

YOUTH'S CORNER.

THE DESERTED CHILDREN.

I will record, in this place, a narrative that impressed me deeply. It was a fair sample of the cases of extreme misery and desolation that are often witnessed on the Mississippi river. In the sabbath school at New Madrid we received three children, who were introduced to that place under the following circumstances:—A man was descending the river with these three children in his pirogue. He and his children had landed on a desert island, on a bitter snowy evening in December. There were but two houses, which were at Little Prairie, opposite the island, within a great distance. He wanted more whiskey, although he had been drinking too freely. Against the persuasions of his children, he left them to cross over in his pirogue to these houses, and renew his supply. The wind blew high, and the river was rough. Nothing could dissuade him from the dangerous attempt. He told them that he should return to them that night, left them in tears and exposed to the pitiless pelting of the storm, and started for his canoe. The children saw the boat sink before he had half crossed the passage: the man was drowned! These forlorn beings were left without any other covering than their own scanty and ragged dress, for he had taken his blanket with him. They had neither fire nor shelter, and no other food than uncooked pork and corn. It snowed fast, and the night closed over them in this situation. The elder was a girl of six years, but remarkably shrewd and acute for her age. The next was a girl of four, and the youngest a boy of two. It was affecting to hear her describe her desolation of heart, as she set herself to examine her resources. She made them creep together, and draw their bare feet under their clothes. She covered them with leaves and branches, and thus they passed the first night. In the morning, the younger children wept bitterly with cold and hunger. The pork she cut into small pieces. She then persuaded them to run about, by setting them the example. Then she made them return to chewing corn and pork. It would seem as if Providence had a special eye to these poor children, for, in the course of the day, some Indians landed on the island, found them, and, as they were coming up to New Madrid, took them with them.—Flint's Travels in America.

READING TOO FAST.

There lived in this immediate vicinity a respectable man who had become interested on the subject of religion, and who had begun with some earnestness to search the Scriptures. He had read a few chapters, when he became greatly perplexed with some of those passages which an inspired apostle has declared hard to be understood. In this state of mind he repaired to an African minister for instruction and help, and found him at noon, on a sultry day in summer, laboriously engaged in hoeing corn. As the man approached, the preacher, with a patriarchal simplicity, leant upon the handle of his hoe, and listened to his story. "Uncle Jack," said he, "I have discovered lately that I am a great sinner, and I commenced reading the Bible, that I might learn what I must do to be saved. But I have met with a passage here," holding up his Bible, "which I know not what to do with. It is this: 'God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.' What does this mean?"

A short pause intervened, and the old African replied as follows:—"Master, if I have been correctly informed, it has not been more than a day or two since you commenced reading the Bible, and if I remember rightly, that passage you have mentioned is away yonder in Romans. Long before you get to that—at the very beginning of the gospel—it is said, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Now, have you done with that? The truth is, you read entirely too fast. You must begin again, and take things as God has been pleased to place them. When you are done all you are told to do in Matthew, come and we will talk about Romans."

Having thus answered, the preacher resumed his work, and left the man to his own reflection. Who does not admire the simplicity and good sense characterized in this reply! Could the most learned polemic have more effectually met and disposed of a difficulty? The gentleman particularly interested in the incident, gave me an account of it with his own lips. He still lives, and will, in all probability, see this statement of it.

Most readily will he testify to its strict accuracy; and most joyfully will he now say, as he said to me then, "It convinced me most fully of the mistake into which I had fallen. I saw God's propriety and wisdom, and I hope to bless God for ever for sending me to him."—Gospel Herald.

A BENEFIT REMEMBERED.

The journey from which Mr. de Bodelschwing, the Minister of the Interior, has just returned, had for its object, as he declares, the accomplishment of a sacred duty. The municipality of Breslau has just decreed to an artisan, named Heller, letters constituting him an honorary burgess of the town, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of his being established at Breslau. Mr. de Bodelschwing, clothed in a plain paletot, presented himself at Mr. Heller's, and inquired if he remembered, in 1813, having lodged and fed for a fortnight a poor student, the son of a locksmith, Mr. Heller replied, that he had a confused remembrance of the fact. "Do you remember the name of the student?—No, Sir.—Are you ignorant what is become of him?—Completely.—I will tell you, Sir; that young man, whom you received so generously, was myself. (Here Mr. de Bodelschwing opened his paletot, and showed his Minister's uniform, adorned with all his orders.) I worked hard, and I have had success.

But, however high-placed I may be at present, I shall never forget those who were my benefactors during my humble state. I congratulate you on the distinction which the municipality of Breslau has accorded to you, and you may count on me in all matters where you or your children need protection or support. After having said these words, Mr. de Bodelschwing shook Mr. Heller cordially by the hand, and withdrew, leaving his card, on which were marked his name, his titles, and the high dignity with which he was invested. Some moments after, Mr. Heller received a case containing rich presents for himself and his children.—Letter from Berlin.

A DOG GIVING EVIDENCE IN COURT.

When I was Chief Justice of the Common Pleas (I did like that Court!) a cause was brought before me for the recovery of a dog, which the defendant had stolen, and detained from the plaintiff, its owner. We had a great deal of evidence, and the dog was brought into Court, and placed on the table between the judge and witnesses. It was a very fine dog, very large, and very fierce, so much so that I ordered a muzzle to be put on it. Well, we could come to no decision; when a woman, all in rags, came forward, and said, if I would allow her to get into the witness-box, she thought she could say something that would decide the cause. Well, she was sworn just as she was, all in rags, and leant forward towards the animal, and said, "Come, Billy, come and kiss me." The savage-looking dog instantly raised itself on its hind legs, put its immense paws around her neck, and saluted her; she had brought it up from a puppy. Those words, "Come, Billy, come and kiss me," decided the cause. But when I was summing up, the defendant incautiously said in my hearing, "The damages cannot be great, and then I will pay; but the dog I am determined they shall not have." I observed upon this to the jury, and told them, that if they were satisfied the dog belonged to the plaintiff, they might give any amount of damages they pleased, after what they had heard from the defendant. Upon this the defendant got frightened, and consented to give up the dog. The verdict was two hundred pounds, to be levied should he again become possessed of the animal.

HOW JOHN SCOTT, AFTERWARDS LORD CHANCELLOR ELDON, FIRST LEARNED TO WRITE.

When Chancellor, he gave the following piece of evidence against his own character, to Mr. Chisholm, his solicitor:—"My father," said he, "agreed with a master, who kept a writing school, to teach me the art of penmanship there for half a guinea a quarter. In the whole of the three months I attended that school, but once my father knew nothing of this—and at the quarter's end gave me a half guinea to pay the master. When I took it to the school, the master said he did not know how he could properly receive it, since he had given nothing in exchange for it. I said that he really must take it; that I could not possibly take it back to my father. Well, replied he, if I am to take it, at all events I must give you something for it: so come here. And upon my going up to him, he took the money with one hand, and with the other gave me a box on the ear which sent me reeling against the wainscot;—and that was the way I first learned to write."—Lord Eldon's Life.

CRANMER.

THOMAS CRANMER, the Apostle and Martyr of the English Reformation, was born in Nottinghamshire, England, in July 1489, being descended from a very ancient family, which, during many years, obtained high honour and consideration; his own abilities, however, conferred the most illustrious dignity on his name, although he received his first instruction from a mere parish clerk of a little village. His father dying when he was very young, the superintendence of his education devolved upon his mother, who, after some deliberation, sent him to Cambridge, where he was entered at Jesus College in 1503, being then in his fourteenth year. It was here, a few years after, that, before his prejudices had taken the alarm, his reason was convinced, and his faith in the dogmas of Rome became shaken, if not destroyed: the sacred writings began to be very generally read, and consequently a spirit of enquiry and a freedom of discussion insensibly spread, until the plain texts of Scripture were openly set in opposition to the tenets of the Romish Church. Among the foremost of those who were distinguished by the name of Scripturists, was Cranmer who, having been elected a fellow of the College, continued to pursue his studies with success until, contracting a marriage, he lost his fellowship and was obliged to accept the lectureship of Magdalen College:—his lectures created universal interest and were constantly attended by a numerous academic audience of every description. He had scarcely however been named a year, when his wife died and, upon that event, in a manner marking the high estimation in which he was held by its members, he was immediately re-elected fellow of Jesus College. In the year 1526 he took his degree of D.D., and became reader of the Divinity lecture in his own College. Such, too, was the favourable opinion entertained of him by the University, that he was soon after elected one of the Examiners of Theology. These situations he filled for three years with equal credit to himself and advantage to the great cause of truth, when an epidemic disease resembling the plague broke out in Cambridge, in consequence of which the whole of the University separated, and Cranmer repaired to the house of a gentleman of fortune, residing at Waltham Abbey, whose wife was his distant relation, and whose sons had been his private pupils at College.

The attention of the entire continent was at this time engrossed by one important subject, the intended divorce of King Henry VIII. from Catherine; and a commission was appointed, with Cranmer at its head, to collect the opinions of the Universities of Europe in this momentous matter. The commissioners, accordingly, set out on their extraordinary errand, and first repaired to Italy where several of the Universities dependent on the Pope fully decided against the legality of the marriage, in opposition to the expressed judgment of Clement himself, in whose presence Cranmer offered publicly to dispute the point: but this was by no means agreeable to his holiness, who, to attach Cranmer, if possible, to his interest, bestowed upon him the office of Penitentiary-General of England, on which, however, Cranmer set but little value, for it is notorious that he never exercised any of the functions attached to it. The commission being thus triumphant in Italy, was dissolved, but Cranmer was again invested with similar authority alone, and desired to repair to Germany, which was at this period the nurse of the reformed religion, and where he became intimately acquainted with several of the most eminent reformers, and among them Osiander. In the University of Vienna he again publicly offered to dispute on the subject entrusted to him: but no one was willing to hazard a defeat, and he remained undisputed master of the field. While thus engaged, Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, died, and Henry ordered Cranmer to return, to receive the vacant dignity, which, after professions of extreme reluctance, he consented to, on condition that he received it from Henry's own hands and not from the Pope's—the former being considered by him the Supreme governor of the Church of England as well in ecclesiastical as temporal causes, but the latter a foreigner who had no authority in the realm. Under these circumstances he was formally consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury by the Bishops of Lincoln, Exeter, and St. Asaph in 1533. The first important act that Cranmer was called upon to perform, after his promotion to his high office, was to conclude the long agitated subject of the King's marriage by pronouncing the sentence of divorce, at which the Pope was so furiously exasperated, that he menaced both Henry and the Primate with excommunication, unless the sentence were immediately revoked; but this menace was disregarded, and thus commenced a rupture which terminated in the separation of England forever from the throne which had enchained her for so many hundreds of years!—In 1531, one of the most important achievements of the great Cranmer in support of religious liberty was accomplished, by his prevailing upon Parliament to pass an act, abolishing the Pope's authority, and confirming the King's supremacy; and immediately after this, another, settling the succession, was through his influence unanimously carried. These acts being passed, Cranmer's next consideration was, in what manner to introduce his great design of reformation in the Church: his first steps were to procure, if possible, a translation of the Holy Scriptures in the English language;—to this work the royal assent being obtained, it was immediately commenced, and in three years afterwards, it was printed at Paris. Cranmer then procured the publication, in English, of the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed with a suitable exposition of each; having proceeded thus far, his attention was next directed to the almost incredible number of Holy-days that were observed throughout the kingdom, and which he succeeded in greatly curtailing—he then engaged himself in efforts for the suppression of monasteries, and his endeavours were eminently crowned with success. The happiness which Cranmer experienced on the fulfilment of these various labours cannot perhaps be fully comprehended, especially when he was about to commit to his fellow creatures the sacred deposit of God's mercy to sinning and suffering men—to present to them a guide to direct their wandering feet from earth, and lead them up to Heaven. "Glory to GOD," was the joyful exclamation of his lips, "peace and good will to man" were the sensations that filled his breast.

No human happiness, however, is of constant duration,—thus, Cranmer, soon after these joyous exultations, had the grief of seeing the use of the Bible prohibited:—under the specious pretext of obtaining a more correct translation, his enemies, and the notorious Gardiner in particular, moved in Convocation, that the Bishops should commence a new revision of the sacred writings—but it was their suppression, not their correction, that was really desired; accordingly, though a version was made, it was strongly objected to, and consequently Cranmer had the sorrowful disappointment of finding the public use of the Bible disallowed during the remainder of Henry's reign.

The death of the King, though in some respects an individual loss to Cranmer, was an event which he could by no means deeply lament, as during his life it was impossible to make any very considerable progress in the Reformation. The prospect that now presented itself was cheering in the extreme, and gave him the most rational hopes of final success. The young King Edward, though only in his ninth year, had already been educated in the Protestant faith—the balance of power was certainly in its favour, and Cranmer was placed at the head of ecclesiastical affairs; to him are to be attributed the happy changes that were effected in this reign; and if, when surrounded by difficulty and danger, his prudence may claim our esteem, his moderation and wisdom under the most prosperous circumstances cannot fail to excite equal respect. The first exercise of his episcopal authority under his new sovereign was a general visitation of the churches throughout the kingdom, and with the view of correcting existing abuses, and this was

followed by the happiest results. In 1549, Cranmer began to be engaged in composing a new liturgy, and openly renounced, amid other errors, the erroneous doctrine of transubstantiation, which seems to have clung to him until this late period. This recantation exposed him to severe animadversion from the Roman Catholic party at the time, and was ever afterwards a source of invective against him; the malice of his opponents, however, did not induce him to retaliate, for he invariably maintained, that clemency was more agreeable to the spirit of the Gospel, and far more likely to effect the good he intended, than rigorous severity:—Cranmer was a Christian, and, remembering his own waywardness, and the long suffering of God towards himself, he, like a lowly disciple of the meek, mild, and holy Redeemer, set an example of patience and forbearance which has rarely been equalled. It is true, indeed, that, while he was invested with full authority, some instances of severe discipline were exhibited, and we should rejoice if these were wanting; but justice requires, that allowance be made for the spirit of the times in which he lived, and that every consideration of his otherwise forbearing disposition should be allowed its just weight.

In consequence of the unsettled state of the country at this period, and through a total neglect of tillage, a famine ensued, which the Papists represented as a judgment from Heaven for the abolition of their religion; a set of articles was therefore drawn up and forwarded to the King, in which various demands were resolutely made: these articles were answered by Cranmer, at the request of the Protector, in a manner which reflected equal credit on his heart and understanding; and although it would be too much, probably, to affirm, that his arguments were more powerful than the sword of Russell which had previously been called into exercise to quell the disturbances which arose, yet no doubt can exist that they greatly contributed to the restoration of that tranquillity which soon after succeeded. Successful however, as Cranmer was, he had still many difficulties to contend with, in the unceasing opposition of the Roman Bishops, finding them utterly refractory, it was at last determined to deprive them of their sees; and as Bonner, Bishop of London, was one of the most incorrigible and troublesome, he was the first marked for degradation, and a fiercer person could not have been chosen. The state of the Clergy at this time was peculiarly distressing; mankind are ever prone to run into extremes: the nation, having formerly loaded the ministers of the Church with wealth, now refused to give them their just dues: this was beheld by the Primate with deep regret, but, by redoubled activity and circumspection, he succeeded in counteracting the evil to a great degree; in fact he was the stem and support of the Protestant cause, all eyes were fixed upon him, and on his judgment all implicitly relied.

The period of which we have lately related may be considered as the zenith of Cranmer's happiness and power; but earthly felicity is, at best, but unsubstantial and uncertain, and the blight of disappointment too frequently withers the fairest hope. So it was with the Archbishop, for, owing to the removal from office of his friend the Duke of Somerset, (who had been a firm supporter of the Reformation) and the elevation of the Duke of Northumberland, he had now to undergo bitter trials and animosities, and was obliged to provide for his safety by withdrawing himself from court. In his privacy, however, he had the consolation of a work in which he had been long engaged—"The book of Common Prayer." In conjunction with Ridley and five other Bishops, and six eminent divines, offices for the general use of the church were drawn up, though the execution of them principally devolved on the two former; and on Whitsunday 1552, the new service was read for the first time in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul. It was only a short while after this, that, assisted as before by Ridley and his former coadjutors, he drew up the thirty nine articles, which form the test of orthodoxy at the present day.

But now the aspect of the times began to wear an awful appearance towards the Protestants—King Edward was dead, and a storm was seen gathering on all sides around them, and with heavy hearts they watched the increase of its portentous darkness. The Archbishop was fully sensible of the peril impending over his own head, and, like the good Hezekiah, "Set his house in order" in expectation of the event. He was at first assailed by all the attacks which malice is capable of, and then formally attainted of high treason, and pronounced guilty. This sentence, however, was remitted by Mary, who now swayed the sceptre; though she detained him on the charge of heresy, for which he was finally condemned to suffer death.

We are now arrived at a period in this great man's life which, while it cannot fail to inspire the deepest regret, furnishes matter of much individual reflection and improvement:—throughout every scene of his eventful career we have beheld him supporting such a uniform character of virtue and dignity that we might naturally have hoped that a reverse was impossible; but let no one presume upon his own strength or resolution! Cranmer had been exposed to a variety of temptations, and had nobly resisted them all; in vain might the dungeon display its gloom, or the breath of persecution kindle the flame against him—he still maintained his integrity! His adversaries, therefore, instead of enforcing the sentence of death immediately upon him, endeavoured to obtain from him a recantation of his principles moved from his noisome prison to the house of the Dean of St. Paul's, where every act of attention and generous kindness was shown him that the sincerest respect could inspire; the

most artful Papists were kept continually around him, inspiring him with hopes of pardon, and representing how useful he might still be to the cause of religion:—the result proved, how well versed they were in the depths of the human character. Under the shock of adversity, Cranmer's mind was invulnerable—but in the hour of returning ease and prosperity, his heart measured back its steps to life—in an evil hour he signed the paper of recantation that was presented to him, and fell!—sealing alike his own misery and disgrace, and the triumph of his enemies! The deep sighing of the contrite heart, however, we may humbly trust, had reached the ears of the Almighty before the day of his painful execution, when, over the flames which ascended about him, he stretched forth his right hand, and there suspended it until it was entirely consumed, frequently at the same time exclaiming, "This unworthy hand"! His agonies, however, were not of long duration, for the wind was high, and the fire, burning very fiercely, soon enveloped and consumed him, while he was distinctly heard to say—"Lord Jesus, into thy hands I commend my spirit"! Thus perished Thomas Cranmer, in the sixty-seventh year of his age, and about the twentieth of his prelate, leaving behind him a wife and two children, bitterly to bewail their loss, and vowing at the same time to the most eminent in virtue this salutary lesson:—"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall"! C. S. J.

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EDITED BY A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Is published every THURSDAY Morning,

By G. F. FISHER, Printer, Bookseller and Stationer, 2, AVENUE-STREET.

TERMS:—Fifteen Shillings a-Year, or Twelve Shillings and Six Pence if paid in advance.

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