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Poetry.

THE CROSS THE TEST.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Some with Jesus are delighted,
While he speaks of joys to come,
Thinking that to them is plighted
After death a happy home;
But the "cross"—when he declares it
"None but he who takes and bears it
Can my true disciple be?"
Few—how few! to this agree.

All are pleased when "Come ye weary!"
They can hear the Saviour say;
But 'tis language harsh and dreary,
"Enter ye the narrow way."
While "Hosanna!" men are singing,
A cry in love. But when is ringing,
"Crucify him!"—at the sound,
Nothing more of love is found.

While his hands are food supplying,
All with joy his bounty take;
When in anguish he is lying,
None for his protection wake.
Thus may Jesus have our praises,
While our hopes and joys he raises;
But should he his favours hide,
Love to him would not abide.

Is thy joy in Christ arising
From thy love to him alone?
In his sorrows sympathizing,
Canst thou make his grief thine own?
Should he cease with hope to bless thee,
Should I lack fears and doubts distress thee,
Still I would say, couldst thou say,
"Jesus, thou art all my stay?"

In thyself, Lord, thou art worthy,
All our love is but thy due;
Saints and angels cry before thee,
"Thou art holy, just and true!"
When on thy bright perfections
Fixes all his best affections,
Has, in loving thee, a part
That shall satisfy his heart.

Sacred School Journal.

Christian Miscellany.

"We need a better acquaintance with the thoughts and reasonings of pure and lofty minds."—Dr. Sharp.

Religion and Youth.

There is great advantage in the Divine authority of the rules which religion prescribes for the conduct of life. Its announcements are so many of the decrees of Jehovah, of which it is not in human folly to question the wisdom, and to which nothing short of absolute madness could hope to offer successful resistance. Obedience, therefore, becomes the dictate of reason as well as of conscience. All the interests of time and eternity are involved in a frank, earnest concurrence with these expressions of the Divine will. After God has spoken, there are no doubtful questions to settle—no wavering probabilities for scrutiny and adjustment. It only remains for those who have heard his voice to gird up their loins and hasten to the accomplishment of an appointment of an appointed task. It must be obvious to the slightest reflection how much the business of life is simplified by this authoritative settlement of doubtful questions, and the subordination of all its pursuits to one controlling principle. They who choose to follow other guides, necessarily lose this powerful element of efficiency. They must often hesitate in their choice of their rules of action—they must often falter in the pursuits to which they finally devote themselves, and often fail in the attainment of their objects, through the insufficiency of worldly motives to sustain untiring activity. They hang in equipoise, while others, obedient to the Divine lawgiver, advance in the race. They stop to reconsider where the demand is strongest for accelerated motion. They find the incentives to which they have yielded up the direction of life too feeble to sustain them. They doubt, under the pressure of toil and weariness, whether they have not consulted ambition and avarice at

the sacrifice of higher interests—whether they may not have thought too little of the claims of repose, or too highly of reputation. They discover, too late, some lack of congeniality for the scenes or society upon which they have been precipitated by levity, or pride, or indolence. After all, will the thought that God is not in all their schemes, and that they tend to an issue upon which Heaven's blessing has never been asked nor promised, often obtrude itself, to relax the sinews of effort, and even to sadden the triumphs of success? Such misgivings are most likely to come upon the mind in its days of doubt and despondency, when the hand is tremulous and the heart faint. Just then it is that the Christian most feels the support of its principles. "The word of God abideth in him," and he travels on from "strength to strength." It is his infallible counsellor in a time of perplexity. It assures him of all deliverance from all dangers and all disasters. It sustains him most completely when all other supports confess their insufficiency. Its light is most intense in the darkest day, and it raises the loudest notes of victory when its devoted champions are borne on their shields from the mortal conflict.

The Christian young man gains another element of efficiency in the permanence of the influences under which his character is formed. From youth to old age, through all of life's changes, he walks by the same unerring light. His eye is fixed upon one object. His pursuits obey one great law, and all tend to a common grand result. Life's entire energies are concentrated upon a point which becomes henceforth the goal of all his efforts and aspirations. Lower worldly maxims lose their force and application with the progress and mutations of time. The appetite becomes sated with enjoyment or paralyzed by age. Disappointment, or the sober second thought of experience, dissipates the illusions of ambition. Hardly any worldly motive but avarice, confessedly the lowest and the worst, is accustomed to maintain its sway to the close of life. Failure or change in the ruling principle, necessarily destroys unity and continuity of action; and enterprises eagerly begun in the thoughtfulness of youth, are abandoned as hopeless or unworthy by sober manhood. The tastes fluctuate. Imagination refuses any longer to gild the phantom with which it at first reduced the unwary. With these changes, come changes of purpose, and even middle life finds itself unsettled and wavering, shorn of its strength in its very prime and unwarred vigour; while the later days of an irreligious life are almost invariably tasteless, unsatisfactory, and to all the higher ends of existence absolutely useless. Such a life has, and can have, no pervading unity. Its efforts are unsteady and fitful, as they needs must be from the variable and conflicting impulses of which they are the result. How different the history of him who has chosen God for his portion in early life, and made the Divine will his one rule of action! "The word of God, which abideth in him," is "quick and powerful," and ministers an unfailing supply of living, powerful resources. It has a rule of action and a ministration of strong impulses for each period and exigency of our earthly existence. Buoyant youth and sober manhood it links together in an indissoluble unity of interest, and hope and effort; and it quickens the slow pulses of hoary age with prospects more radiant and exhilarating than ever rose before the visions of childhood. Now it is chiefly in his steady and unflinching devotion of the entire life to a single object, that we are to look for the secret of all eminent success. It was to this continuity and intensity of effort in a single direction, rather than to any special attributes of genius, that Davy, and Cuvier, and others were indebted for their eminent achievements in science. For the production of great characters or great actions, there is wanted the early adoption of some worthy object of pursuit—its steady prosecution through all the vicissitudes of

life, and an earnest, fervent temperament, which stirs old age itself with living impulses. How completely religion, embraced in early life, satisfies these indispensable conditions, we have already seen.—*Dr. Olin.*

Where hast thou gleaned to-day?

The clear, sweet harmony of the great choral hymn filled all the court of heaven. The spirits went and came on their love fraught errands, but when the voice of one died in the distance, other tones came from afar, and other angels rejoined the mighty choir. One of them was commissioned to our earth, but he sang on until the sun dipped below the wave, and the twilight glided past scattering her manifold, soft shadows.

As the stillness deepened, the commissioned one left his place in the heavenly band. More and more slowly he approached the earth as if reluctant to commence his task.

"Obedience," murmured he, at length. "What if some reject my warning? what if some scorn my reproof? Did not men hate my Master? and am I better than He?"

So with his one question of deep significance, he passed on. Noiseless, invisible, yet everywhere recognized and understood, he found no obstacle to his viewless course. The barred cell of the criminal, and the palaces of kings, the peasant's cottage, and the consecrated temple, the throng and the solitude were alike free to his footsteps.

He entered a gorgeous mansion and asked of its princely owner, "Where hast thou gleaned to-day?" The young man laughed lightly as he replied, "In the field of my own pleasure. Am I not master of myself?"

The angel bent over a little child, and whispered, "Where hast thou gleaned to-day?" And the child answered, "I have been among the flowers. I have made garlands of the sweet-scented valley-lily, and the honey suckle that the bee loves so well; and I thanked the great Father that he made them grow and blossom."

The angel entered the chamber of a maiden who sat looking out into the moonlight, and asked softly, "Where hast thou gleaned to-day?" "Among the sick and sorrowing," answered she gladly, "For our Saviour has said, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'"

The angel stood in the wilderness, and asked sternly of one hiding there gold and jewels, "Where hast thou gleaned to-day?" The man answered with a frown, "In the field of theft? yet away with thy boding voice, threatening the vengeance of the Eternal! Away! away!"

The angel paused amidst the graves, and asked of a bereaved mother, "Where hast thou gleaned to-day?" And the lone one answered, "In the field of prayer, and behold! even now have I received a blessing. Already is my mourning turned to joy."

A scholar sat in a vast library amidst the gathered lore of departed centuries. But the verse of the poet, and the wisdom of the sage were forgotten in the intense interest awakened by the volume of divine truth. The angel looked a moment on the damp brow and anxious eye, then gently whispered,

"Where hast thou gleaned to-day?" "The scholar sighed deeply, and said, "In the field of endeavour, but alas! I cannot understand how man can be saved."

The heavenly visitant lingered yet awhile, for he knew that the Holy Spirit had been there.

The scholar wept, and prayed, and soon the book glowed to him with light, and he exclaimed rapturously, "God has given his salvation also unto me!"

Quickly the swift pinions of the angel beat the air, and, rejoicing the heavenly host, he proclaimed the glad tidings of the return of another soul. The countless multitude responded again, and yet again, and these were the words of the chorus, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him

that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever.—*Watchman and Reflector.*

A River from a small Rill.

A Welch clergyman asked a little girl for the text of his last sermon. The child gave no answer—she only wept. He ascertained that she had no Bible in which to look for the text. And this led him to inquire whether her parents and neighbours had a Bible; and this led to that meeting in London in 1804, of a few devoted Christians, to devise means to supply the poor in Wales with the Bible, the grand issue of which was the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society which has already distributed more than 15,000,000 copies of the Bible, its issues now reaching nearly a million and a half annually. And this, in turn, led to the formation of the American Bible Society, and to the whole beautiful cluster of sister institutions throughout the world, which are so many trees of life, scattering the golden fruits of immortality among all the nations of the earth. This mighty river, so deep, so broad, so far-reaching in its many branches, we may trace back to the tears of that little girl. "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!"—*Read's Hand of God in History.*

"These Endure but for a Time."

MARK IV. 16, 17.

There is a piety which resembles the summer convolvulus. It is lovely, and it is short-lived. How sweetly does the elegant creeper put forth its morning blossoms, the pride of the garden! Yet morrow finds them sickly and faded; and the sun goes down upon shrivelled and unsightly forms, which only serve to tell us of a glory departed. And so it is sometimes seen in the church. Youth blooms in the beauty of Christian holiness; and its love, and its purity, and its zeal, are as flowers of Eden for attractiveness, the planting of the Lord, and the joy of his people. But all this excellence is transient. Some form of temptation arises with a burning heat, the reproach of the cross, the allurements of pleasure, the care of this world, and the life of the soul dies away, and its graces perish. There is an "end" of which Christ has declared that it "is worse than the beginning;" and never can his language be more solemnly emphatic than when applied to the cases of men whose youth has been spent in the service of God, and who terminate life "in the flesh."

A Negro's Advice.

A young minister received a call from two different societies at once to become their pastor. One was rich, and able to give him a large salary, and well united; the other was poor, and so divided that they had driven away their minister. In this condition he applied to his father for advice. An aged negro who overheard what they said, made this reply:—

"Massa, go where there is the least money and the most devil."

He took the advice, and was made the happy instrument of uniting a distracted church and converting many souls to Christ.

Afraid to Follow their Example.

A man asked his neighbour why he did not follow the example of certain persons who had ceased to support the Gospel and withdrawn from public worship. He said, "I am afraid to do it." "Afraid! What do you mean by that?" "I have for a long time," said he, "been accustomed to observe the condition of the men who take that course; and when I see how generally and rapidly, from that time, they go downward, 'I am afraid to follow their example.' "Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."—1 Samuel ii, 30.