

POWER OF RELIGION.
AN AFFECTING NARRATIVE.
(Concluded.)

What the thoughts and feelings of the strangers were on retiring to rest, I presume not to say. On the mind of one individual, indeed, reflections were induced by the statements he had overheard such as he was before an entire stranger to, and which the following morning fully disclosed. Captain B., who was an early riser, had not long entered the coffee room, where he was alone, when one of the gentlemen who had sat during the preceding evening near Mr. K., came down stairs, and having saluted the captain, took a chair beside him. He was a young man, of most gentlemanly exterior and manners. Without any circumlocution, he adverted to the occurrences of the last evening, and mentioned that what he had then heard had made a deep impression upon his mind. Captain B. at once entered into his feelings, and the young man at once disclosed his entire heart. I write now from recollection, and cannot therefore say that I record, as related to me, his exact words: his statement, however, in substance was this:—"I am by birth a Roman Catholic, and descended from an opulent and respectable family in one of our midland counties. After my education had been completed, I was sent by my parents to travel on the continent. In early life, my prejudices had all been engaged in favour of the church of my fathers; but the scenes which I witnessed in Italy transmuted my attachment into disquiet, while the doctrines which I heard broached in France riveted the bands of infidelity finally upon my mind, and I returned to Ireland, in my politics a zealous Roman Catholic, but in my creed completely anti-christian. Such was my state on entering this room on the last evening; but by your statement relative to your conversion, my attention was arrested, and after my astonishment had in some degree subsided, I thought with myself, here's a military man—one who has had opportunities of seeing the world—he has no inducement to practise a delusion upon his fellow men, such as priests and monasteries have—he bears testimony to the enjoyment he has found in the Bible and in prayer; there must, then, after all, be something in religion." He added, "This is still my conviction, and may I beg you to tell me how I should act."

To say that the captain was interested by this candid confession of his state, would be too weak an expression. His whole soul was drawn forth towards him, that he might become the saved of the Lord. To one who had been himself, by the power of Divine grace, turned from darkness to light, there can be no great difficulty in pointing out to others the way of reconciliation. The Bible had been the captain's sole director; he recommended it, therefore, strongly to his young friend as his secret guide. He recommended him, too, to pray earnestly for the Holy Spirit's teachings when he read it; and above all, to look to Jesus, who is the Alpha and Omega of the Oracles of God, and the author and finisher of salvation to all who believe upon him. His counsel was short, but it was sufficient. The coach-hour had arrived, and his new acquaintance, his brother beloved, bade him a hasty, and, as it proved, a final farewell until the morning of the resurrection.

He had scarcely left the room when Mr. K. made his appearance. With feelings almost bordering on ecstasy, Captain B. related to him the interesting conversation he had just had with the young gentleman who had that moment left for T——, the residence of his father; and as the coach horses bore him rapidly onwards, the prayers of both were

offered to the God on his behalf, that he who, by their feeble testimony to the power of his grace, had began a good work in his heart, would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

His subsequent history, at least in the outlines of it, is known to many in the immediate neighbourhood of his father's residence, and is too important not to be known more extensively. The Bible was soon procured, and became the constant, though for some time private companion of his retired hours. This plan he was led to adopt, in order to avoid grieving his parents, especially his mother, who was as zealous in her opposition to the Book of God as in her attachment to the superstitious ceremonies of her religion. His habitual absence, however, from the chapel, the change in his own deportment, together with his spending so much of his time in his own room, soon began to create suspicions in the mind of the old lady respecting her son's religious opinions. The fears which were thus excited were speedily realized, when to her great horror, she found a Bible, and that a Protestant Bible too, in his bed room. With a promptitude and zeal worthy a better cause, he was immediately questioned respecting it. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, his affections had been brought to embrace the truth as it is in Jesus; and his feelings in reference to the Scripture revelation of his God were similar to those of David—"O how I love thy law?" Psa. cxix. 97. Painful, therefore, as he felt it to be to inflict a wound upon the minds of parents whom he dearly loved, he felt bound now to bear a decided testimony to the value of the Holy Scriptures, and to avow his determination to take them as the rule of his future life. Entreaty and remonstrance succeeded each other, especially on the part of his mother. The danger to which he would expose his soul by leaving the "true church," the disgrace he would bring upon his family, and the sorrow into which he would plunge her, were all urged upon him in a manner, and with a force and pathos, that a mother's tears and a mother's voice alone could do. All, however, were ineffectual. He stood firm, not in his own strength, but in His who has promised to perfect His strength in our weakness. The old lady's grief was now extreme; but there remained yet one other plan to be tried. Coercive measures were resorted to, and for some time he was debarred from all intercourse with his family. Whether, indeed, by this severe treatment, or originating in other causes, I cannot say, but his health soon began to fail, and symptoms of pulmonary disease speedily manifested themselves. Though deprived of the Bible on its being discovered, he subsequently found means of procuring another. This he at first concealed in his bed; but fearing that he might also lose this copy of the word of God, he found means to secrete it in the bottom of his easy chair on which he sat, and where it was found after his death, which followed a rather short illness.

That death to him was the door of life, there was afforded the most satisfactory proof. Though not allowed to hold intercourse with any of the Lord's people, he found means to communicate by writing, with a decided Christian friend, who felt a deep interest in the case, and thus documentary evidence was given, that in the mortal conflict he was enabled to rely upon the merits of his Divine Redeemer for eternal salvation, and that the departed is now a redeemed spirit inhabiting the hill of life.

As taught us by St. Paul, it is the duty of all real Christians to "shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life." Phil. ii. 15, 16. That the grand means ordained by

God for the conversion of man is the preaching of the gospel, will not be denied; but that the holy lives and heavenly conversation of God's children; is another and very important means, appointed by the Great Head of the Church to bring about the same glorious event, seems not sufficiently regarded. Souls—immortal souls—are perishing around us; but if in their every day intercourse with their fellow men, Christians were faithfully to act their part, and prove themselves true "witnesses" for Jesus, against the world and in favour of the gospel, no doubt the Lord's blessing would be granted; and as the morning of Christianity, when it shone forth in all its freshness and loveliness upon our world, numbers were added to the Lord, even so would it be in our own day, and amongst our own countrymen. No place surely could be more unpromising in its aspect, for successfully casting in the seed of the kingdom, than the soil presented in the public room of a hotel; yet even there it was sown, and in one heart at least it took deep root. Upon the faithful testimony of these devoted men, to the power of his word and grace, the Lord set his seal, and we behold a young gentleman, who, up to that evening, was tainted in his politics, and infidel in his religion, becoming a real Christian, and dying happy in the Lord.—*London Visitor.*

THE TRAVELLER.

JERUSALEM IN 1843.

Concluded.

THE VALLEY OF ESCHOL.

We passed many ruined villages formerly inhabited by Christians, and the name by which they are still known testifies to this fact, viz., Churbatta en Mazparam; i. e., destroyed villages of Christians. A little beyond these ruins the Valley of Eschol opened itself before us. The weather and the season of the year prevented our seeing this valley in all its beauty, but we could see enough to enable us to judge of the fertility of the place: Vineyards, olive-trees, and fig-trees in abundance, covered the country; but orange trees do not grow here,—the mountains are too high, being 3000 feet above the level of the Mediterranean. Hebron itself is situate at a height of 2664, or, according to others, 2842 feet. We now rode down a hill to the spot in which Hebron is situated.

THE JEWS OF HEBRON.

One of the principal Jews of Jerusalem had furnished the Bishop with a letter of introduction to one of the chief Jews of Hebron, for whose house he now inquired. And glad we were when finally the house was shown to us, and we were ushered into the room, where we found the Bishop and Mr. Roland sitting at a coal fire. Thus we found ourselves in the city where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob dwelt, sojourning under the hospitable roof of a son of Abraham. Our kind hostess, a native of Poland, soon brought us some supper; after which, we lay down to rest.

Early in the morning on the following day, being Saturday, we saw the Jews going to their synagogues. The Bishop, Mr. Roland, and myself soon joined them. Mr. Blackburn being indisposed, was obliged to keep in the house. The first synagogue we visited belonged to the Sephardim; it bore marks of antiquity, but we could not discover the date when it was built. It has two shrines containing the law of Moses, handsomely decorated, the gift of a pious Jew of other countries. The name of the giver is engraved on a silver or gold plate hanging on each roll. There were also various curtains before the shrines embroidered in gold, where also the name of the giver is visible. Over the reading desk is the following inscription in Hebrew, "Oh man, why continuest thou in sin, and dost not reflect that the day of death will certainly appear, when the angel of death will approach thee, and take thy soul from thee. I do not ask whether thou art old or young; thou livest after thine heart's desire; but death will quickly overtake thee!" Around the reading desk Psalm cxxx' was inscribed in Hebrew.