

This lady, who was well known to the writer, had made many sacrifices for the cause of Christ, and was, I believe, doing what she could to bring poor wanderers back to God.

Many other things were mentioned by her, but which I cannot now so distinctly remember as to warrant my making any record of them here. There was a strange unearthliness about this young woman, after this event. Previously, her disposition was rather sullen, and there was an impression of sourness on her countenance; but the change produced by this occurrence was manifest to all that knew her. Her temper became the most amiable, and her countenance was lighted up with more than ordinary joy. But, strange to say, in a few months she allowed herself to be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelation, and consequently lost much of her glory; but the rod of affliction led her to recover her forfeited enjoyment, and in about three years after this trance she died happy in the Lord.

No person is perhaps more disposed to scrutinize and to reject the disclosures of what are called trances and visions than myself; and yet, when they furnish so many marks of genuineness as those of Miss D—, I think they should be allowed their proper weight and influence in confirming and illustrating the doctrines of revelation. There is nothing in Miss D—'s disclosures inconsistent with that Book which is to be a light unto our feet, and a lamp unto our paths, and by which we are to regulate our faith and practice; but, on the contrary, there is the most perfect accordance. The Word of God informs us that there is a world of spirits, into which men enter on quitting life, and are happy, or otherwise, according to their moral character; and if the Lord should, in some cases, for reasons best known to himself, lift the veil which conceals from our view that spiritual region, we ought not to reject the light thus let in upon us, but rather avail ourselves of its assistance for the better understanding of the word of God, and the realities of another state of existence.

With respect to the locality of the world of spirits, conjecture has been busily and fruitfully employed. Some suppose that it is in the sun; others that it is in the centre of the vast universe, attracting and governing all the celestial bodies in their revolutions: but the opinion which to me appears most plausible is that of its being in the atmospheric region, and consequently all around us. It is true, we perceive it not, because "our senses are holden." Our physical nature is supposed to be the veil separating between us and the invisible world; but when this veil is removed by the hand of death, our souls will at once find themselves in that world, and discern things which, though now present, are not seen, because spiritually discerned. This view of the subject seems to be countenanced by the Scriptures.—The mountain appeared covered with spiritual beings when the Lord, in answer to the prayer of the prophet, opened the eyes of his servant, or drew aside the veil. (2 Kings vi. 17.) Stephen, at the time he was about to suffer martyrdom, "saw the heavens open, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God." Believers are to be "caught up to meet the Lord in the air;" and the ministering spirits which "minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," "do always behold the face of our Father which is in heaven." They do not leave the spiritual world to perform their ministrations, but are in heaven, it would seem, at the very time they are "encamping round about them that fear the Lord." It is true that this view, as well as others, relative to the abode of separate spirits, involves difficulties not to be solved in this imperfect state; but it nevertheless appears to receive some sanction from the word of God, and is, in my estimation, more consistent with the condition of being entranced than any other opinion held on the subject.

It is also a very generally-received opinion, that spirits know each other in the invisible world. The rich man knew Abraham and Lazarus; and the Apostle, referring to a future state, tells us that "then shall we know as also we are known." According to the testimony of Miss D—, she knew, without being informed, the various beings she met with in the world of spirits. It appears to be a region of knowledge intuitively obtained, without any laborious effort or inquiry. This view of the subject is calculated

to strike terror into the hearts of those who, by their neglect or influence, destroy souls, as it supposes they will know their victims when they shall meet them in the world lying beyond the tomb; but it is a view well adapted to excite pleasurable emotions in the breast of those who "turn many to righteousness," as it encourages the hope of their recognising their "spiritual children" as their "crown of rejoicing in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming."

There is another opinion, entertained by some persons, which does not appear to be without foundation in the Word of God, that the inhabitants of eternity know what is taking place in the world. The temptations presented to the wicked by wicked spirits, the guardianship of the good beings, the cloud of witnesses represented by the Apostle as looking from their place upon Christians running the race set before them, and the joy felt in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, certainly very strongly countenance the opinion. This also agrees with Miss D—'s statement; for she told us most distinctly that the state and circumstances of the population of our globe were fully known to the inhabitants of the other world.—How startling is the thought! What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness? If earth is without a covering to eternity, with what circumspection ought we to walk!

Now, if these things be so—if there be a state of future rewards and penalties, on which we must enter on leaving this state of trial; how important it must be for eternal things to exert their due weight and influence upon us, that when we fall upon earth we may be received into everlasting habitations! Were we to judge of the relative claims of time and eternity by the general deportment of men, we should conclude that the former were far more imperative than the latter; the perishing body more valuable than the immortal soul; and the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season, more to be desired than those unfading joys which are at God's right hand.

One of the persons that Miss D— saw in torment had been in the habit of violating the Christian Sabbath by matters of worldly business. I more than once reproved her for it, warned her of her danger, and exhorted her to flee from the wrath to come. She acknowledged the propriety of my remarks, but, like many, pleaded her secular engagements, and expressed a hope, that, at no very distant period, she would be able to retire from business, and attend to her soul. Unhappy woman! Procrastination has ruined many a soul, and it ruined hers; for, while she was about to realize all that her earthly mind had long and anxiously desired, the messenger of death suddenly and unexpectedly blighted all her hopes, abruptly put an end to her mortal life, and Miss D— saw her in hell lift up her eyes, being in torment. "O that mortals were wise, that they understood this; that they would consider their latter end!"

Reader, are you prepared for another world? If *impenitent*, you are not; for, "except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." If *unbelieving*, you are not; for, "without faith it is impossible to please God," and "He that believeth not shall be damned." If *unregenerate*, you are not; for "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. If *unholy*, you are not; for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord."—Such is the testimony of God. "He that hath ears to hear let him hear!"

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

NARRATIVE. BY THE REV. F. NIEL, OF THE REASONS WHICH IMPELLED HIM TO LEAVE THE COMMUNION OF THE CHURCH OF ROME, IN WHICH HE WAS RECENTLY A PRIEST, IN FRANCE.

(Concluded.)

There is another ceremony, whose connection it is difficult to trace, that of renewing the fire on the evening of Easter and Pentecost. The procession of penitents is often witnessed. They perambulate the streets, divided into companies, with one or more priests at their head, bearing standards, wearing masks of green, red, &c., for there are penitents of all hues, chanting aloud,

who enter the church dedicated to some saint.—If the procession is in the country, it would be impossible to describe the noise and disorder which often prevails, particularly during their repast, or when they become heated with wine. If the country is suffering from want of rain, the priest convokes the people, and they go in procession to the edge of a well or stream, and the priest dips the bottom of the cross two or three times into the water, in order to bring down rain. If, on the contrary, rain is too abundant, and the fruits of the earth are destroyed, the procession carries the cross to the foot of a hill, and there they implore the aid of all the saints to procure fine weather. It is to be supposed the priest does not lend his assistance without a suitable remuneration. Roman pagans went in procession to their temples in honour of Ceres or Bacchus, to propitiate them, that good crops and abundant vintage might be granted them. The Roman Catholics thus imitate them in their extravagant and pompous ceremonies. To the ignorant people these brilliant spectacles are peculiarly acceptable.

Another ceremony, not always so agreeable to the priesthood, is that during a storm. The people compel their minister to exercise his power, under the persuasion that he can command the storm; but should it happen that the priest is absent, or unwilling to lend his assistance, or that, notwithstanding his conjurations, the storm continues to extend its ravages, the priest is exposed to outrage and ill treatment, and he ceases to enjoy the respect of his parishioners, because, as they conceive, he would not exert the skill he could command.—When a priest is about to perform this ceremony, he puts on the surplice, stole, and square cap, and issues from the church with the ritual in his hand, reciting litanies and prayers so very long, that there is every chance of the storm breaking before the conjuration comes to an end. Sometimes their assistants hold them fast to their garment, for the poor deluded people suppose the priest would be carried off by the Devil, if he failed in his exorcism!

Numberless other ceremonies might be named, not less absurd or superstitious. Should one of the Incas, from America, happen to arrive in Europe during some of the festivals of the Romish Church, he would be agreeably surprised to find a priest superbly dressed, walking beneath a canopy of cloth and gold, bearing in his hands the symbol of the god whom the Peruvians adore!

A Mahomedan met a caravan of pilgrims on their way to St. James de Compostella, or to some other place where some saint had manifested his power by working miracles, might he not ask why do you not go to Mecca or the Moaque?—In Russia the people and clergy pay more respect and veneration to the image of St. Nicholas than they pay to Christ himself, and this idolatry originated in the Church of Rome, and to such an extreme have they proceeded in Russia, as to call the image of the saint God. If the Church of Rome treats as schismatical the Russian or Greek Church, surely it cannot be on account of these practices, but rather because the prince of this church would not yield precedence to his rival at Rome. History recounts the most bitter disputes on this point between the two churches. Still when the Church of Rome has any object to gain, as bringing forward its catholicity and unity, to prove its infallibility and the truth of its doctrines, it does not hesitate to reclaim the Greek Church as its legitimate child. The Church of Rome profess to be *One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic*. Invincible arguments in its favour! Surely, could it prove its infallibility, it would require no further argument to prove itself the true Church. We can judge of its claim to be apostolic by comparing the doctrine which it teaches with that which is contained in the writings of the Apostles; and we shall find it holy and infallible, if extravagance and superstition are the characteristics of holiness, if manifest contradiction in its decrees, and palpable errors in its doctrine, are the signs of infallibility, I cannot for one be persuaded that a Church whose ceremonies, commandments, prohibitions, &c., vary to infinity, can be truly called *one*. In the Church of Rome, each different section has its own peculiar rites, feasts, offices and practices. One must, under pain of excommunication, believe that the Pope is infallible; if this article of faith is denied, he is cursed by the priest.