

ascetic person be himself diligent and exact in keeping this sacred rest unbroken by worldly engagements of business or pleasure; let none of them be ever seen guilty of any direct or indirect transgression of this great commandment,—and the effect upon the public mind and public manners cannot fail to be salutary. The veneration for this sanctified day will grow and spread; and consistency be thus given to those honest remonstrances which an observance of casual violations may provoke.

But abstinence from labour, rest from the business of life, is not all that pertains to the sacred observance of the Sabbath-day: those are things to be left *undone*; there are duties also to be *done* on this holy day. Though it be a day of rest, it is by no means to be a day of indolence or inactivity. There is one very important employment marked out for it, the appropriateness and obligation of which all christians recognize,—THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF ALMIGHTY GOD. Through the gracious rest and leisure afforded by this holy day, all have opportunity, of every class and condition, to meet together in the house of God,—to acknowledge their common brotherhood and common Father,—to offer up the united prayer and to present their mingled praises.

In this view we cannot but be struck with the peculiar solemnity of the sacred Sabbath-day. If it be attractive as presenting one wide respite from labour throughout God's vast creation,—repose and stillness and tranquillity in lieu of the hum and bustle and distractions of active life and occupation;—it is even more attractive when viewed as a season in which all the intelligent creatures of God are employed in the adoration of his awful majesty and the praise of his glorious name. For let us figure to ourselves the whole christian world resorting together to the house of prayer; let us conceive there the mingled voices of supplication, the deep tone of repentant sorrow, the earnest cry for heavenly mercy through the blood of a crucified Saviour. Let us fancy every eye turned with hope to the common heaven,—every ear open to the consoling words of heavenly truth. Let us reflect on such a scene,—a scene presented throughout all christian lands, repeated in ten thousand temples erected to the honour of God,—the rich and poor bowing down there to the universal Father,—the tremulous tongue of age speaking its thankfulness and hope,—the voice of childhood lisping its interceding prayers! Bring then the animating association nearer. Let us imagine millions of voices on the self same day, yes at the self-same hour, with instantaneous offering, responding the same prayers and praises and intercessions which ourselves are using,—speaking in the same words of "truth and soberness" their heart-felt addresses to God. While all this serves to array religion herself with fresher beauty, can it help quickening the feeling of devotion, drawing closer the bands of christian brotherhood, and strengthening the ties of national affection? can aught be more beautiful than the picture of this universal worship?—It is mortality casting aside its frailty and its dross, and employed in the business, and aiming at the purity of heaven. It is the scattered sound of those many voices on earth, which are preparing to swell in full and harmonious chorus before the throne of God in heaven.

And what, we may ask, could have suggested,—who could have directed this general devotion, except the gracious God who appointed the rest of the Sabbath? Without such an appropriation of it what, indeed, would be the picture of the moral world? how else would the knowledge, the sense, the practice of religion be maintained? What opportunity would there be for "declaring the counsel of God"—which needs to be so continually and solemnly declared;—what means for achieving the benefit which an apostle ascribes to "the foolishness of preaching?"

In short,—for we have the warning precedent of the Jews who possessed and yet polluted the Sabbaths of God,—if we would avoid both public and private misfortune; if we would escape the wrath of heaven; if we would be happy as individuals and prosperous as communities;—let us "hallow the Sabbaths" of God. Let us hallow them in the fullest sense, by maintaining inviolate the sacredness of their rest and by appropriating them, as is becoming and as is enjoined, to the services of religion. "They shall be a sign," says Almighty God, "between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God." And "if we seek him;" if we reverence and serve him, "he will be found of us; but if we forsake him, he will cast us off for ever."

E. R.

HORÆ BIBLICÆ.

No. II.

THE SUBLIME IN HUMAN CHARACTER.

It might have been expected that the most sublime views of Deity should be revealed to us in that book which comes to us immediately from himself, and the professed object of which is to display his glory. But it is my intention at present to shew, that though the sacred writers employ their noblest intellectual energies in describing the glorious character of their Eternal King, yet they do not expend all their strength on this subject; but afford us many instances of the *sublime in human character* as well as in the Divine.

The short history of Enoch appears to me one of the most elevated and dignified portraits of human excellence. *Enoch walked with God; and he was not; for God took him.* How sublime is the idea which is conveyed by the expression "walked with God!" To what society is the man introduced! How far above the common walks of mortals does he range! Jehovah is his companion! It is true he *lives* among men, but he *walks* with God. His body is on earth; but his heart is in heaven. He is in the midst of a degraded and unholy world; but he is not of the world. All around him are ripening for destruction; but he for everlasting glory. The hearts of others are filled with wickedness, and violence, and fraud: his is a *habitation of God thro' the spirit*. In vain a bewitching world smiles to entice him from his only source of pure and heavenly satisfaction. In vain an angry world frowns on his rigid preciseness, and would terrify him out of his allegiance to his Sovereign. He walks with

God, alike regardless of the good and evil opinion of a rebellious world.

"Among the faithless, faithful only he;
Among innumerable false, unmoved,
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
Nor number nor example with him wrought,
To swerve from truth or change his constant mind,
Though single."—MILTON.

And he was not; for God took him. How striking is the distinction with which God honors his servant! No painful lingering death terminates his holy course. He is borne away from his labours to his reward without paying the common debt of nature. Perhaps nothing could have more strongly expressed the divine approbation, than this departure from the laws of nature; and nothing could have so strikingly impressed our minds with the exalted holiness of the man, as this mention of the peculiar mode of his removal from the world, in immediate connexion with his walking with God. It seems to say, that his soul had become so elevated and refined from all the pollution of sin; and that there was so complete a transformation of the whole man produced by this close and uninterrupted walking with God, as to render it needless that he should pass through those scenes of trial and conflict to which other men are exposed. His *place* was to be changed, rather than his *disposition* and *employment*. He had walked with God on earth, and now he was removed, to walk with God in heaven.

The character of Abraham, which is detailed at much greater length, is one of the very highest order, and presents us with many traits of astonishing sublimity. *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a land which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.* Here we see him under the sole influence of a divine command, and cheered only by a divine promise, setting out in life, without any earthly prospect except one of misery and ruin; leaving his father's house, his native land, the friends and associates of his youth; and by an unrivalled exercise of confidence in the truth of God, committing himself entirely for life to the Divine guidance. Here was a dependence which produced the most perfect independence of which the human character is capable—a dependence upon God so unreserved, that nothing earthly could become an object of anxious desire or tormenting fear to him. From such a beginning much might be expected, and that expectation will not be disappointed in the contemplation of the patriarch's history.

What disinterested magnanimity appears in his conduct towards Lot his nephew! when their herdsmen contended with each other about their right to pasturage, surely it was the duty of the younger and of the dependent to have yielded to the elder and superior. But instead of Lot's apologizing to Abraham, Abraham said unto Lot, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me; if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left. I need not make one remark on the perfect contrast between the uncle who could make such an offer, and the nephew who could accept it.

The title with which Abraham was honoured as *the friend of God*, gives us a very exalted conception of his character; and the way in which he was permitted to draw near to God, and the intercourse he had with Him, heightens this conception. He who said to Abraham, *Fear not; I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward—I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect*: at once declared how much He loved him, and how highly He thought of him.

The patriarch appears truly great in disinterested benevolence when with holy importunity he draws near to the throne of God to plead for guilty Sodom. And the condescension of Jehovah in saying, *shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I do?*—gives us at once the most sublime conception of the character of Abraham, and accounts for the sacred boldness with which he pressed his request on behalf of the cities devoted to destruction.

But the event in Abraham's history which raises him far above all praise, is his prompt obedience to the command which required him to offer up his only son. Every thing conspires to render this solemn, self-denying act, the most conspicuous instance of magnanimity that ever adorned the page of history or the fables of poetry. Abraham had many years lived upon the promise that he should have a child in whose posterity all nations of the earth should be blessed. At length, when every human probability of the event had ceased, the promise was fulfilled. Abraham received his child with gratitude, and watched over him with peculiar tenderness, as the centre of all his hopes and wishes. But in the midst of all his enjoyment of the present, and his anticipations of the future, respecting his child, he is suddenly and peremptorily commanded to offer him as a sacrifice. There was nothing to prepare the mind of the parent for the painful separation which was insisted upon—nothing to shew him that the hopes which were founded on the word of God should not be blasted. And still further to rend the feeling heart of the parent, he himself must be the executioner of this awful sentence. And yet not a murmuring word escaped his lips, not an unholy feeling rages in his heart, or disturbs the serene aspect of the great Father of the faithful. Not a lingering step betrays the least reluctance or hesitation about his duty. Even his son during the journey cannot discern one mark of feebleness or irresolution about him. And when with admirable simplicity the child enquires after the lamb for the sacrifice, the parent is not thrown off his guard, by a question which was surely enough to unman the most determined spirit.

I do not believe that any character has ever been drawn by the most inventive genius, which is as uniformly great, and which on many occasions is so truly sublime, as that of Abraham. Let those who doubt of this only read for themselves, and read with attention, and they will each say, "The half has not been told me."

J. K.

THE CHURCH.

COBOURG, SATURDAY, JULY 1, 1837.

We are compelled this week to postpone several notices which we had prepared on various subjects of interest to our readers, in order to give place to the numerous and valuable communications with which our present number is filled.

We thank the author of THE SATURDAY PREACHER for his suggestion, and trust that the field which, under that designation, lies open for the numerous able correspondents by whom we hope to be favoured, will invite them to supply us with a variety of subjects which will form an useful and agreeable adjunct to those excellent articles which seem pledged to our columns under the title of SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATIONS, HORÆ BIBLICÆ, and VIEWS OF OUR ZION. We were apprized by the author of the latter that for the very striking and appropriate title under which he has ushered his useful Essays, he is indebted to a highly popular work recently published in the United States, called "Walks about Zion;" yet we are authorized to say that, probably in no other respect, will any particular coincidence be discovered between them;—that, at least, when any use is made of that valuable publication, the due acknowledgment shall be made.

We must also defer any comment upon the slender augmentation to the number of Subscription Lists returned, with which the successive mails of this week have furnished us, until opportunity is afforded for that reply to the appeal in our last number, which the zeal of our brethren and other agents gives us cause to anticipate with encouragement and hope.

CHURCH STATISTICS.

RECTORY OF ST. THOMAS.

Rev. Mark Burnham, Incumbent, who performs regular service on Sundays at St. Thomas' church and at the church at Dunwich; and alternately at two school-houses about three miles distant from St. Thomas on the evenings of the days on which he officiates at the latter place. In 1836 there were Baptisms 30; Marriages 30; Burials 10; Communicants 60.

RECTORY OF BATH.

Rev. Abraham Fuller Atkinson, Incumbent. Divine Service is performed in St. John's Church, Bath, every Sunday; on the Isle of Tanti every alternate Sunday afternoon, when the season permits; and periodical ministrations are given at five other stations in the Townships of Ernest Town and Camden, which are regularly attended by Mr. Paul Shirley, a faithful and laborious catechist under the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign parts. The Sunday school in St. John's church, Bath, is at present attended by about 50 children, and the prospects of increase are encouraging. During the year ending 18th June inst. there were, Baptisms 30; Marriages 5; Burials 14; Communicants, St. John's church 25, Camden 31, Isle of Tanti 21;—in all 77.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The *Sabbath Morning Hymn* possesses much merit, and shall have a place in our next.

Letters received to Friday the 30th June:

Rev. A. F. Atkinson, add. subs.; Rev. J. Cochrane; Rev. D. Robertson; Rev. J. G. Geddes, add. subs.; J. Burwell, Esqr. remittance.

We have much pleasure in giving publication to the following Letter from the Lord Bishop of Montreal to the Archdeacons of this Province,—affording an interesting detail of his Lordship's exertions in England during the preceding year in behalf of the cause of Missions in Canada:—

Riviere De Loup, 4th March, 1837.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN:

You are aware, I believe, that I was overtaken here at Philipsburgh, St. Armand West, by the Revd. Messrs. Bettridge and Cronyn, proceeding to England as delegates to plead the cause of the church in Canada; and that upon their presenting to me your recommendation of the object (conveyed in tones of kindness towards myself for which my best acknowledgements are due,) I furnished them with such credentials as the hurry of the opportunity would permit,—I being myself upon the point of going to the church for a Conformation, and they having no more at their disposal than that for which the driver of the Stage would consent to wait. I promised however to send to their address in England a fuller and more formal signification of my concurrence in your approbation of their undertaking, in order to provide for the case of their finding the Bishop of Quebec too ill to furnish such a document himself. It does not appear that any particular arrangement has been made respecting the mode in which the sums which these gentlemen may succeed in raising are in the first instance to be disposed of; nor whether it is understood that they are to act in concert with the Upper Canada Clergy Society formed recently in England. It would be natural and obvious that they should put themselves in communication with the Society for the propagation of the gospel, were it not repugnant to the system of that Society to recognize any distinct fund for the exclusive benefit of a particular colony. Some regulation upon this point appears to be required in the outset of their operations and ought to be announced, I should think, in their appeal to the public at home. I shall be glad to be favoured, at your early convenience, with your ideas upon the subject.

As it appears from your address that this measure, having been agitated some time ago, was suspended to wait the result of my own endeavours at home on behalf of the church, I feel it due both to you and myself, to state as briefly as I can, what those endeavours were. It was but little that I effected, and that little might no doubt have been better done; but I was in one way or other engaged very constantly in doing my best, and it pleased God that I was not, in all points, absolutely unsuccessful. Much of my time was occupied in negotiations with the different public authorities respecting the arrangements for the