

SIR ANDREW AGNEW'S SERVANT.

The mention of John Gibb, leads us to give our readers the little episode of his life, which is not of itself devoid of interest, and seems due to one who, during thirty years' service, manifested the most affectionate devotion to his master. He was a native of Barbadoes, born in slavery, and when about thirty was brought over to this country in the service of one of Sir Andrew's connections. His mistress, of course, never dreamt of parting with her dependent; but John, it seems, had learned something of the then almost recent, and to him most marvellous doctrine, that whosoever touched the free soil of our happy land, himself became free, and, as the time for returning to Barbadoes approached, his dread of returning to the neighbourhood of its sugar plantations overcame the fear of his mistress, and of starvation in a strange land. After requesting his freedom, which was refused, he respectfully intimated his determination to remain in England. Great indignation did his harshness excite; every means was used to alter his resolution; and it would have gone hard indeed with the friendless negro, had not the confidence which her kind eye inspired, induced him to throw himself upon the compassion of Sir Andrew's mother. In these days sympathy with the slave was a rare and stigmatized thing; but this excellent lady, to whom perhaps no one in trouble ever appealed in vain, instantly settled the matter by receiving poor John into her service. He attended Sir Andrew at college, and in all his subsequent wanderings; and a more faithful, humble, and trust-worthy servant never lived. The freedom he had so much coveted, he seemed to value chiefly, that he might spend and be spent in the service of his benefactress and her son. He was not less dutiful to his master that he felt himself a freeman; and while busily engaged in scouring the plate, he might be heard humming with great glee,—

"Britons never—never shall be slaves!"

John had every thing to learn after he came to this country. He was instructed in the principles of religion, and baptized; he learned to read and write; often when, as he grew older, his attendance on the family circle at table was dispensed with, he might be seen planted near the door so as to be at hand, intently poring over his Bible. He grew grey in Sir Andrew's service; he loved his children as his own; and though for many years his mind continued apparently dark, he always alluded to his master's opinions with the most reverential respect; attended on the ministry, and read the books which he recommended; till at last, through divine grace, after many sharp convictions of sin, he attained the blessed hope of the gospel, and old John simple and humble to the last, died as he had lived, with this blessed exception, that the Saviour he had long honoured as "his master's God," he was at length enabled to rest in and hold fast as his own. His death took place in 1839, and the large concourse of every rank that attended his funeral, strikingly marked the kind and cordial estimation in which he was held by all that knew him.—*Memoir by Dr. McCrie.*

TROUBLES NEEDED.—Mr. Berridge, in a characteristic letter to Lady Huntingdon, says:—"The sensible comfort will not last always nor long. In the present state of things, a winter is as much wanted to continue the earth fruitful as summer. If the grass were always growing, it would soon grow to nothing, just as flowers that blow much and long, generally blow themselves to death. And as it is thus with the ground so it is with the labourers too. Afflictions, desertion and temptations, are needful as consolations.—Jonah's whale will teach a good lesson as well as Pishgah's top; and a man may sometimes learn as much from being a night and a day in the deep, as from forty days on the mount. I see Jonah

come out of a whale and cured of rebellion. I see Moses go up to the mount with meekness but come down in a huff, and break the tables. Further, I see three paked disciples attending the Master to the mount and fast asleep there. Jesus has given you a hand and heart to even a great things for his glory, and therefore he will deal you out a suitable measure of afflictions to keep your balance steady."

A WARNING.—The pastoral relation is of divine appointment, and God sometimes manifests his displeasure at its violent disruption. In a small church in the country, among a farming population, a pastor had laboured quietly and diligently for years. There had been no general awakening under his ministry, but silent and gradual additions had been made to the church. It was one of the smallest in the body with which it was connected, and yet usually its annual additions exceeded those of any other, and thus among a population diminishing by emigration. But some were not satisfied, and the pastor must leave, though at this very time, a number were inquiring what they must do to be saved. The pastor must go; and among the reasons, it was urged by a young man, that "a new minister might call out some who did not regularly attend, and by hearing from him a single sermon they might be converted. A change was made, and what has been the result? The Holy Spirit was grieved. Those inquirers have remained where they were, or have gone back to the world, and though they have one of the best of men for a pastor, and years have passed, there has not been, so far as I know, a single conversion there since. The pastor is discouraged, his heart broken. He has been greatly afflicted; but with deep emotion he said, "All these things are nothing in comparison with the greater trial of Zion's desolation." To trifle with God's institutions is a fearful thing. Let the churches respect the pastoral relation. "They watch for your souls as they that must give account."—Heb. xiii., 17.

A STORY FOR LITTLE CHILDREN.—There was once a little boy, who heard one Sunday a clergyman preach. The text which the clergyman read was "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." After reading the text, he stopped a minute, and asked his hearers to consider what it was they should like most, and then to ask it in Jesus's name, trusting to his promise that it would be given to them. At the end of the service the little boy asked his aunt, if she had asked for anything; then she asked him what he had asked God to give him, and he said, "I thought first of one thing I should like, and then another, but I did not know which would be best to ask, and so I said, 'Father, thy will be done.'"

HE WAS A BURNING AND SHINING LIGHT.—Not burning only, nor shining merely, but burning and shining. The enthusiast burns but does not enlighten. The formalist shines but does not warm. Neither alone will do for the minister of Christ. Warmth without light will never produce vegetation, nor will the rays of the moon fructify the earth. "When there is light in a minister," says an old writer "consisting of human learning and great speculative knowledge and wisdom of this world, without a spiritual warmth and ardour in his heart, and a holy zeal in his ministrations, his light is like the light of an ignis fatuus and some kind of putrifying carcasses that shine in the dark, though they are of a stinking savour. And if, on the other hand, a minister has warmth and zeal, without light, his heart has nothing excellent in it, but is rather to be abhorred; being like the heat of the bottomless pit, where, though the fire be great, there is no light. To be hot in this manner, and not lightsome, is to be like an angel of darkness. But ministers, by having light and heat united in

them, will be like the angels of light, which for their light and brightness, are called 'morning stars.'"—*N. Y. Observer.*

THE BENEFITS OF SABBATH-KEEPING.—A gentleman in London, said Sir Andrew, who was very zealous in the Sabbath cause, and attended all our meetings, one day invited me to his house. I went, and was surprised to find a beautiful mansion, standing a little retired from the street, with a flower garden in front—a luxury not very common in London. On my remarking that he was surely more favoured than his neighbours, "The Sabbath, Sir," he replied, "has done it all, for while I traded on Sabbath, I could make nothing. All my winnings were put into a bag with holes, but ever since I respected the Sabbath I have prospered."—*Life of Sir Andrew Agnew.*

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