

Youth's Department.

SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS.

386. Damascus was formerly the capital of Syria, and is supposed to have been founded by Uz, the eldest son of Aram, and is one of the most ancient cities now in being. It is still a place of considerable importance, and the capital of one of the four pachalics into which Syria is now divided. From what passage do we learn that this ancient city was in being so early as the time of the Patriarch Abraham?—(*Genesis*.)

387. Damascus was situated on the banks of two celebrated rivers which ran on the east side of its walls: and from these rivers, as well as the numerous rivulets which flowed from the adjacent mountains, the territory of Damascus was rendered the most fruitful province of all Syria; and even to the present day the Arabs speak of its fertility with the utmost enthusiasm. Do you recollect the names of these two celebrated rivers?—(*2 Kings*.)

388. Damascus was not only the capital of Syria, but the imperial city, or the residence of the Syrian kings: and the palaces of Benhadad, one of these monarchs, are distinctly mentioned. Where do you find any allusion to these?—(*Jeremiah and Amos*.)

389. Tyre was the great emporium of trade and merchandise for the surrounding Asiatic cities and countries. How does it appear that Damascus dealt extensively in the Tyrian manufactures and merchandise?—(*Ezekiel*.)

390. In the war which David had with Hadadezer, King of Zobah, the Syrians of Damascus came to succour Hadadezer; and David on this occasion slew 22,000 of the Syrians, and brought their country under tribute. Where is this event recorded?—(*2 Samuel*.)

391. Damascus was afterwards captured by Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, who carried away its inhabitants captive to Kin or Kir, beyond the Euphrates, and thus fulfilled the prophecies of Isaiah and Amos. Can you point out the passages in which these predictions occur?—(*Isaiah and Amos*.)

392. Damascus continued to be a place of considerable importance in the time of the Apostles. Can you relate the striking circumstances connected with the Apostle St. Paul, which took place in the neighbourhood of this celebrated city?—(*Acts*.)

CHURCH CALENDAR.

March 3.—Third Sunday in Lent.
10.—Fourth Sunday in Lent.
17.—Fifth Sunday in Lent.
24.—Sunday before Easter.

SCENES IN OTHER LANDS.

No. XXXV.

CORK; JOURNEY TO LIMERICK.

In magnitude and population, Cork is the second city in Ireland; but in commercial importance—from the contiguity of its spacious and unrivalled Cove—it stands perhaps the first. The name is derived from a word which signifies a marsh, *Coreagh*; for the spot upon which most of this beautiful town now stands is said to have been formerly a swamp. It possesses some striking historical associations, and the Danes and Ostmen having encircled it with a wall in the 9th century, and about the close of the 17th it was besieged and taken by the Earl of Marlborough. Many of the streets are spacious and handsome; the public buildings are numerous and many of them imposing; and in some portions of the city, rows of commanding private edifices are presented. The fronts of several of the houses present a singular appearance from being shingled, like their roofs, with blue slate stones,—excellent repellents, no doubt, of the penetrating violence of the wintry storm, but by no means adding to the attractiveness of the facade of either public or private edifice. Cork abounds in charitable and literary institutions: amongst the former are houses of Industry, a Lunatic Asylum, and a Foundling Hospital; and in the latter are numbered the royal Literary Institution, which contains a museum of minerals and a botanical garden, a Society of Arts, and a Library association. There are numerous remains of ancient Abbeys and Friaries; and the dishonoured relics of many of these religious structures are said to have furnished building materials for the houses of the modern city. The river Lea nearly encircles Cork; and at the outskirts of the city, its margin presents many beautiful villas. Amongst the attractions of its environs, are Blarney Castle frowning from a rocky eminence,—Ballyvelly Castle, commanding the northern entrance from the Cove,—and the Giant's Stairs, which is a natural curiosity on Cove Island.

I had the pleasure of making several acquaintances in Cork; but there were others, to whom I had introductions, that I had not the satisfaction of meeting. Amongst this latter number was that estimable individual the Rev. Dr. Quarry,—the able divine and exemplary christian, a "burning and a shining light" in his day and generation. He kindly sent his son with a special message to apologize for his inability to see me, in consequence of some pressing professional engagement which compelled him to be absent from home during the whole of my brief stay in Cork. I was more fortunate in meeting with Sir Thomas Deane, the kind-hearted Sheriff of the city,—in whose house I had also the gratification of meeting the respected widow and family of a late Chancellor of the Diocese of Limerick. A busy day,—employed in scanning the numerous curiosities of this large and agreeable place and neighbourhood,—was concluded in the hospitable society of a friend who resided on St. Patrick's Hill. By him I was strongly urged to adopt the route by the Lakes of Killarney, where the pleasure of a visit would have been enhanced by an introduction which he kindly offered me to his near relative, the Rector of that interesting place; but my previous arrangements, which could not be conveniently changed, compelled me most reluctantly to decline that agreeable tour, and proceed directly to Limerick. In taking my seat at the coach-office for the latter place, I incidentally encountered an unlucky specimen of the female refinement which characterizes some portion of the Society in the neighbouring county of Kerry.—An individual of that sex—under the influence, it was clear, of some artificial excitement—suddenly faced me in a very pugilistic attitude, and charged me with the very heinous offence of "looking at her!" As I could not conscientiously profess myself entirely guiltless of the charge, I was without any very satisfactory grounds of exculpation to offer, and began to think, from the increasing ferocity of my fair antagonist, that I should be obliged to summon into exercise some boyish recollections of the "art of self-defence," when the interposition of the office-keeper, conjoined with my own protestations of innocence, put an end to the amusing

On the following morning we started at an early hour for Limerick,—a slight mist, which the coachman denominated "the pride of the morning," gently falling, and gradually saturating our garments; when suddenly the sun broke forth, threw his radiance upon hill and valley, and converted into sparkling gems the myriads of rain drops that hung and quivered upon the freshened blades of grass.—The country which we traversed immediately after leaving Cork, was not marked by very interesting scenery; and we miss from the landscape the richly cultivated fields, the dense shrubbery, the neat cottages, and the ample farm-houses of England. Still, in its natural advantages, Ireland is in almost every quarter, one of the most favoured spots in the world: the sun shines not, nor do the showers of heaven descend upon more fertile fields or more joyous vales than this fine island possesses. Even the distant and sloping hills, which stand out bare to the wintry storm or the summer's scorching sun, relieved by no overshadowing clump of wood or shrubbery, present a richness of green which merits well the distinctive appellation of the 'Emerald Isle'; but nevertheless, wherever the fault may lie, man has not done all of what in physical and moral cultivation this fine country is so manifestly susceptible. The want of an efficient Poor Law caused the high-ways to be thronged with miserable and tattered mendicants; and the non residence system, then so cruelly prevalent amongst the wealthier landlords, accounted for the meagreness of cultivation and the squalid poverty of the abodes with which, in this route, the eye was so often pained. But the misfortunes of Ireland are to be traced to other than physical causes: there is a moral canker-worm which gnaws at the root of its prosperity, and splits that strength and energy and enterprise which ought to be concentrated for the improvement of the country and the amelioration of the condition of its people, into a thousand petty and subdivided factions,—the source of countless animosities and of innumerable disasters. But let me explain what I mean in the words of one better qualified than I can be to tell the causes of that comparative deterioration which in unhappy Ireland so undeniably exists:

"I turn to Ireland, and I perceive that nature has done much for that which poetry calls the emerald isle of the ocean. There is fertility in her soil, and majesty in her mountains, and luxuriance in her valleys, and a loveliness in her lakes, which makes them rivals to those in which Italian skies glass their deep azure. And the character of her children is that of a lofty and generous heroism; for I believe not that there is a nation under heaven, possessing more of the elements, than belong to the Irish, of what is bold and disinterested and liberal. And without question, it is a phenomenon at which we may well be startled and amazed, to behold Ireland, in spite of the advantages to which I have referred, in spite of her close alliance with the home and mistress of arts and liberty, torn by intestine factions, and harassed by the feuds and commotions of her tenantry. Of such phenomenon the solution would be hopeless, if we did not know that Ireland is oppressed by a bigoted faith, bestrid by that giant corrupter of christianity, who knows, and acts on the knowledge, that to enlighten ignorance were to overthrow his empire. It is because Ireland is morally benighted that she is physically degraded; and the energies which must be turned on her, to raise her to her due rank in the scale of nations, are religious rather than political; she can be thoroughly civilized only by being thoroughly christianized."

These are the words of the Rev. Henry Melvill: and many corroborating testimonies might be adduced to prove the correctness of this vivid and eloquent picture of Ireland's wants and unhappiness. We might turn to other climes and other people benighted by a similar spiritual darkness, for a proof that it is the system which is enfeebling and destructive of the moral energies and physical advancement of a nation. The soft and sunny landscapes of Italy and Spain are what the eye and spirit must dwell upon with unsatiated rapture; but turn to the moral aspect of the land, to the religious condition of the people,—look for those refinements of the human character which a pure faith imparts, and even for the progress of ordinary civilization and the arts, and the scene becomes one of barrenness and desolation.—Yes, even in Ireland, the contrast in spiritual influences as respectively exhibited in a corrupt and sound communion, are marked and strong; the face of the country not less than the character of the people in the Romish South and the Protestant North of the Island, is as diverse as if an ocean rolled between! But I do not mean to become philosophical in these passing remarks, and I must proceed on my journey.

About mid-day we came to Mallow,—a handsome town situated on the Blackwater, which we crossed on a substantial bridge in entering. Near the town is a medicinal spring which causes it to be a place of considerable resort,—the Hot-wells, in short, of Ireland. At Mallow are visible the remains of a castle built by the celebrated Desmond, the ancient Irish chieftain. Ireland, indeed, possesses many extraordinary and interesting remains: in almost every direction you are presented with relics of ancient castles, monasteries and round-towers. This last is a description of structure which has effectually baffled the antiquarian; for although many suppositions have been advanced as to the actual cause of their erection, nothing certain or satisfactory has been adduced upon the subject,—although, from a concurrence of circumstances, it would seem most probable that they had answered the purpose of the specula or watch-tower used in ancient times.

In Kilmallock, some miles beyond Mallow, we have the realization of a ruined and forsaken city,—like the Palmyra or Balbec of the desert, to which it has frequently been compared. Here, on every hand, are exhibited the remains of monasteries, castles, round-towers, and even of walls, gates and streets. No tradition that I could learn remains of this once great city; but the grandeur of the ruins which lay strewn around, afford presumptive proof that it was once of no mean condition.

In our progress onward, the country became more beautiful, and manifested signs of a better cultivation. There was that pleasing interchange of hill and valley, on which the eye delights so much to dwell; and the interest of the landscape was heightened by the frequent appearance of the gentleman's seat or the nobleman's demesne. Interspersed with the 'emerald' verdure of the fields, were frequent clumps of trees, and the park extending to the very road side. At an early hour in the afternoon, we arrived at Limerick, and took up our quarters at Moriarty's Hotel. Of this hotel, circumstances did not permit me to form a favourable, or perhaps a fair judgment, because the Assizes were in session, the town was full, Mr. Moriarty's house was thronged, and great confusion seemed to prevail throughout it. I was constrained to accept that very much decried

species of accommodation, a "double-bedded room;" and for this most inadequate comfort I was charged considerably more than I had ever been required to pay for lodging comparatively sumptuous and luxurious at the first Hotels in England! But I was fortunate in meeting there with agreeable companions; and my short sojourn in Limerick was passed pleasantly and profitably.

The Garner.

FALSE GUIDES.

Those who, without any apparent commission from God, or allowable call from men, or extraordinary necessity of the case, in no legal or regular way, according to no custom received in God's Church, do intrude themselves into the office, or are only assumed thereto by ignorant, unstable, giddy, factious people, such as those of whom St. Paul saith, that according to their own lusts they heap up teachers to themselves, having itching ears. Those who are not in reasonable ways fitly prepared, not duly approved, not competently authorized, not orderly admitted to the office, according to the prescription of God's word, and the practice of his church; not entering into the fold by the door, but breaking through, or clambering over the fences of sober discipline.—*Dr. Isaac Barrow*.

ZEAL.

Zeal is in itself, without doubt, an excellent gift; but, where men have no regard how far they offend others, how rash and intemperate does it grow, in approaching not only the vices, but the follies and weaknesses of mankind; how easily does it degenerate into censoriousness, and transport men beyond all bounds of charity and discretion! The consequence is, that it is immediately surrounded with enemies of its own raising, and suffers under the names of fury and uncharitableness. But, on the other side, where it is found in company with prudence, and joined with a care not to offend, it is a gentle and heavenly flame, which warms without scorching; it falls upon its right object, the honour of God, and the good of men, and confines itself to such methods only as may best serve to promote both: it will therefore never run into any indecencies of passion, which are unbefitting the cause it maintains; nor will it provoke and exasperate those whom it labours to reform, as knowing what little benefit men can receive by being ill-treated. Thus will it secure itself from being evil spoken of, and appear with advantage in the eyes of all that behold it.—*Bishop Sherlock*.

THE DUTY OF A CHRISTIAN.

The duty of a Christian is easy in a persecution, it is clear under a tyranny, it is evident in despite of heresy, it is one in the midst of schism, it is determined amongst infinite disputes: being like a rock in the sea, which is beaten with the tide, and washed with retiring waters, and encompassed with mists, and appears in several figures, but it always dips its foot in the same bottom, and remains the same in calms and storms, and survives the revolution of ten thousand tides, and shall dwell till time and tides shall be no more.—*Bishop Jeremy Taylor*.

YOUTH.

Youth is no obstacle in the way of obtaining the favour of Christ. The disciple whom he loved was the youngest of all the Apostles. And certain it is, that religion never appears to greater advantage, than in the persons of those who "remember their Creator in the days of their youth," and are admitted early into the number of the disciples of the holy Jesus. It is then like a diamond set in gold. There is something more noble in renouncing the world for the love of Christ, when the relish for sensible enjoyments is at the highest, than there can be in doing it when the evil days come, in which there is no farther pleasure or satisfaction to be had in earthly things. He surely is not so likely to accomplish his journey, who begins it when the sun is going down, as he is who sets out at the hour of its rising. Youth, like the morning, is the proper season for every task that requires time and pains. Then all the powers of the body and soul are fresh and vigorous, as those of one awakened from a sound and kindly sleep. Then is the golden opportunity, the sweet hour of prime; and the day is before us.—*Bp. Horne*.

CHRISTIAN COWARDICE.

It is a reproach, I believe, peculiar to the Christians of this age and nation, that many of them seem ashamed of their Christianity; would not perhaps be said to have thrown it aside, yet would by no means be imagined much in earnest about it; and therefore study, if possible, to conceal their way of thinking; or, when they are attacked upon it, excuse their piety, as others do their vices, with a sort of laughing half-defence; and shift off the subject as well and soon as they can. A most astonishing treatment of what our eternal happiness depends on; especially when our Saviour expressly requires us to confess him before men, as even we expect that he should confess us before his Father which is in Heaven. It is not meant that we should be affectedly forward in talking of our religion; but, whenever we are called to do so, unaffectedly own it, and stand by it. In such a case, dissimulation, or even reserve, is a mean-spirited desertion of the worthiest cause in the world: and the words of the holy Jesus on another occasion are justly applicable to this, that he who is not for him is against him. Whoever is unwilling to be taken for a pious and good man, runs a good risk of soon becoming a profane and bad one.—*Archbishop Secker*.

THE CHURCH IN ADVERSITY.

The temporal advantages, respect, and influence, which, by the blessing of God, the Church has enjoyed, and which Churchmen may rightly enjoy, in times of tranquillity, when kings are her nursing fathers, and queens her nursing mothers, I duly appreciate. But in contemplating the obligations of the pastoral office, our best lessons of duty will generally be found in the history of the Church in a suffering state. In this view there is not, perhaps, a brighter page in the history of the Church of England than the grand Rebellion, if we consider it in a Christian spirit; when we view seven or eight thousand men suffering every privation, and every insult, and every calumny, for truth and righteousness' sake, and exercising the duties of their office at every risk, for the benefit of those who still adhered to them.—*Dr. Walker, Bishop of Edinburgh*.

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