when they are called to suffer. They thought they would do some great thing for God; but all that God permits them to do is to suffer. Go round to every one in glory—every one has a different story, yet every one has a tale of suffering. One was persecuted in his family, by his friends and companions; another was visited with sore pains and humbling disease, neglect by the world; another had all these afflictions meeting in one—deep called unto deep. Mark, all are brought out of them.—It was a dark cloud, but it passed away; the water was deep, but they have reached the other side. Not one of them blames God for the road he led them: "Salvation" is their only cry. Is there any of you, dear children, murmuring at your lot? Do not sin against God. This is the way God leads all his redeemed ones. You must have a palm as well as a white robe.—No pain, no palm; no cross, no crown; no thorn, no throne; no gall, no glory. Learn to glory in tribulation also. "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."—*M. Cheyne.*

DEVOTING A FIXED PORTION OF INCOME TO CHARITABLE PURPOSES.

In reading the biography of the most eminently pious and useful in different ages, we have often been struck with the fact, that almost all of them devoted a regular proportion of their income to pious and charitable uses. We will mention a few whose names are familiar, whose writings are venerated, and whose memory is precious. Among those who made *tenth* the fixed proportion of their almsgiving, was Lord Chief Justice Hale, the Rev. Dr. Hammond, and the Rev. Dr. Annesley. Baxter informs us, that he long adhered to this, until, for himself he found it too little, and observes, "I think however, that it is as likely a proportion as can be prescribed; and that devoting a *tenth* part ordinarily to God is a matter that we have more than *human* direction for." Doddridge was another instance of this kind. "I make a solemn dedication of *one tenth* of my estate, salary and income to charitable uses; and I also devote to such uses an *eighth* of everything I receive by way of gift or present. A *fifth* part was the proportion of Archbishop Tillotson and Dr. Watts. A *fourth* part was the proportion constantly given by Mrs. Bury, the wife of the eminently pious and useful Rev. Mr. Bury. Her husband in his account of her life, says: "She thought it was reasonable that such as had no children should appropriate a *fourth* part of their net profits to charitable purposes." Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe gave even more than this. "I consecrate" says that excellent female, "half of my yearly income to charitable uses; yea, all that I have beyond the bare conveniences and necessities of life shall surely be the Lord's." Such too was the constant practice of the Hon. Robt. Boyle, of the Rev. Mr. Brand, and of the Rev. Thomas Gouge. Of the latter, Archbishop Tillotson says, in his funeral sermon, "All things considered, there have not been, since the primitive times of Christianity, many among the Sons of men, to whom that glorious character of the Son of God might be better applied than, 'he went about doing good.'"

The list might be extended to those who

have lived since, to many of our own age, and in our own country, but these examples are sufficient. If Christians generally were to act thus, to fix some due proportion, and keep a separate fund for charitable purposes, with how much more wisdom, prudence and cheerfulness would they perform this Christian duty? How often would they lift up their hearts to God, in devout thanksgiving for affording them opportunities of enjoying this privilege, and of showing to themselves and others, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive!"—*Lon. Watchman.*

A STRIKING ILLUSTRATION.

A company of individuals united themselves together into a mutual benefit association. The Blacksmith comes and says, "Gentlemen, I wish to become a member of your association." "Well, what can you do?" "Oh, I can shoe your horses, iron your carriages, and make all kinds of implements." "Very well come in Mr Blacksmith." The mason applies for admission into the society. "And what can you do, Mr Mason?" "Oh, I can build your barns and houses, stables and bridges." "Very well, come in, we can't get along without you."—Along comes the Shoemaker, and says, "I wish to become a member of your society." "Well, what can you do?" "I can make shoes and boots for you." "Come in, Mr Shoemaker, we must have you."

So in turn, apply all the different trades and professions, till lastly and individual comes and wants to be a member, "And what is your business?" "I am a Rum-seller." "A Rum-seller! and what can you do?" "I can build jails, and prisons, and poor houses." "And is that all?" "No I can fill them; I can fill your jails with criminals, prisons with convicts and your poor-houses with paupers." "And what else can you do?" "I can bring the gray hairs of the aged with sorrow to the grave; I can break the heart of the wife, and blast the prospects of the friends of talent, and fill your land with more than the plagues of Egypt."— "Is that all you can do?" "Good heavens!" cries the rum-seller, "is not that enough?"—*Poughkeepsie Blacksmith.*

GOOD ADVICE.

One hundred years ago, the Rev John Wesley, among other particulars promotive of health gave the following advice:

1. The passions have a greater influence on health than most people are aware of.
2. All violent and sudden passions, dispose to, or actually throw people into acute diseases.
3. The slow and sudden lasting passions, such as grief and hopeless love, bring on chronic diseases and low fevers.
4. Till the passion which caused the disease is calmed medicine is applied in vain.
5. The love of God, as it is the sovereign remedy of all miseries, so in particular it effectually prevents all the bodily disorders the passions introduce, by keeping the passion themselves within due bounds. And by the unspeakable joy, and perfect calm serenity and tranquillity it gives the mind, it becomes the most powerful of all the means of health, and long life.—*London, June, 11, 1747.*

OLD PSALM TUNES

To forward the reception of such tunes, two facts as to their original intention must be practically borne in mind. They were sung faster than we usually sing them, and what is better, by a far greater number of voices. It is a great mistake to suppose that old tunes should be sung in a heavy, drawing style. Our forefathers in the Church were cheerful Christians. A psalm of a dozen verses was but short to them. Hence, as well as from other circumstances, it is clear that they sang in a quicker and livelier manner than is commonly conjectured. The Old Hundredth tune is made a dirge in our days, but in theirs it was joyous and an animating canticle. "All people that on earth do dwell, sing to the Lord with cheerful voice! In like manner York tune, which is shelved among the dull and obsolete, was, little more than a century ago, the liveliest and the most popular tune of the entire kingdom.—But to hear old tunes to advantage, they must be sung in old style. Not only must they be sung with decent gravity and cheerful sanctity, but by masses of people, by a multitude of voices, "by all the people together," as the original directions state. Six thousand voices were wont to be heard at St. Paul's Cross; "three or four thousand singing at a time in a church in this City is but a trifle," said the excellent Roger Ascham, in a letter from Angsburgh, dated the 14th of May, 1551.—*Hackett's National Psalmist.*