

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Sea of Tiberias.—At the upper end of the sea, between me and the hills, there is occasionally a very broad belt of pasture land; and at the mouths of the glens opening into it, I could not often perceive the tents of the Arabs whose flocks grazed it. There are many scenes where people would gather together for such purpose as the multitudes followed our Saviour. The most perfect seclusion may be enjoyed in all directions; but I do not think that either the word "desert" or "wilderness," according to our understanding of them, describes the species of solitude; and yet it would be difficult to find another expression, perhaps, to suit it so well. In the two or three places on the banks of the lake, are the remains of towns. At the upper end of it, near to the entrance to the hills, I found a few ruins, and sat there to rest, in the hope that I was, if not on the precise spot, somewhere near the site of Capernaum. Some distance on my left hand, as I looked down the length of the sea, the Jordan ran into it, I could just see it; and beyond it I thought I could perceive through my glass the position of Bethsaida. How completely desolate of living beings is this fine city now. I could see nearly to the southern end of the lake; and, with the exception of poor Tiberias, there is not a dwelling even in sight. How populous must these shores have been when daily witness to our Saviour's mercies, when it was no doubt the custom to pass from city to city and coast to coast, in boats that plied upon the waters incessantly. There is not a vessel now to be seen upon them, nor, while I remained in my resting place, one man upon the banks. I could scarcely quit the spot, it was so still and beautiful. I entered the hills, and was soon lost among the rocks and wild crags; over which we stumbled and scrambled without meeting a soul, or hearing even the sound of the shepherd's voice. Occasionally, as we ascended, the heights commanded a view of the lake and of its mountains and hills. Sometimes the paths and the green slopes above them were covered with a rich variety of flowers; the purple iris, anemones, tulips of every color, geraniums, and the finest lupines I ever saw.—*Major Skinner's Overland Journey.*

The Rev. John Wesley and the Military Officer.—John Wesley having to travel some distance in a stage-coach, fell in with a pleasant-tempered, cheerful, well-informed officer. His conversation was sprightly and entertaining, but frequently mingled with oaths. When they were about to take the next stage, Mr. Wesley took the officer apart, and, after expressing the pleasure he had enjoyed in his company, told him he was thereby encouraged to ask of him a very great favor. "I would take a pleasure in obliging you," says the officer, "and I am sure you will not make an unreasonable request." "Then," says Mr. Wesley, "as we have to travel together for some time, I beg, that if I should so far forget myself as to swear in your company, you will kindly reprove me."

The officer immediately saw the motive, and felt the force of the request, and smiling, said, none but Mr. Wesley could have conveyed a reproof in such a manner.

The remainder of the journey gave no occasion for the officer to comply with the preacher's prayer, nor to the latter to complain of one oath from the officer.

Cold Winters.—In the year 400 the Euxine was covered with ice for 10 days. In 859, the Adriatic was covered with ice, but for what length of time does not appear. In 929, the Thames was frozen over for 13 weeks; the same river was also frozen over 1763, 1765, and 1777—8. Several times since the same has happened. The winter of 1683 was so severe in Europe, that trees were split by the frost. Loaded sledges passed on the ice from Boston to Nantucket in the winter of 1797—8, and have done the same one or two winters since. On the 12th of Dec. 1803, the frost in New England was so intense, that the trees were killed. A fall of snow took place in February, 1717, so deep that the people in Boston had to get out of their chamber windows. Eleven hundred sheep perished on Fisher's Island, from being buried 13 feet in the snow. Two were found alive after a lapse of 28 days, they having supported themselves by chewing the wool of others. In

1780, the Chesapeake was covered with ice as far as the mouth of the Potomac. In the same year, troops of horse and heavy cannon crossed on the ice from New York to Staten Island, and Long Island Sound was nearly covered with ice. Almost all the birds of the forest perished.

Copy of the Gospel in Gothic.—At a recent anniversary of the American Antiquarian Society, held at Worcester, (Mass.) we notice a donation by the Hon. Thomas L. Winthrop, president of the Society, of a book entitled *Evangelica Gothica*, a quarto volume, containing the four evangelists in the Gothic, and Anglo-Saxon language, printed at Dort, in Holland, in 1665. This rare volume, containing the only considerable specimen extant of the written Gothic, the ancient stock of the English, and other northern European languages, was procured by Gov. Winthrop expressly for the library of the Antiquarian Society.—*Chr. Intell.*

Age of European Monarchs.—The following is said to be the ages of the different reigning sovereigns in Europe. The king of England, 71 years. The king of Sweden, 71 years. The Pope, 71 years. The king of Denmark, 68 years. The king of Prussia, 65 years. The king of the French, 64 years. The king of Holland, 63 years. The king of Wirtemberg, 44 years. The Sultan of Turkey, 51 years. The king of Belgium, 46 years. The Emperor of Austria, 43 years. The Emperor of Russia, 40 years. The king of Bavaria, 39 years. The king of Sardinia, 38 years. The king of Naples, 36 years. The king of Greece, 21 years. The Queen of Portugal, 17 years. The Queen of Spain, 6 years.

STANDARDS OF ENGLISH.

"When the word 'witness,' says the intelligent Editor of the New York Commercial Advertiser, 'can be shown us in the Old Testament, or in any of Southey's writings, as a synonyme for 'see' or 'behold,' we will admit that it is good English. The Old Testament and Southey are our authorities.'—And there can be none better. There has always seemed to us a clear and striking providence in the selection of the time at which King James' version was effected, in the prime vigour and lustihood of our benign and blessed mother-tongue: and as for Southey, he draws with golden urn from the cool depths of 'the pure well of English undefiled.'—*Missionary.*

COMMUNICATIONS.

For the Colonial Churchman.

ON RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

It is a matter of much shame, as well as grief, to all that have any regard for the honor of Christ their Saviour, and his religion, that his doctrine and precepts are so generally slighted and neglected as they are, and they cannot but be very solicitous to know how they may be better observed for the future. For it cannot be questioned, that many who have put on the profession of religion, do not live up to it. If parents, however, would take more care in instructing their children in the first principles of the Christian religion, we might hope for better things of the rising generation.

The Church takes security of those who bring a child to be baptized, that when it comes to be capable of it, it shall be instructed in the catechism which she, for that purpose hath set forth, containing all the principles of that religion into which it was baptized. But this is much neglected by parents of the present day. The catechism of our Church is a complete summary of the christian religion, which is easy both for parents to teach and for children to learn, and so full and comprehensive that it contains all things necessary for any man to know in order to his being saved. There are many parents in this town, to my own knowledge who leave the religious instruction of their children almost entirely to the Sunday School; they do not consider the great responsibility they incur, by neglecting this duty. For the instruction received at the Sunday School, will do comparatively little good, if not seconded at home. And what additional trials do they put upon the teachers of that institution, by their neglect. If they did but serious-

ly reflect what a discouraging thing it is to the teacher, to see no improvement in the scholars after all his pains, in consequence of this neglect of theirs. But especially as it is a duty laid upon all parents by God himself, and to whom they must give an account at the great day of Judgment. I say if they would but seriously reflect upon these things, so as to use their utmost care and diligence to teach their Children to know God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, that they may thereby grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we should see more religion among us than we do see.

The first thing children are taught in the catechism is, to renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this world, and all sinful lusts of the flesh. Secondly, to believe all the articles of the christian faith; and Thirdly, to keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of their life. Under which three things the whole substance of the christian religion is contained, being promised by children when baptized into it. They therefore should be put in mind of these promises as soon as they are capable of receiving them, and of the obligation which lies on them to perform it; for otherwise it can never be expected that they should do, or even so much as know any thing about them.

But no one can fulfill these vows and promises without God's especial grace, which we have no ground to expect without fervent and diligent prayer: and as Christ has promised the Holy Spirit to them that ask for it, we should therefore teach our children this first and great duty of prayer, and never omit ourselves to pray for them and for a blessing on the instructions they receive. But alas! how few do this. How very few call their children round the family altar, and offer up their united prayers to that God from whom all good things do come, and in whom we live and move and have our being. Alas! there are some that even do not thank Him for their daily food—do not acknowledge the hand that feeds them. Or if a grace is intended, it is left to one of the younger branches of the family, as if it was conferring too much honor on the Almighty Creator of Heaven and Earth, for the head of the family to thank him for his gifts.

The next thing the Catechism teacheth is the ten commandments, wherein they are taught their duty towards God, and their duty towards their neighbour. That is, to love God with all the heart, and our neighbour as ourselves, and lastly, the nature of the two sacraments, which our Church considers generally necessary to salvation—that is, baptism and the supper of the Lord.

Parents cannot begin too soon to instruct their children in these important truths. If they value their soul's salvation, that the seeds of grace which were sown in their hearts at baptism, may not be lost or stifled, but grow up to perfection; great care must be taken that they be taught as soon as they are capable to discern good from evil, to avoid the evil, and do the good, according to that saying of the wise man, "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." God has laid a strict command upon all parents to bring up their children in the knowledge of himself, and of their duty to him. God highly favoured Abraham, because he said he would command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord. And how much God is displeased with parents who neglect to bring up their children in his faith and fear, appears sufficiently evident from that severe judgment which he inflicted upon Eli and his whole house for it. Saying to Samuel; "In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house, when I begin I will also make an end. For I have told him, that I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever." "Hear ye children the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding," saith the wise man. "Get wisdom, get understanding, forget it not, forsake her not and she will preserve thee. Take fast hold of instruction, let her not go: keep her for she is thy life." Many other passages in scripture might be quoted