

peculiar mode of life, and to the singular element which they inhabit. Thus we are so delighted and enraptured at the discovery of so many proofs of Divine wisdom, goodness, and benevolence, that we feel constrained to exclaim, like the Psalmist of old, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all. The earth is full of thy riches."

J... G...

Montreal, 10th January, 1844.

DIGNITY OF LABOUR.

IN early life David kept his father's sheep; his was a life of industry; and though foolish men think it degrading to perform any useful labour, yet, in the eyes of wise men, industry is truly honourable, and the most useful man is the happiest. A life of labour is man's natural condition, and most favourable to bodily health and mental vigour. Bishop Hall says, "Sweet is the destiny of all trades, whether of the brow or of the mind. God never allowed any man to do nothing." From the ranks of industry have the world's greatest men been taken. Rome was more than once saved by a man who was sent for from the plough. Moses had been keeping sheep more than forty years before he came forth as the deliverer of Israel. Jesus Christ himself, during the early part of his life, worked as a carpenter. His apostles were chosen from amongst the hardy and laborious fishermen. From whence I infer that when God has any great work to perform, he selects as his instruments those who by their previous occupation had acquired habits of industry, skill, and perseverance; and that, in every department of society, they are the most honourable who earn their own living by their own labour.—*Rev. T. Spencer.*

From the Philadelphia Saturday Courier.

FORGIVENESS.

"With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

LIFE is not a fairy dream, in which all the fairest and most beautiful of earth's blessings are strewn with lavish hand to bless and soothe us with their magic sweetness—but a stern reality, where we meet with frowns as well as smiles; where clouds, and storms, and tempests, succeed to the placid breeze and soft serenity of the blue ethereal skies. Friends may meet us with a glad smile, yet part with angry frowns; the words spoken in jest and intended as but the pleasing remark of a light, perhaps volatile heart, may cause offence, and end in coldness and displeasure; and thus on through life's mazy ways we go with naught to cheer or soothe us but one bright thought—that forgiveness may follow in the path of error—that the kind heart of one who was a friend will not be estranged, because of an unintentional error, committed in a thoughtless and unguarded moment, but remembering "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again," and in that spirit, which is a mark of true nobleness, extend the proffered hand, and speak from the eyes more effectually than words can speak, the language which their hearts feel: that all is forgotten and forgiven.

In contemplating the heavens when the great luminary of light has hid his face beyond the western hills and clothed all nature in a mantle of darkness, one star will attract and rivet our attention by its superior brilliancy—in casting our eyes over a ridge of mountains, some peak, towering its head above the rest, will call forth the expression of more than usual admiration; so will that person who, to the usual accomplishments of life, adds the rich treasure of a forgiving heart. We are all more or less prone to com-

mit errors here, and as life's fleeting hours pass by, we do many things to offend those for whom we have the highest friendship, yet in the cultivation of this bright quality, these offences may be robbed of their bitter sting; and around that path, which, but for this, might have been filled with wretchedness and affliction, may be thrown the richest garlands of peace and happiness.

THE TRAVELLER.

BURNING PRAIRIES.

THE prairies burning form some of the most beautiful scenes that are to be witnessed in this country, and also some of the most sublime.—Every acre of those vast prairies (being covered for hundreds and hundreds of miles, with a crop of grass, which dies and dries in the fall) burns over during the fall, or early in the spring, leaving the ground of a black and doleful colour.—There are many modes by which the fire is communicated to them, both by white men and by Indians—*par accident*; and yet many more where it is voluntarily done for the purpose of getting a fresh supply of grass, for the grazing of their horses, and also for easier travelling during the next summer, when there will be no old grass to lie upon the prairies, entangling the feet of man and horse as they are passing over them. Over the elevated lands and prairie bluff, where the grass is thin and short, the fire slowly creeps with a feeble flame, which one can easily step over; where the wild animals often rest in their lairs, until the flames almost burn their noses, when they will reluctantly rise, and leap over it, and trot off amongst the cinders, where the fire has passed, and left the ground as black as jet. These scenes at night become in describably beautiful, when their flames are seen at many miles distance, creeping over the sides and the tops of the bluffs, appearing to be sparkling and brilliant chains of liquid fire (the hills being lost to the view) hung suspended in graceful festoons from the skies.

But there is yet another character of burning prairies that requires another letter, and a different pen to describe—the war or hell of fires! where the grass is seven or eight feet high, as is often the case for many miles together, on the Missouri bottoms: and the flames are driven forward by the hurricanes, which often sweep over the vast prairies of this denuded country. There are many of these meadows on the Missouri, the Platte, and the Arkansas, of many miles in breadth, which are perfectly level, with a waving grass, so high, that we are obliged to stand erect in our stirrups, in order to look over its waving tops as we are riding through it. The fire in these, before such a wind, travels at an immense and frightful rate; and often destroys, on their fleetest horses, parties of Indians, who are so unlucky as to be overtaken by it; not that it travels as fast as a horse at full speed, but that the high grass is filled with wild pen vines and other impediments, which renders it necessary for the rider to guide his horse in the zig zag paths of the deer and buffaloes, retarding his progress, until he is overtaken by the dense column of smoke that is swept before the fire—alarming the horse, which stops, and stands terrified and unmoveable, till the burning grass, which is wafted in the wind, falls about him, kindling up in a moment a thousand new fires, which are instantly wrapt in the swelling flood of smoke that is moving on like a black thunder cloud, rolling on the earth, with its lightning's glare, and its thunder rumbling as it goes.

"Well, then, you say you have seen the prairies on fire?" "Yes." "You have seen the fire on the mountain, and beheld it feebly creeping over the grassy hills of the North, where the toad and the timid snail were pacing from its approach—all this you have seen, and who has not? But who has seen the vivid lightnings, and heard the roaring thunder of the rolling conflagration which sweeps over the deep-clad prairies of the West? Who has dashed, on his wild horse, through an ocean of grass, with the raging tempest at his back, rolling over the land its waves of liquid fire?" "What!" "Aye, even so. Ask the red savage of the wilds what is awful and sublime—ask him where the Great Spirit has mixed up all elements of death, and if he does not blow them over the land in a storm of

fire? Ask him what foe he has met, that regarded not his frightening yells, or his sinewy bow? Ask these lords of the land, who vauntingly challenge the thunder and lightning of Heaven—whether there is not one foe that travels over their land, too swift for their feet and too mighty for their strength—at whose approach their stout hearts sicken, and their strong-armed courage withers to nothing? Ask him again (if he is sullen, and his eyes set in their sockets)—"Hush!—ah!—sh!"—(he will tell you, with a soul too proud to confess—his head sunk on his breast, and his hand over his mouth)—that's medicine!"

I said to my comrades, as we were about to descend from the towering bluffs into the prairie—"We will take that buffalo trail, where the travelling herds have slashed down the high grass, and making for that blue point, rising as you can just discern above the ocean grass; a good day's work will bring us over this vast meadow before sunset. We entered the trail, and slowly progressed on our way, being obliged to follow the winding paths of the buffaloes, for the grass was higher than the backs of our horses. Soon after we entered, my Indian guide dismounted slowly from his horse, and lying prostrate on the ground, with his face in the dirt, he cried, and was talking to the spirits of the brave—"For," said he, "over this beautiful plain dwells the Spirit of Fire! he rides in yonder cloud—his face blackens with rage at the sound of the trampling hoofs—the fire-bow is in his hand—he draws it across the path of the Indian, and, quicker than lightning, a thousand flames rise to destroy him; such is the talk of my fathers, and the ground is whitened with their bones. It was here," said he, "that the brave son of Wah-chee-ton, and the strong armed warriors of his band, just twelve moons since, licked the fire from the blazing wand of that great magician. Their pointed spears were drawn upon the backs of the treacherous Sioux, whose swifter-flying horses led them, in vain, to the midst of this valley of death. A circular cloud sprang up from the prairie around them! it was raised, and their doom was fixed by the Spirit of Fire! It was on this vast plain of fire-grass that waves over our heads, that the swift foot of Mah-to-ga was laid. It is here, also, that the fleet-bounding wild horse mingles his bones with the red man; and the eagle's wing is melted as he darts over its surface. Friends! it is the season of fire; and I fear, from the smell of the wind, that the Spirit is awake."

Pah-me-o-ne-qua said no more, but mounting his wild horse, and waving his hand, his red shoulders were seen rapidly vanishing as he glided through the thick mazes of waving grass. We were on his trail, and busily traced him until mid-day sun had brought us to the ground, with our refreshments spread out before us. He partook of them not, but stood like a statue, while his black eyes, in sullen silence, swept the horizon round; and then, with a deep-drawn sigh, he gracefully sunk to the earth, and laid his face to the ground. Our buffalo tongues and pemican, and marrow-fat, were spread behind us, and we were in the full enjoyment of these dainties of the Western world, when quicker than the frightened elk, our Indian friend sprang upon his feet. His eyes skimmed again slowly over the prairie's surface, and he laid himself as before on the ground.

Red thunder was on his feet!—his long arm was stretched over the grass, and his blazing eyeballs starting from their sockets! "White men, (said he) see ye that small cloud lifting itself from the prairie? He rises! The boots of our horses have waked him! The Fire Spirit is awake—this wind is from his nostrils, and his face is this way!" No more—but his swift horse darted under him, and he gracefully slid over the waving grass as it was bent by the wind. Our viands were left, and we were swift on his trail. The extraordinary leaps of his wild horse, occasionally raised his red shoulders to view, and he sank back again in the waving billows of grass. The tremulous wind was hurrying by us fast, and on it was borne the agitated wing of the eagle. His neck was stretched for the towering bluff, and the thrilling screams of his voice told the secret that was behind him.—Our horses were swift, and we struggled hard, yet hope was feeble, for the bluff was yet blue, and nature nearly exhausted! The sunshine was dying, and a cool shadow advancing over