

GENERAL LITERATURE.

MIND—A FRAGMENT.

BY REV. H. D. MOORE.

THE mind has ever been, and ever will be, an unsolved problem, and though all its parts operate with the most perfect harmony, depending one upon the other for mutual support and existence, as do the essential parts of a well constructed machinery; still it forms as a whole a most sublime intricacy. No philosophic wanderings—no scientific research into the deep profound principles of natural order—no lengthened and able metaphysical disquisitions have ever succeeded in unravelling the mystery that envelopes it like a cloud, or in exploring and divulging the fountain springs of its immortality.

Ancient philosophers had scaled the summit of all knowledge, and descended in the fardown silence of the deepest research, when in august council they agreed, that man possessed within his body, his outer frame, an embodiment of uncreated excellence, an immortal principle, which combined to an extent the attributes which they conceived to be centered in the Deity; yet could form no idea or conception whatever of the character of its existence, or the nature of its destiny; yet being well assured by the light of acknowledged reason, that such a principle as mind did exist, suggesting their every deliberation, and controlling their every action, it served only to awe them into the most profound reverence for the character of that God from whom they supposed it to emanate. They conceive it to be a bright emanation of *infinite wisdom*, whose *sacred divinity* reposed in its structure, a *spirit form of immateriality*, partaking of the *divine*; but that it should have its seeming location in the body, served to involve in shrouded mystery, the nature of its connection with the body, and the action of the one, upon the final destiny of the other.

And even now, in the nineteenth century, when the sun of mental knowledge has passed the mental horizon, and climbed the zenith of the intellectual firmament, and is shining in meridian splendour, when the ineffable light of *science* is shedding its halo over all lands, and illuminating with the bright floods of its rich coruscations, the darkest abodes of ignorance, when bigotry and superstition are being crushed before the onward march of civilization and religion—even in this age of the world, when to doubt the existence of mind, would be considered even by the most ignorant, folly as consummate, as it would be to clothe in the vesture of rationality, a mad man's dream—even now does the veil of secrecy hang in sable folds over its immortal superstructure, defying the most desperate efforts to divulge, and the most ponderous reasonings to elucidate. The oracle of oracles has been consulted and importuned to aid the mind in this unequal contest with mind; yet not one spark of immortal fire has ever fallen behind the veil. Man has done all he can do, all he dare do; and daring infidelity, with its front of brass, has attempted to storm the council chamber of infinite wisdom; and taken by force the throne of God; but heaped upon with ten thousand defeats, vanquished and dismayed, it cowers behind its sure fate, oblivion. Yet, notwithstanding it is impossible to attempt effectually an entrance within the inner veil, and behold unshrouded the glories of the immortal mind; we delight to linger in the distance, which lends an holy enchantment to the view, and contemplate this uncreated mystery; we love, while sparkling admiration kindles into fire, to bend the knee of adoration to unseen, yet not unconceived beauty that reigns within the inner temple,

the while, *thought*, wrapped in the mystic mantle of its high order, passes and re-passes the sacred ordeal, yet cannot unfold to man its invigorated loveliness, in the language of earth, and durst not, while man embodies corruption, pluck from angelic harps the song of heaven. The mind, 'tis a sacred, heaven-born theme, and demands the high toned excellence of seraphic music, ere its faintest beauty can be sung; sacred in its original, sacred in its action, sacred in its immortality. In its original, celestial; in its action, heavenly; in its immortality, *divine*. It is to our life what the sun is to-day; for, like the playful gamboling of a new-born sunbeam round the palace of night, it hovers over man's existence, illuminating its gloom; and, like twilight on the bosom of morning, reposes his life on a fair-lit pavillion of immortality.

THE MINISTER'S FLITTING.

It was a beautiful morning, during the fine weather in August last, when the Rev. Mr. —, and his family, prepared to leave the manse of —. As usual on the occasion of a flitting in that part of the country, a goodly number of the neighbouring farmers had come with their horses and carts, to assist in removing the furniture, and several of the humbler parishioners had come to lend what help they could. Every body was fully employed, and there was no time for reflection. The little children had risen sooner than was wished, and when reproved, the eldest replied that she was afraid they would be forgotten. Excited by the bustle, and pleased perhaps at the prospect of a drive to the neighbouring town, they were singing gaily. Little did they know what that drive meant; and little could they appreciate the calamity which it involved.

The house was at length emptied, and the preparations all over. The fires had been extinguished, the ashes removed from the grates, and the hearth-stones swept clean. The minister himself entered every room to see that all things were left in decent order. He secured the windows, and closed the shutters with his own hands, and descended calm and composed into the kitchen, where he assembled his faithful friends.

I shall never forget the scene which occurred in that desolate kitchen. The minister, who had discharged his last duty in the parish pulpit with perfect self-possession, was calm and apparently unmoved still; and it was thought fitting that his last act in the house, where he had spent so many happy days, should be an act of devotion. There stood the minister's wife, with her little children beside her, strong in faith that He who feedeth the young ravens, would not suffer them to want, meekly submissive to the will of God, and willing to go forth to Christ, without the camp, hearing his reproach; yea, rejoicing that it had been given to her, in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake. And there stood a portion of the little flock, deeply attached to their pastor, but far more to the cause for which he had been honoured to contend.

When the minister began to pray, there was not that freedom and fervour with which he sometimes proceeded; but he spoke with much solemnity and earnestness, his voice firm and unflinching, till he came to mention his little flock, and especially to commend to God that portion of them who had manifested so much kindness to him and his. Here nature at last gave way, for he believed that his ministry among them was nearly over, and his words were like to choke him in the utterance. Several times did he attempt to proceed amidst the tears and stifled sobs of the com-

pany. Strong and brave men, who at the call of duty would have marched to the cannon's mouth, were like to burst with suppressed agony. This place might well be called Broholm, for it was a place of weepers; and the whole reminded one of the scene on the beach at Miletus, when Paul was parting with the elders of Ephesus, when he kneeled down and prayed with them all, and they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him. The minister was just able to draw to an abrupt conclusion, when he hurried to a secret retirement and poured out his heart there. We are told that God puts the tears of his people into his bottle. He preserves them there; they are not forgotten.

The sad procession moved quietly away, and there was something most affecting in the sight. Here was a family peaceably removing from their pleasant home into the wilderness, compelled for conscience sake to leave houses and land, and their voice was not heard in the street. As they passed through the little village, a few of the parishioners came out to bid them a sorrowful good bye; but the trial was too painful, and they drove hastily on. The minister's family passed away, and their place is no more in the parish. But that quiet and unostentatious departure had told a tale, which many understand even now, and which will be more fully appreciated hereafter, when the passions of contending parties have cooled down, and wrongs, real or imaginary, have been forgotten.

It is needless, and it would be uninteresting, to record all the particulars of this sad event; but an incident occurred during the journey, which illustrates so strikingly the watchful care of a kind Providence over his suffering people, that we cannot forbear mentioning it. The linch-pin of the crazy vehicle in which the minister was driving a part of his family, gave way, but notwithstanding of this, the wheel remained on till they had proceeded some hundred yards or two, when a smith, whose shop was just at hand, happening to be standing by the road side, perceived the danger. He immediately called out to stop, and, rushing forward, seized the wheel. It was just in the nick of time, for one revolution more, and it must have come off, and that at the side where sat the mother with a little child upon her knee; and, in all likelihood, the death, or at least the severe injury, of some of the party would have been the consequence.

Through the good hand of their God upon them, they reached the place of their sojourn in safety; and, though the wilderness to them, it was a pleasant and comfortable spot, and might well be called the valley of Achor.—Here I might leave them, without another word, were it not to relate a touching little scene that was witnessed after their arrival. During the confusion and hurry consequent upon the carrying in, and disposal of the furniture, two little children were neglected.—They who had been brought up delicately and tended most carefully, in the altered circumstances of the family were now without a nurse; and, fatigued with the toil of the day, they were found laid down to sleep on a bed that was lying on the street in front of the house. But they were safe. There was an eye watching over them more faithful than that of any earthly guardian. And we doubt not that it will yet be well with the families of the suffering servants of God. They have now a claim to promises to which they were not entitled before; and theirs is an inheritance infinitely better than the parish revenues, or favour of the patron; could ever have procured for them. They may have privations to endure—they may have a struggle to main-