

Youth's Department.

SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS.

XVII. BABEL.

169. Why was the tower of Babel so called?—(Gen.)
170. What strikes you as being the probable intention of the builders of Babel?

XVIII. BABYLON.

171. Who was the founder of Babel—or rather of Babylon, as the term is rendered in the marginal reading?—(Gen.)
172. What king of Judah sinfully exhibited his own treasures and those of the house of the Lord, before the ambassadors of Merodach Baladan, king of Babylon?—(2 Kings.)
173. Were they the Israelites or the inhabitants of Judah which were carried as captives into Babylon? and under what king of Babylon did this take place?—(2 Chron.)
174. In what passage are the Jews described as sitting down by the waters of Babylon when in their captivity, and weeping at the remembrance of their former glory?—(Psalms.)
175. How long did the Jews remain in captivity in Babylon?—(2 Chron.)

CHURCH CALENDAR.

- Feb. 4.—Fifth Sunday after Epiphany.
11.—Septuagesima Sunday.
18.—Sexagesima Sunday.
24.—St. Matthias Day.
25.—Quinquagesima Sunday.
28.—Ash Wednesday.

PASSING THOUGHTS.

BY CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

No. IX.

LOYALTY.

It has often struck me, that one of the glaring evils characteristic of these latter days, that of despising dominion, is allowed to creep into places where it ought to be especially guarded against. It is not unusual among persons who profess to take the Holy Scriptures as their daily and hourly guide, to hear the proceedings of those in highest authority commented on in a severe, censorious strain, for which there is no warrant in the Word of God, and to which the whole tenor and spirit, no less than the letter of our liturgical services, are strongly opposed.—Among the godly men who were raised up to be the reformers of our national religion, the fathers of our English Church, no feature perhaps more prominently marks their characters than that of reverence for the kingly authority, even when, by its dreadful abuse, they were led to the dungeon, the rack, and the stake. They saw in the reigning monarch God's "chosen servant," appointed to be their sovereign. They knew that, the hearts of kings being in his rule and governance, every ordinance, whether for present prosperity, or wholesome affliction, to the militant Church, dispensed through the hand of that vicegerent, was to be received as coming from Him by whom kings rule: and it would be difficult to collect, from the voluminous annals of even Mary's reign, instances of deviation from this heaven-taught principle of loyalty. Rebuke was indeed administered occasionally by those who, coming as "ambassadors for Christ," delivered a message from him, even to crowned heads: but this was done reverently and carefully; while they who were commissioned so to do, ceased not to urge on their flocks the submission due from subjects to their sovereign. Intercessory prayer then held the place which is now too often usurped by severe animadversion. "Lord, open the King of England's eyes!" were the dying words of exiled Tyndal, when suffering strangulation at the stake in a foreign land; and many a beautiful prayer of like import is recorded of that noble army of martyrs.

Are we wiser, or more enlightened than they? A royal deviation from the straight line, even in comparatively unimportant matters, cannot now be traced, but it calls forth a strain of observations such as our pious fathers would have silenced with no light rebuke: and the evil effects of this unguarded concurrence in what is alas! too justly termed the spirit of the age, are incalculable. In God's word we see the welfare of Christian subjects inseparably connected with the well-being of their king; and the scriptural means of promoting that well-being distinctly pointed out. "I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty."—We do greatly err, if, putting aside the governing powers that be, ordained of God, we seek good things for the country apart from the recognition of that ordinance. Do we recognize it aright, when, exercising what we conceive to be Christian liberty, we bandy severe remarks, even to the extent of speaking evil of dignities? Our sympathies are readily awakened by a scene of poverty and grief; why are they so deadened when contemplating the splendours that necessarily surround those who must often carry an aching head and anxious heart beneath the hereditary honours that devolve on them? How often do we find our feet entangled in the snares spread by our crafty foe; and if every secret fall were publicly exposed, what a spectacle would the holiest of us become! Yet the humbling effect of this individual experience appears to be lost when the actions of the great come under review; though the enemy of mankind has a manifest interest in redoubling his efforts to ensnare them.

It is well known that the revered grandfather of our beloved Queen lived in the practice of continual intercession for his people; and that his prayer was accepted, let the stupendous mercies, the wondrous deliverance that exempted our nation from the scourge which desolated Europe, testify. Do we owe no debt of grateful love to the progeny of our Hezekiah? Does no secret consciousness of especial obligation bid English hearts respond to the divine call, "Honour the King?" O, if one of us, yet vigorous in life and strength, with every advantage of spiritual knowledge, and deep experience of the loving kindness of the Lord, were to-morrow exalted to that giddy height, and sur-

rounded with those fearfully perplexing cares that it is now the lot of one youthful individual to encounter, how would he look around upon the Church that hailed him its temporal head, and from the inmost recesses of a trembling heart, exclaim, "Brethren, pray for us!" Let no Christian be beguiled into the sin of omission in this most solemn and imperative duty: it is a sin that will be visited on his children's children. Be ours, in its full, its richly spiritual meaning, that sublime aspiration which the Holy Ghost put into the mouth of Israel's high-priest and faithful prophet of old: "God save the queen: long live the queen: may the queen live for ever!"

THE WOUNDED SOLDIER.

There was a boy who had been brought up in a Sunday school where it was customary that the children should repeat, every succeeding Sunday, the appropriate collect of the day; he afterwards entered upon the world—he left a pious mother—he became a soldier, and I lament to say that in the army he lost almost every trace of his religion; and the experience he had acquired in younger years was effaced by the habits of military life. It so happened that he was engaged in one of those great battles which occurred so frequently during the last war, and he received a wound which left him upon the ground in a state that seemed to be hopeless. Feeling, as he did, that he was on the very confines of the eternal world, all the recollections of his past life rushed upon his memory: the habits that he had acquired in his military engagements, and all the principles of his youth that he had lost, presented themselves most powerfully to his mind; and, from his own account, he endeavoured to lift up his heart in prayer; but he had lived without prayer; he did not know how to pray, and no words whatever suggested themselves to his mind. Still, in the midst of that awful feeling with which his mind was possessed, he struggled to give utterance to his thoughts in the language of prayer, addressing the God whom he had offended, and the Saviour whose cause he had deserted; at length a collect that he had learnt as a boy at school, presented itself to his memory. It was the language of prayer—it was a supplication for pardon—it recognized the Saviour as the ground of his hope—it was offered up in the spirit of penitence and true contrition; and from that time he felt as if a burden had been removed, and he had found access to the throne of grace. It pleased God to spare his life; he returned to his own country; and feeling how much he was indebted to what he had learnt in the days of his childhood at the Sunday-school, he made a resolution to save the sum of one guinea, and at the very first sermon that he might hear preached for a Sunday-school, to drop the sum into the plate. He did so. The town where the sermon was preached was Leeds. When he dropped the guinea into the plate, the person who held it, supposing he had made a mistake, and had contributed a guinea instead of a shilling, brought it back again, and explained the mistake which he presumed he had made: but he said, "Sir, it is no mistake; the sum that I have laid down has been collected during many weeks, and I wish it to be an offering of gratitude to my God." Being requested to explain what the circumstances might be, which led to so liberal an act, he retired into the vestry, and there related the facts which have been communicated above.—*The Witness (English publication).*

WICLIF'S ASHES.

Hitherto (A. D. 1428) the corpse of John Wiclif had quietly slept in his grave about forty-one years after his death, till his body was reduced to bones, and his bones almost to dust. For though the earth in the chancel of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, where he was interred, hath not so quick a digestion with the earth of Aceldama, to consume flesh in twenty-four hours, yet such the appetite thereof, and all other English graves, to leave small reversions of a body after so many years. But now such the spleen of the Council of Constance, as they not only cursed his memory as dying an obstinate heretic, but ordered that his bones (with this charitable caution,—if it may be discerned from the bodies of other faithful people) be taken out of the ground, and thrown far off from any Christian burial. In obedience hereunto, Richard Fleming, Bishop of Lincoln, Diocesan of Lutterworth, sent his officers (vultures with a quick sight scent at a dead carcass) to ungrave him. Accordingly to Lutterworth they come, Sumner, Commissary, Official, Chancellor, Proctors, Doctors, and their servants, (so that the remnant of the body would not hold out a bone amongst so many hands,) take what was left out of the grave, and burnt them to ashes, and cast them into Swift, a neighboring brook, running hard by. Thus this brook has conveyed his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, then into the main ocean; and thus the ashes of Wiclif are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over.—[*Fuller's Church History*].—"The concluding period of this most lively narrative," says Charles Lamb, "I will not call a conceit: it is one of the greatest conceptions I ever met with. One feels the ashes of Wiclif gliding away out of the reach of the Sumners, Commissaries, Officials, Proctors, Doctors, and all the puddering rout of executioners of the impotent rage of the baffled Council; from Swift into Avon, from Avon into Severn, from Severn into the narrow seas, from the narrow seas into the main ocean, where they become the emblem of his doctrine, 'dispersed all the world over.' Hamlet's tracing the body of Cæsar to the clay that stops a beer-barrel, is a no less curious pursuit of 'ruined mortality,' but it is in an inverse ratio to this: it degrades and saddens us, for one part of our nature at least; but this expands the whole of our nature, and gives to the body a sort of ubiquity, a diffusion, as far as the actions of its partner can have reach or influence. I have seen this passage smiled at, and set down as a quaint conceit of old Fuller. But what is not a conceit to those who read it in a temper different from that in which the writer composed it? The most parts of poetry to cold tempers seem and are nonsense, as divinity was to the Greeks, foolishness. When Richard II., meditating on his own utter annihilation as to royalty, cries out,

'O that I were a mockery king of snow,
To melt before the sun of Bolingbroke.'

if we have been going on pace for pace with the passion before, this sudden conversion of a strong felt metaphor into something to be actually realized in nature, like that of Jeremiah, 'O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears,' is strictly and strikingly natural; but come unprepared upon it, and it is a conceit: and so is a 'head' turned into 'waters.'—[*Note to Bishop Doane's Sermon at the ordination of the Rev. J. Wolff.*]

CHRISTIANITY CONTRASTED WITH PAGANISM.

The erection of hospitals and infirmaries for the poor, is one of the distinguishing ornaments and fruits of Christianity, unknown to the wisdom and humanity of Pagan times. Compassionate consideration for the poor formed no part of the lessons of Pagan philosophy; its genius was too arrogant and lofty to stoop to the children of want and obscurity. It soared in sublime speculation, wasted its strength in endless subtleties and debates, but among the rewards to which it aspired it never thought of "the blessedness of him that considereth the poor."—You might have traversed the Roman Empire in the zenith of its powers, from the Euphrates to the Atlantic, without meeting with a single charitable asylum for the sick. Monuments of pride, of ambition, of vindictive wrath, were to be found in abundance; but not one legible record of commiseration for the poor. It was reserved for the religion whose basis is humility, and whose element is devotion, to proclaim with authority, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy."—*Robert Hall.*

CHARITY.

Charity is a virtue which never goes alone, and is busied in solitary places, being reserved and excluded from the society and communion of other graces; but it is that which seasons, gives life and efficacy to all the rest; without which, if it were possible for me to enjoy all the graces that the bountiful hand of God ever showered upon a reasonable creature, yet, if St. Paul speaks truth, I should be nothing worth: it is that which fulfils all the commandments. This is evident to all that shall but slightly, and in haste, read over I Cor. xiii. beginning at verse 4, and so onwards, where we may behold almost all the virtues that can be named, enwrapped in one virtue of charity and love, according to the several acts thereof, changed and transformed into so many several graces: it suffereth long, and so it is longanimity; it is kind, and so it is courtesy; it vaunteth not itself, and so it is modesty; it is not puffed up, and so it is humility; it is not easily provoked, and so it is lenity; it thinketh no evil, and so it is simplicity; it rejoiceth in the truth, and so it is verity; it beareth all things, and so it is fortitude; it believeth all things, and so it is faith; it hopeth all things, and so it is confidence; it endureth all things, and so it is patience; it never faileth, and so it is perseverance.

CONFESSION OF AN INFIDEL.

David Hume was one day boasting to Dr. Gregory, that, among his disciples in Edinburgh, he had the honor to reckon many of the fair sex. "Now tell me," said the doctor, "whether, if you had a wife or daughter, you would wish them to be your disciples? Think well before you answer me; for I assure you, that whatever your answer is, I will not conceal it." Mr. Hume, with a smile, and some hesitation, made the reply:—"No: I believe scepticism may be too sturdy a virtue for a woman."

There is nothing on earth, so stable as to assure us of undisturbed rest, nor so powerful as to afford us constant protection.

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