

WITNESSES FOR GOD.

There is one important respect, in which all objects in the universe, from the atom to the archangel, unite—all are witnesses for God. He, who made all things for Himself has so made them that voluntarily or involuntarily, according to their respective natures, they distinctly attest the Divine existence and character. He has not left it contingent whether they give such testimony or not. The great name of THE MAKER is interwoven into the texture of every thing He has made! so that, even if the creature possess a will, and that will become depraved, and guiltily withhold its intelligent testimony to the Divine existence, an eloquent and incorruptible witness is still to be found in the physical constitution of that creature. If "the fool" should "say in his heart, there is no God," every pulse of that heart replies—there is; and every action of that vital organ adds—He is thy Maker.

As the nature of the material witnesses differs, it follows of course, that the manner in which they render their evidence will vary accordingly. In regard to some of them, the marks of design and beneficence are so obvious, that they may be said to be even speaking for God without solicitation; the Divine signature is visibly imprinted on their surface. In regard to others, the evidence lies deeper, and must be sought for patiently. In each case, while the witnesses are under examination—while the investigation is proceeding from link to link in the chain of evidence the ungodly sometimes unseasonably exult, and the timid and uninformed believer in revelation trembles for the issue. But he need not; let him only wait confidently, as God does, till the examination be complete—till the enquiry has reached the last link of the chain—and that link will invariably be found in the hand of God. CHEMISTRY—once the strong hold of the sceptic—has long since discovered that no substance in nature is simple and unmixed; in other words, that every thing is in a made state, that even the atom is an artificial, manufactured thing; so that an argument for God lies in every particle of which the globe is composed, and a witness is in reserve in every pebble we possess, and a final appeal is lodged for God in the elements or first principles of all things—thus demolishing the altar which scepticism had erected to the eternity of the world, and replacing it by an altar dedicated and inscribed to the Divine Creator; so that "if we hold our peace" or withhold our homage, in a literal sense, the very "stones will cry out." GEOLOGY—the voice of the earth, the Pompeii of natural religion, the witness now under examination, a witness raised from the grave of a former world—is producing her "primitive formations," to show that even they are in a made state, and her fossil skeletons to show, that they bear indubitable marks of having come from the hand of the great Designer—leading us to infer, that, could we reach the foundation of the earth, we should find it inscribed with the name of the Divine Architect; that, could we penetrate to the very centre of the globe, it would speak for God—and thus impelling us to erect, out of the wreck of a former world, a temple to Him, that created all things. ASTRONOMY leads us forth into the vast amphitheatre of nature, to gaze on ten thousand times ten thousand burning worlds; and are they not all witnesses for God? For are they not in motion? this is not nature, but miracle; the first miracle was the production of matter, the second to make that matter move; its natural state is rest, but here are unnumbered myriads of material worlds in motion—not in their natural state, but in an artificial, constrained, preternatural state, these are all God's witnesses; "the stars in their courses fight against" irreligion; each of them, obediently followed, is a star of Bethlehem, to guide into the Divine presence; each of them rushes through immensity, as a miracle and a messenger from God to the universe, proclaiming, There is a God, and the hand of that God is upon me; and all of them unite—yes, this is the real "music of the spheres," the chorus of creation—all of them unite in proclaiming "His eternal power and Godhead." In the estimation of the psalmist, the creation is a vast temple; and often did he summon the creatures, and join them in an universal song of praise. John heard the chorus; the noise and din of a distracting world may drown their voices here, but, saith he, "Every creature, which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever." Thus nature, with all her myriad voices, is ever making affirmation and oath of the Divine existence, and filling the universe with the echo of His praise. Rev. John Harris.

A TURKISH SUPPER.—"A small carpet was spread between two guns on the main deck, outside his cabin. It was not screened off. On it we sat down cross-legged, opposite to each other. Two agas—they were gentleman of no less rank—kneelt to us with ewers to wash our hands; then tied napkins round our necks, and placed between us a circular metal tray upon a low stool, provided with four saucers, containing as many kind of conserves, slices of bread and of cake, salt, and a bowl of salad sauce, to be eaten at discretion. Our fingers were the operating instruments. The first dish was a pile of red mullet. The pasha of course had the first help; being a bit of an epicure, he pawed every one in-

dividually before choosing. I took one whose tail only had come in contact with his forceps. The next dish was a fowl. The pasha steadied it with the thumb of his left hand, and with his right hand pulled off a wing. I tried the same manoeuvre on a leg; but, owing to delicacy in not making free use of both hands, failed in dislocating it. The pasha, perceiving my awkwardness, motioned to an officer to assist me. I would fain have declined his services, but it was too late. The fellow took it up in his brawny hands, ripped off the joints with surprising dexterity, peeled the breast with his thumb-nail, tore it in thin slices, and, thus dissected, laid the bird before me with an air of superiority saying, 'Eat, I was very hungry or I should not have been able.' The third dish was lamb stewed with olives. On this I showed that I had fully profited by my late lesson, and dreading the intrusion of another person's fingers on so slippery a subject, dug my own into it with unblushing effrontery. I followed precisely the pasha's motions, scooping the olives out of the dish, with a piece of bread and my thumb, as adroitly as though I had never seen a fork. The attendants winked at each other, and my host's unmeaning eyes faintly radiated at the rapidity with which I adapted myself to existing circumstances. I never fully understood before the point of the saying, 'Do at Rome as Rome does.' Various other meats followed, which I will not enumerate, they were all diminished by a similar process; suffice to say they were excellent, the Turkish kitchen being in many points equal to the French kitchen, and in one article superior—the exquisiteness of lamb dressed in Turkey far surpasses my feeble praise." —Stade's Turkey.

THE PEARL.

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THE DUTY OF CHRISTIANS IN RESPECT TO SCIENCE, AND GENERAL KNOWLEDGE.

NO. 1.

We are not of the number of those who believe that christianity takes the key of knowledge from man, leaving him profoundly ignorant of every thing but the science of salvation. To us it appears matter of unmingled astonishment that any religious persons should ever have concluded that the christian religion was opposed to the study of science and to the universal diffusion of general knowledge. And yet unhappily in this age of light and intelligence many such persons are to be found—persons who strenuously contend that the knowledge of salvation is incompatible with a knowledge of the physical sciences. What God says is every thing to them—what he does is passed by as unworthy of their notice. The book of revelation they will diligently search, but they refuse to read a single page of the book of nature. To the evidences of the wisdom, power and goodness of the Deity as spread before them in the Scriptures, they are all eye, all ear, all attention—but to the manifestation of these glorious attributes in creation they are utterly deaf and sightless. Day unto day uttereth no speech to them—night after night sheweth no knowledge. The scientific researches and experiments of the philosophical are viewed as evils, while Mechanics' Institutes and all other societies formed for the diffusion of general knowledge are their abhorrence. To peruse a scientific treatise is to waste time, and to attend a Mechanics' Institute is to furnish sad evidence of our want of piety and love to God. In their view, to be a bad philosopher is the surest way to become a good christian, and to expand the views of the human mind, is to endanger christianity, and to render the design of religion abortive. 'They seem to consider it as a most noble triumph to the christian cause, to degrade the material world, and to trample under foot not only the earth, but the visible heavens, as an old, shattered, and corrupt fabric, which no longer demands our study or admiration. Their expressions in a variety of instances, would lead us almost to conclude, that they considered the economy of Nature as set in opposition to the economy of Redemption, and that it is not the same God that continued the system of nature, who is also the "Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." In short with these strange individuals you must attend but to one thing—all other subjects must be discarded as beneath our notice and regard. Far be it from us to insinuate that religion should not be the object of our supreme regard, or that it ought not to have the first place in our attention. But while we admit this in all its force we must as pointedly deny that it is any mark of neglect or indifference to piety, to employ a portion of our time in the study of the sciences. That the greater should not be sacrificed to the less, we know and believe. So while religion claims the first place in the attention, it leaves every other kind of knowledge to be sought in its proper order; that is, in due subordination to the higher interests of immortality. But the creed of those individuals against whose principles we contend is, that the study of nature is a disparagement of Gospel truth—and that it is inimical to evangelical piety to seek to coalesce with philosophy and science.

Such a creed we do consider a libel on christianity—de-

rogatory to the high character of our holy religion—and subversive of all the great interests of godliness. What! shall the christian represent his great master as the foe of knowledge and the advocate of ignorance—or his religion as reprobating human learning and sanctioning sterility of mind? Shall he promulge the repelling view that christianity 'demon-like, presents the material world as a temple into which mortals are forbidden to look; through the doors of which it would be profanity to enter, and the treasures of which it would be sacrilege to appropriate?' Shall he anathematize us for examining the works of our Heavenly Father, or for teaching others the wonders of his power? Shall he desire to envelope the human mind in the mists of ignorance excluding it from all intellectual culture and extended knowledge? Shall he propound the revolting position, that in proportion as the ministers and members of christian churches are ignorant of literature and science, christianity will flourish, and faith, humility, holiness and love abound? Or in a word, that religion and science are hostile to each other? Now if this position be true, we hesitate not to aver, that the religion of the Bible is unworthy of man, because unsuitable to him as an intelligent creature. And we have no doubt that more harm has been done to christianity by the pernicious sentiments of those religionists, than by all the combined malignity and craft of infidels. Let all christians openly avow and maintain such principles, and christianity will be doomed irretrievably, to reprobation and rejection. Who will embrace a system that condemns man to the gloomy dungeons of ignorance? Who desire to be linked to darkness and stupidity? Who wish to have his name connected with the author of a religion which sets its broad stamp of disapprobation on the pursuits of literature and science? None: and the profession of the christian religion will be known only as the badge of barrenness of mind and scantiness of information. But whence have these persons derived their preposterous views? From the Bible? No; for light can never recommend darkness. Indeed, to rescue the inspired volume from such dangerous hands, and, to defend it against such impious notions, is the object of the present article: and we feel impelled to the task not as lovers of science only, but as lovers of mankind also. And it is our purpose as well as our duty to act upon the offensive more than the defensive in this question. We think it would be debasing christianity to attempt to prove that she grants the right of sufferance only, in respect to the study of the natural sciences. We shall, therefore, stand on higher ground, and contend that "CHRISTIANITY NOT ONLY ALLOWS BUT REQUIRES THE ACQUISITION OF GENERAL KNOWLEDGE"—that we cannot pass through the world, blind to its beauties, and deaf to its harmonies, without blame—and that the man fulfils not the design of his Creator, who does not cultivate his mind in all useful knowledge to the utmost of his circumstances, and of his power. In this way we shall wipe off the blot which has been cast on the characters of those who have pondered on the works of their Creator, while by implication, we shall fasten folly, if not guilt, on all who shut themselves in the murky dens of ignorance, and refuse to consider the wondrous works of God.

In the prosecution of our enquiry we must not overlook the fact that man is placed by his Maker, in a world where he is surrounded by an endless multiplicity of objects, calculated to excite his intense interest, and to call forth the expressions of wonder and admiration. Looking at the earth on which he lives, the vegetable kingdom presents itself to view with its countless species of plants and flowers, of various forms and diversified hues:—of all sizes from the sturdy and majestic oak, and the tall cedar of Lebanon down to the mossy turf and the delicate windflower:—of all colours from the gaudy tulip or fine carnation down to the humble violet peeping from the bank, or modest lily of the valley. Some dazzling us by the brilliancy of their dyes, and others teaching us humility by the simplicity of their dress, and in all the varied combination of tints, shade melting into shade infinitely before any production of art.

"The gay rejoicing creatures, they neither toil nor spin.
Yet see what bright attire they're all apparel'd in."

Looking at the animal creation we are no less astonished at the scene of wonders presented to our view. By the ingenuity of their construction, variety of their shapes, delicacy of their colouring and loveliness of their fragrance, those interesting children of the ground, the various families of plants, arrest with peculiar energy the attention of man. And in the animal world we find similar properties to those possessed by vegetable nature. In the feathered race what a diversity of colours in their plumage! How various their shape and size, and how different their instincts and modes of existence! Then there is the warbling of birds, a subject no less curious than pleasing to contemplate. The note of alarm, of joy, of anger, or of love is very different in each species. There is the twittering of the swallow and the quickly vibrating lay of the linnet—the solemn note of the owl and the lively 'air of the goldfinch—or the song of the early lark, soaring till the unrisen sun gleams on his speckled breast, and the sweet music of that bird to whom the immortal bard refers, 'who all night long her amorous descant sang.'

In the insect tribes which so thickly people the earth, the waters and the air, we find an endless diversity. In these 'little woa-