

Reviews.

REPORT OF THE TORONTO DISPENSARY FOR DISEASES OF THE EYE; by S. J. STRATFORD, M.R.C.S., Surgeon and Oculist, Church-street. Toronto: A. F. Pless.

We have no doubt that to the professional reader, this account of 149 cases of disease of the eye, treated by Dr. Stratford at his Dispensary during the past year, is extremely interesting and useful. To us, it seems wonderful, that disease of the eye should resolve itself into so many distinctive forms. It is only fair, however, to suppose that surgical science has kept pace with every other department of human knowledge, and that day after day adds something to our information of the delicate structures of the organ of vision, and the mode in which disease in these is developed. We have heard this pamphlet highly spoken of by those competent to express an opinion on its merits.

BLACKWOOD for August, 1851. Toronto: Thos. Maclear.

This old familiar friend comes to us now as a part of our nature; its pages filled as usual with the wellings of mind-springs. However great the merit of the several articles contained in this number, we cannot now refer to them. Two pages alone have riveted our attention and occupied our thoughts; and we closed the book after their perusal with a sad and heavy heart. They contain a just and feeling tribute by the Journalist to the memory of DAVID MACBETH MOIR, better known as the *Delta* of this periodical. Yes! the gentle spirit of man-love which governed his mortality, has breathed its last sigh in this world! Its noble aspirations will no longer speak to the hearts who have feasted on the lessons of genuine philanthropy so abundantly supplied during its earthly pilgrimage. We have been carried back to days long gone by, when, with the earnest ardour of youthful admiration, we read each mellow line of truthful verse as it came fresh from the purest mine of human intellect; and the influence of those hallowed memories abides with us yet in undiminished force. Well do we remember thee, oh! Poet of the Heart. Our idolism was venial. Who could contemplate thee in thy self-sacrificing humility, without recognising and venerating thy noble nature. Let others speak for thee, who knew thee perhaps better, but could not love thee more.

"Rarely, indeed, does it happen that the life of a man of genius closes without exciting, with regard to some part of his career, a hostile or an envious commentary. It may be that the errors from which none of the human race are free, the passions which sway the conduct and the peculiarities which colour the disposition, are more readily remarked and more keenly observed in men of high attainments and intellectual superiority than in others. Where many are led to admire, there are usually some to blame; and seldom does the grave close over a departed brother, before the voice of censure is heard commenting upon his faults or his frailties. Such has not been the case with David Moir. As a citizen, a friend, a husband, a father, and a Christian, his life and conversation were blameless; or, if that expression be too strong to apply to the conduct of any mortal man, this, at least, we can say with sincerity, that he has left none better behind. He was a man who, we verily believe, never had an enemy, and never harboured an angry or vindictive thought against a human being. Nor was this owing in any degree to a want of that determination of character which leads men to form strong opinions, and to vindicate them when assailed. Mr. Moir was, as those that know him best can testify, resolute in his principles, and strong in their assertion; but never for a moment did he forget to temper his zeal with that true Christian charity which is, of all virtues, that most apt to be overlooked by the controversialist, but nevertheless is the most unerring sign of a sweet and saintly spirit."

"In his profession he ranked deservedly high. He might, at any time, have commanded an extensive and lucrative practice in Edinburgh; but his attachment to Musselburgh, the place of his birth, was so strong, that he never could be induced to make a change of residence. This, at least, was his own assigned reason; but we have strong grounds for believing that a higher and better motive induced him to refrain from abandoning the scene of his early labours, and permanently joining, in the metropolis of Scotland, that social circle which contained many of his dearest friends. He could not bring himself to forsake his practice in a locality where the poor had a claim upon him. During the terrible visitations of the cholera, which were unusually, and indeed, unprecedentedly severe in the parish to which he belonged, Moir was night and day in attendance upon the sufferers. He undertook, with more than the enthusiasm of youth, a toil and risk which he might well have been excused delegating to other hands, and often has the morning found him watching by the bed of some poor inmate of a cottage whom the arrow of the pestilence had stricken. That any man with the brilliant prospects which were undoubtedly presented to Moir, and certainly within his reach, should nevertheless have preferred the hard and laborious life of a country practitioner, must appear inexplicable to those who did not know the tenderness of his heart and the exquisite sympathy of his nature. Of his profession he took a high estimate. He regarded it less as the means for securing a competency for himself, than as an art which he was privileged to practise for the good of his fellow men, and for the alleviation of their sufferings; and numerous are the instances which might be cited, though untold by himself, of sacrifices, which he made, and dangers which he incurred, in carrying aid and consolation to those who had no other claim upon him except their common humanity. His indeed was a life far more devoted to the service of others than to his own personal aggrandisement—a life whose value can only be appreciated now, when he has been called to receive his reward in that better world, the passport to which he sought so diligently—in youth as in manhood, in happiness as in sorrow—to obtain.

Bright as the flowers may be which are twined for the coronal of the poet they have no glory when placed

beside the wreath which belongs to the departed Christian. We have represented Delta as he was—as he must remain ever in the affectionate memory of his friends; and with this brief and unequal tribute to his surpassing worth, we take farewell of the gentlest and kindest being, of the most true and single-hearted man whom we may ever hope to meet with in the course of this earthly pilgrimage."

The waters of thine own loved Esk glide softly and tranquilly by thee—the shade of the hazel and the willow fall kindly on thy grave. The haugh and the dell will oft resound to the echo of thy whispered name; and the good thou hast done has raised a lasting and spiritual tablet to thy genius and worth in the grateful heart of thy country.

THE NORTH BRITISH REVIEW. Toronto: Thos. Maclear.

We have before us the August number of this, the youngest of the British Reviews, and we have perused it with interest, if not with profit. Its principles, so far as *politics* are concerned, are Whiggish, or perchance even more liberal than that somewhat indefinite word would imply—and as to *religion* it is not easy to characterise them. No open blow is struck against, what Anglican Churchmen are taught to regard as the vitalities of Christianity—the doctrines of the Trinity and of the Atonement, are treated with respect—but there is a perpetual pandering to the restless, haughty-minded spirit of the age, which has the effect of leaving the general reader perpetually doubtful whether to choose good or evil, truth or error.

So far as literary ability is concerned, the *North British* is unquestionably superior to the *Edinburgh Review*. Its contributors are evidently fresh men, who think for themselves, and whose energies have not been worn out by toiling for many years upon the tread-mill of *hack journalism*. To use the expression of Dr. Quincy—"they are not the squeezed lemons, and sucked oranges of literature!"

BIBLES.

The returns laid before the House of Commons show that during three years ending Dec. 31, 1850, the Queen's printers printed 1,157,500 Bibles and 754,000 Testaments. For the same period, there were printed at the Oxford press, 875,750 Bibles and 750,000 Testaments. At the Cambridge press, 138,500 Bibles and 204,000 Testaments.

SCENES IN OUR PARISH.

NO. VII.

BLIND SARAH.

"These eyes, that, dazzled now and weak,
At glancing notes in sunshine wink,
Shall see the King's full glory break,
Nor from the blissful vision shrink."

Tho' scarcely now their lagged glance
Reach to an arrow's flight that day
They shall behold and not in trance,
The region "very far away."

KEBLE'S CHRIST. YEAR,
4th Sunday in Adv.

I had a pleasant walk after Church last Sunday. I am very fond of fresh air and quiet, and they seem especially suitable to my feelings after evening service, after joining the earnest prayers, and listening to the solemn sermon. I am sorry to confess, that too often in the summer, the only quiet walk is to be found in our churchyard and our own sweet garden, for the bright weather sends out into our fields and lanes, groups of those of whom the utmost stretch of charity cannot prevent our feeling, "they are doing their own works, and speaking their own words, and taking their own pleasure on God's holy day." But it is yet too early in the year for any of these noisy parties, and this evening, though very soothing to my mind, was perhaps to some, more mirthful, cold, and grey, and gloomy. Indeed the mist, that threatened to become rain, as I stood hesitatingly in our home field, would perhaps have sent me back, if I had not made a promise to blind Sarah which I was anxious to fulfil. But I was glad I went on, for by the time the little white gate of the lane swung behind me, the cloud past by, and the yellow sunshine streamed from the blue western downs through the leafless hedge, and across my path.—The birds, grey linnets I think they were, (the first songsters I have heard this year, except the robin,) kept up an animated conversation on either side of me, in very sweet tones, and by short addresses to each other, which, I doubt not each well understood. Spring is really come, and I know it by the sign of our village children; you can set your foot on two daisies at once; so I should be quite sure, even if the vividly green leaves of the shining slippery dock, and the elegant wild parsley springing through the moss, whose seeds are nearly ripe, did not confirm the opinion. Then as I came near the ivied arch which leads to the farm, I was agreeably surprised by hearing a thrush singing its song of thanks, for the unripe berries which have been its chief supply through this long hard winter. There were a few sheep, lying on a green pasture on my right hand; but few indeed, yet on such an evening enough to remind me of the beautiful 23rd Psalm, "The Lord, my shepherd," &c.

Poor blind Sarah! if she could have had a glance at them, it could not have failed to remind her of that Psalm too, for it is a very favorite one with her, and when I have read the last verse, "Goodness and mercy have followed me all the

days of my life," she generally assents with earnestness, saying, "They have followed me, my dear: they have followed me." And whilst I have listened to her story, I have assented too, and felt "so they have;" and the more I consider the ways of God in his providence, the more I am amazed at the wisdom and mercy with which, according to a homely but expressive phrase, "he fits the back to the burden." It seems to me that, if some persons with whom I have conversed, possessing, nevertheless, the same high principle of action, and the same strong consolation, had had half to bear that poor Sarah has borne cheerfully, they must have fainted under it.

She was not born blind, yet she has no remembrance of material objects, as she became so during her infancy. Whether this is an alleviation of her loss or otherwise, is probably questionable. Rogers would consider it an addition to the evil, as of so many things she can have no "pleasure of memory." Her father and mother died, and left her as she said, and her lip quivered a moment, "to God and the wide world, at twelve years old." She had brothers and sisters, but some went to service and some to sea, and some were married, and "it could not be expected," she adds, "that they, having their own bread to get, would be burthened with me a blind girl." Indeed she seems to think that she was quite as well able to take care of herself, as they to take care of her. It is curious to hear her list of accomplishments. "I was strong and hearty," she says, "and I was afraid of nothing: I could clean furniture beautifully, and I could scrub a room, and nurse a child better than many who could see." Besides she has been used to brew and bake, and speaks of her attainments in those particulars with great satisfaction. She has been preserved from ever meeting with any accident by fire, and no child left with her met with any harm, though in her youth she was constantly intrusted by her neighbors with the care of theirs. She could nurse with quite as much ease, and according to her own account, with more pleasure than hiring nurses generally feel: and I remark here, what appears singular, and yet what I believe inquiry will prove to be true, that blind women are often particularly pleased with the company of young children, and wonderfully expert in attending to them. There is a blind girl in our parish at present, who gains her livelihood as poor Sarah did, and is never better pleased than when she has one child in her arms, and another at her side.—But blind Sarah was, in her way, a milliner and a mantua maker. She can cut out any article of dress she wants, taking the pattern in paper first, and can make and mend, in a way which would put most of the seeing women of our parish to shame.

As long as she can remember, she says, she was particular about her appearance; and when she was young the neighbors would look after her, and wonder who kept her so nice, and whether she could possibly dress herself with so much exactness: and that, she observes, was great encouragement; "I could not be untidy after that." When I reached her house after my walk, I found her sitting alone in her neat kitchen, the floor sanded and the fire irons polished; every cup and glass, each exactly in its own place; her neat dark gown pinned quite evenly, and her cap, handkerchief, and apron, as stiff and clean and clear as they could have been on her wedding day. On her wedding day? Yes! blind Sarah was married. You are not more astonished than she was, when the proposal was made to her. She was very grateful, but expressed great wonder at her intended husband's rashness. "It was not likely," she says with great simplicity, "that I should be able to give satisfaction—I could clean my room to please myself—so I told him, but how could he be so foolish as to think of such a poor creature as I, when there were so many who could see?"

But when all the objections in such a case arise from a woman's sense of her own unworthiness for the honor intended, there is no great fear but that they may be overruled, and so it was now. "God had promised to be a father to the fatherless," was Geoffrey's answer, and God would make good his word by fitting him, as long as he lived, to be a kind guardian to the blind orphan. So they married, and he kept his promise to the utmost.—I have heard of true love, and I have seen it; but truer I never expect to see, than that which subsisted between this singular couple. Geoffrey was a collier, and like most of that portion of those men who work under ground, he was grave and thoughtful. His affection to his wife, however, was so uncommon, as to carry in it something of a romantic character; and his religion was as enthusiastic as sincere religion can be. He was many years older than Sarah, and he possessed some property—two houses and their little bit of garden ground—which he settled on her. In one of these they lived, and to hear poor Sarah describe it, you would really believe she was speaking of some green spot in fairy land, or some dwelling in Arcadia. "My home was so beautiful," she says, "that strangers used to stand and look at it, and I used to hear them wonder how the blind woman could keep it so; and we had all kinds of flowers, and my husband made me a beautiful arbor to sit in, of roses, and yellow and white jessamine, and honeysuckle, and it was very pleasant!" Poor thing!

I should like to see that bower in my mind's eye she sees it. Who knows? Fancy is more gorgeous than reality; perhaps her view of a pleasant and beautiful bower, is more lovely than any I can ever have—because where real roses are, I must see dust, and drooping, and withering. Her husband was in the habit of reading to her the word of God, but his Bible was small and old, and she determined to make him a present of one.

At this time she went out every day to wash, and unknown to him laid by a small portion of her weekly earnings for the purpose. It was a long time before the pence and sixpences amounted to the requisite sum, for she intended to give him a large handsome Bible; but she kept her secret; and the day on which she and a neighbour went to pay the money and fetch home the book, and the evening when she gave it to her husband, are still remembered as among the most joyful of her life. She has been for many years a thankful and cheerful Christian—but the days of her married life were really days of joy. "They were ten of the happiest years," she says, "that I think any one could spend on earth." The bond of affection must be strengthened by other than merely earthly ties, or it will decay like all that is of earth; and Geoffrey and Sarah learnt to love each other more and more because they were companions to the house of God and because month after month found them kneeling with thankful hearts at his table. And here perhaps, it may not be out of place to mention the delight with which she speaks of that holy ordinance and of one particular circumstance connected with it. All other things she fancies, but when the sun shines through the chestnut leaves that shade the eastern window, on the spotless table, the gleam of the fair linen and the sheen of the plate and chalice are really presented to her dim eye. Then and then only she knows what it is to see. As "the gentle foot-step" is "gliding round," it is not by her ear alone that she is sensible when the precious memorials are about to be presented to her.—"The light shineth in a dark place." "It is a bright speck," she says, "but I am ravished." This was her strong expression—"I am ravished with thinking how much broader the light of heaven will be."

Sarah is never weary of talking of her husband, or of telling how very kind he was to her. How he thought everything she did was well done, and always said no one ever made his clothes, or mended them to please him half so well as his blind wife. And she takes great pleasure in showing the handsome clock which he gave her, teaching her how to feel the hour and how to wind it up. "Did you never break it?" I asked. "O no my dear," was the answer, "I never break anything; my thoughts always go with what I am doing, (it would be well, I think the grave mistresses of families, if all giddy young people understood the secret,) and I set about every thing very slowly, and I don't break any thing once in seven years."

But ten years is a long time for happiness to last on earth, and Sarah's time of trouble was come. Her kind husband was taken ill, and after six weeks died. He died many years before I can recollect; and I cannot tell you much on the subject, because pleased as she is to talk of him generally, and cheerfully as she tells the rest of her story, when she comes to mention death, it is with such agonized remembrance, and such deep feeling that I should be hard indeed if I allowed her to proceed. Of this much, however, I have been assured; the God who knoweth whereof we are made, raised up friends for his servants in this time of trial. The best medical advice was freely procured for the one, and the most comforting kindness was shown to the other; and "He who never leaveth, nor forsaketh," guided his departing servant through the valley of the shadow of death, giving him not only a peaceful but a triumphant departure. It is more than two and twenty years, since Sarah prest her husband's band for the last time; yet still, she says, she dreads the day to come round, and at that time she always prays very much for strength that she may not sink under the remembrance, and "when I go to my bed at night," she says, "I always pray that I may not think so much of my dead husband as of my living Lord; besides, I am getting very old now, and in heaven my husband and his blind wife will see each other." But if the loss of a friend is at any time a very, very great affliction, it certainly may be aggravated when the loss of the means of life is consequent upon it; and poor Sarah has known in the latter years of her life much pecuniary distress. She was obliged to rent a house nearer the place where she worked, and to let her own two houses she soon found would presently ruin her. She generally had tenants, to be sure, but she had almost insurmountable difficulties in getting her rent; and when they did pay her, her outgoings for repairs would always nearly equal her income. And then her unprincipled tenants were always taking advantage of her, leaving without giving notice, and breaking windows wholesale, and pulling down walls, as if for the very amusement of the thing. Still whilst she had health she could work, and though sometimes she must have lived very hardly, she never complained.

(To be concluded in our next.)