

Youth's Department.

SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS.

XLIII. DAVID.—CONTINUED.

373. Another sign of considerable magnitude on the part of David was his numbering the people; a sign which is generally supposed to have had its origin in pride,—in a wish to leave some public record of the extent of his army and the general prosperity of his Kingdom. In what way did God shew his displeasure on this occasion.—(1 Chron.)

374. At whose instigation does David appear to have adopted this sinful and inexpedient measure?—(1 Chron.)

375. What were the three evils which Gad, the seer of David, was commissioned by the Lord to propose to David as the punishment of his sin? and what was the answer returned by David?—(1 Chron.)

376. When, in consequence of David's choosing the pestilence, the angel of the Lord was executing the divine sentence, and David saw him standing between heaven and earth, what did David and the elders who were standing with him do? and in what terms did David himself address the Lord?—(1 Chron.)

377. The angel of the Lord was by the threshing-floor of Ornan, or Araunah, the Jebusite, when the Lord repented him of the evil, and commanded the angel to stay his hand. How were Ornan and his four sons occupied at the time? and what did they do when they saw the angel of the Lord?—(1 Chron.)

378. How did Ornan, or Araunah, show his munificent spirit on this occasion; a spirit which from our different habits we should hardly have expected from the menial occupation in which himself and sons were then engaged? and why did David refuse to avail himself of his princely generosity?—(1 Chron.)

CHURCH CALENDAR.

Feb. 17.—First Sunday in Lent.
24.—Second Sunday in Lent.
—St. Matthias' Day.
March 3.—Third Sunday in Lent.

ANECDOTES ILLUSTRATIVE OF SCRIPTURE.

No. III.

OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH.

ENKIEL xx. 20.—"Hallow my sabbaths."
In the winter of 1809, Mr. Wilberforce, meditating a trip to Bath, wrote to Mr. Percival to ascertain the day of the meeting of parliament. "Parliament," was the reply, "will not meet, unless something unforeseen should occur, until Monday the 16th of January. I hope, therefore, you will lose no time in getting your health well set up at Bath." His watchfulness for public morals at once suggested to him the amount of Sunday travelling which such a day of meeting would create; and he begged in answer that it might, if possible, be altered. "I thank you for your note of yesterday," rejoined the conscientious minister, "and am really sorry that I have given occasion for it. I feel myself the more to blame because upon the receipt of your note it brought back to my recollection (what I had till then forgotten) some observations which the speaker made to me some time ago upon the same subject; if they had been present to mind when we settled the meeting of parliament, I would not have fixed it upon a Monday. We were, however, almost driven into that day. * * * Notwithstanding all these considerations, however, if I had thought as I ought to have done of the Sunday travelling which the meeting on Monday will too probably occasion, I would have preferred meeting on Friday in the sessions week with all its inconveniences. You have the whole state of the case before you. I am open to your judgment—for inadvertence is certainly never felt by me as any excuse." Two days later he wrote again. "Dear Wilberforce, you will be glad to hear that it is determined to postpone the meeting of parliament till Thursday the 19th, instead of Monday the 16th to obviate the objections which you have suggested to the meeting of that day. Yours, very truly, Spencer Percival." Mr. Wilberforce has in his diary, without any allusion to the part he had in it, "the house put off nobly by Perceval because of the Sunday travelling it would have occasioned.—Life by his Sons.

THANKFULNESS TO GOD.

EPHESIANS v. 20.—"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Rev. Daniel Wilson, (now Bishop of Calcutta,) in a speech delivered before the Church Missionary Society, in May 1814, alluded to the prospect of a general peace, and desired that all should view the hand of Providence interposing in our favour, and that all would ask with pious gratitude, what shall I render unto the Lord? He remembered that, some time since, when a vote of thanks to Lord Wellington for some glorious achievement in the Peninsula, was moved in the house of Commons by the late Mr. Perceval—a man, he must say, around whose private and public virtues his mournful death had shed a kind of sanctity:—upon some member observing, that "Ministers might thank their stars;" that excellent man replied, "No, Sir, Ministers may thank their God." Such was the feeling he desired might prevail in their present rejoicings.

FILIAL PIETY.

MALACHI i. 6.—"A son honoureth his father."
When George, the son of Sir George Staunton, was, at the age of twelve, page to the embassy to China, he was noticed by the old Emperor of that country, for his knowledge of the Chinese language, and was presented by him with a yellow silk purse, a mark of great distinction.—On his return to England, he was on the deck of the 'Lion' with his father, who imagining that a French man-of-war was going to engage them, desired his son to go below the deck. "My father, I will never forsake you," was the spirited and affectionate reply of the youth.

A CHRISTIAN'S CONTEMPLATION OF THE GRAVE.

GENESIS xlviii, 30.—"I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying-place."
At the time when his Majesty George the Third, desirous that himself and family should repose in a less public se-

pulchre than that of Westminster Abbey, had ordered a royal tomb to be constructed at Windsor, Mr. Wyatt, his architect, waited upon him with a detailed report and plan of the building, and of the manner in which he proposed to arrange its various recesses. The King minutely examined the whole, and when finished, Mr. Wyatt, in thanking his Majesty, said, "he had ventured to occupy so much of his Majesty's time and attention with these details, in order that it might not be necessary to bring so painful a subject again under his notice." To this the good King replied, "Mr. Wyatt, I request that you will bring the subject before me whenever you please. I shall attend with as much pleasure to the building of a tomb to receive me when I am dead, as I would to the decoration of a drawing-room to hold me while living; for Mr. Wyatt, if it please God that I shall live to be ninety, or an hundred years old, I am willing to stay; but if it please God to take me this night, I am ready to obey the summons."

HUMILITY.

MARK ix. 35.—"If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all."

Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, was eminent for humility. When the people had chosen him bishop he privately withdrew, reckoning himself unworthy of so great an office, and giving way to others, whose age and experience rendered them, as he thought, much fitter for it; but the people having found where he was, beset the house, and forced him to accept the office.

HUMAN INFIRMITY.

ACTS xv. 15.—"We also are men of like passions with you."
When the French ambassador visited the illustrious Bacon in his last illness, and found him in bed with the curtains drawn, he addressed this fulsome compliment to him: "You are like the angels of whom we hear and read much, but have not the pleasure of seeing them." The reply was the sentiment of a philosopher, and language not unworthy of a Christian—"If the complaisance of others compares me to an angel, my infirmities tell me I am a man."

FAITH AND REPENTANCE.

ACTS xxi. 21.—"Testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

In the year 1680, the Rev. Philip Henry preached on the doctrines of faith and repentance, from several texts of Scripture. He used to say, that he had been told concerning the famous Mr. Dod, that some called him in scorn, faith and repentance, because he insisted so much upon those two in all his preaching. "But," says he, "if this be vile, I will be yet more vile, for faith and repentance are all in all in Christianity." Concerning repentance he has sometimes said, "If I were to die in the pulpit, I would desire to die preaching repentance; or if I die out of the pulpit, I would desire to die practising repentance." And he had often this saying concerning repentance, "He that repents every day for the sins of every day, when he comes to die, will have the sins but of one day to repent of."

RECOLLECTIONS OF A COUNTRY PASTOR.

THE INFIDEL.—SECOND VISIT.

On the following morning, as I had proposed, I rode over to the parish of a neighbouring minister, for the purpose of asking his advice as to the best plan to be adopted by me for impressing the mind of the wretched L. I was not altogether prepared to take the same view of religious matters as this excellent fellow-labourer; but I knew him to be a man of deep piety, and of much practical experience. Unfortunately, on my arrival at his vicarage, I found he had that morning left home for a few days, and that he would not return until the end of the week. I returned home much disappointed. The vestry meeting was held in the afternoon, and it was a most harmonious one. I felt it my duty to attend as the representative of the rector. The usual parochial elections took place. A sum of money was voted for the parochial Sunday-school. Fresh means were adopted for furnishing provisions to the poor at a reduced rate; and all expressed themselves thankful that we had had such a unanimous feeling.

In the evening I visited Mr. L.—. On my entering the room he exclaimed—"Well, sir, I am glad to see you—pray be seated." He looked much worse. Taylor's physic, he said, had done him no good. He had passed a sleepless night, and a restless day. He felt himself much weaker; but he was sure all would be well.

"And so I hear," he said, "you got the fools to vote a sum of money for your school. I wish I had been amongst you—I'd soon have turned them. They're a pack of old women—fools one and all. But I'll be at you again."

"Sir," I replied very gravely, "I'm not come this evening to talk over parish matters with you. The vestry was a most harmonious one. Every body expressed the utmost satisfaction. There seemed to be but one feeling, that of deepest sympathy at the cause of the rector's absence." (I could have added, and of thankfulness for his own.) "My object is to talk with you about your religious principles. To come at once to the subject, let me ask, are you a believer in the truth of the Gospel?"

He was evidently much agitated, and replied quickly—"Sir, I wish to dismiss the subject; I wished to see you this evening that we might talk over the vestry business. I wish to have no more talk about religion."

"My good sir," I replied, calmly but firmly, "you will excuse me when I say, that this is no time for talking over worldly matters; your case, let me tell you is one of imminent danger. I have seen Mr. Taylor, and he has warranted me to say so. He thinks you cannot live long. This is the decided opinion of the physician whom he has called in. Both are agreed that your case is desperate."

I shall never forget—I wish I could forget—the mingled look of horror and rage which presented itself before me.—It is a tale of other years. The language he uttered, however, sounds even now in my ears: a volley of oaths, ended with the thrice repeated tale, "I'll cheat you all."

"Sir," I continued, "you are a dying man; no power but that of the omnipotent God can pluck you from the jaws of death. Do you believe in the existence of such a being?"

"There may be a God," was his reply.

"Can you doubt, sir, the fact, and be in your senses?"

"I daresay there is such a being."

"Daresay there is a God!"

"For God's sake," he exclaimed, "let me remain in peace; go away. O God! O God!"

"Good, sir; you have twice called on the name of God—what do you mean by this? Are you invoking his aid?—Do you believe on the name of his only begotten Son?"

"Go away!" he repeated angrily, and with much agitation. "What have I to do with God's Son? What can he do for me?"

"Calm yourself, my good sir. Have you never heard of Jesus the Son of God?"

"I have; but what then? I used to believe in his name. I used to think of him as a Saviour, as it was called—and then I thought of him as a very good man—and now I don't want to think of him at all. I don't want to know things about such stuff. Pray go away—go away, do!"

No words can describe my feelings at that moment. The sick man, evidently wasting every hour, sat propped upon pillows—his sunken cheeks glowing with disappointment—life was fast ebbing—yet a few hours, and he might be gone for ever—the lamp of life might have ceased to burn. O! with what energy were the words brought home to my heart—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

Strange to say I felt afraid of the dying man. Praying for grace, I once more said—"Have you any hope of God's mercy through Christ?"

The reply was—"I do not want his mercy. O, God!—Stuff, all stuff—priestcraft—nonsense. Give me my physic! Where's Betty? Go away—no offence, sir—my physic—go away."

"Once more, good sir," I exclaimed in agony, "do you believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God?"

"Sir, you'll drive me mad—where's Betty?—my physic—run for Taylor!"

It was in vain to remain any longer. I therefore took my leave, and, with a heavy heart, returned to the rectory, where I now resided. No words can describe the horrors of that awful night. I felt the peril of the wretched man, and most fervently did I pray that pardon might be sought, and mercy found, even at the waning moments of the eleventh hour. After a long, disturbed, and harassed night, I fell asleep in the morning, from which I did not awake until it was very late. Starting from my bed, I heard the tolling of the bell. On going down to breakfast, I did not dare to ask a question. The servant, as I made tea, said—"Sir, the clerk wants to see you about Mr. L.—'s funeral."

The agony of that moment was fearful. The clerk entered—"Sir," said he, "Mr. L.—'s cousin came here late last night, and says he's to be buried at —." I felt a momentary relief. I could not have gone to the funeral of that wretched man—and yet, perhaps, this feeling was wrong. Why should I have refused to read over his remains the beautiful and charitable language of our burial service? I have often since thought that ignorance of the true nature of that service has proved a snare to many of my weak brethren. Whether L.— found mercy or no, God forbid that I should presume to decide! I dare not—I would not if I could.—Of this I am sure, that judging from this, and other instances which have come under my observation, there is no torment, short of the worm that shall never die, can equal that of the wretched infidel in a dying hour, who has no refuge from the storm and tempest under the covert of an Almighty Saviour, and who begins even now to experience the truth of the declaration, that "he that hath not the Son hath not life, but the wrath of God abideth on him,"—Church of England Magazine.

The Garner.

SELF-DECEIVERS.

Let us look, for a moment, into the artifices by which the sons of disobedience, in the seasons of fear and misgiving, hope to pacify their own maimed and wounded spirits. Their condemnation, perhaps, seemeth to linger for a season; and hence the threatenings of wrath sound often in their ears like a cunningly devised fable. And to this thought they fly for consolation; and, perhaps, for courage. But miserable is the comforter in which they put their trust, for if they will not believe the words of an Apostle, they surely may believe the facts, which a little search and forecast would bring before their sight. Have they never heard that, even in this life, some fearful portion of the wages of sin is frequently paid down? Have they never heard of the poisonous fruits of transgression, which, even on earth, will sometimes come to a disastrous ripeness. Have they never heard of ruined health, of murdered faculties, of a name which has become loathsome, of hopes that have been smitten as by a withering curse, of a sun that goeth down in darkness even at noon-day? Have they heard nothing of those agonizing shocks which awaken the slumbering minister of vengeance within the bosom of the wicked, and which people their very chambers with demons of remorse? Have they never known or seen that the penal fires which await the sinner have sometimes, even here, burst out beneath his feet, and made him taste of torment before the time? And if they have seen or heard such things as these, how can they endure the deceivers who tell them that no wrath is treasured up for them that do evil? With these earnestness of vengeance before them, how can they dream that men may waste their strength, and debase their noblest capacities in the service of their lusts, and yet that God hath forgotten, and will not see it? or that God is merciful, and will not visit for it? that Heaven hath no eye to view such things, and that hell hath no flames to punish them?—Rev. C. W. Le Bas.

NECESSITY OF EPISCOPACY.

Christianity needeth considerable societies to uphold it; but no society (especially of any large extent) can abide in order and peace, under the management of equal and coordinate powers; without a single undivided authority, enabled to moderate affairs, and reduce them to a point, to arbitrate emergent cases of difference, to put good orders in execution, to curb the adversaries of order and peace; these things cannot be well performed, where there is a parity of many concurrents, apt to dissent, and able to check each other; no democracy can be supported without borrowing somewhat from monarchy; no body can live without a head; an army cannot be without a general, a senate without a president, a corporation without a supreme magistrate; this all experience attesteth; this even the chief impugners of episcopal presidency do by their practise confess; who for prevention of disorder have been fain of their own heads to devise ecclesiastical subordinations of classes, provinces and nations; and to appoint moderators (or temporary bishops) in their assemblies; so that reason hath forced the dissenters from the Church to imitate it.—Dr. Isaac Barrow.

Men are atheistical because they are first vicious, and question the truth of Christianity because they hate the practice.—Dr. South.

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