

P O E T R Y.

From the Evangelical Magazine.

THE COMPASS.

The storm was loud; before the blast
Our gallant bark was driven;
Their foaming crests the billows rear'd,
And not one friendly star appear'd
Through all the vault of heaven.

Yet dauntless still the steersman stood,
And gaz'd, without a sigh,
Where, pois'd on needle bright and slim,
And lighted by a lantern dim,
The compass met his eye.

Thence taught his darksome course to steer,
He breath'd no wish for day;
But brav'd the whirlwind's headlong might,
Nor once throughout that dismal night
To fear or doubt gave way.

And what is oft the Christian's life
But storm as dark and drear;
Through which, without one blithesome ray
Of worldly bliss to cheer his way,
He must his vessel steer?

Yet let him ne'er to sorrow yield,
For in the sacred page
A Compass shines, divinely true,
And self-illumin'd greets his view
Amidst the tempest's rage.

Then firmly let him grasp the helm,
Though loud the billows roar;
And soon, his toils and troubles past,
His anchor he shall safely cast
On Canaan's happy shore!

From the London Christian Observer.

ARCHDEACON WIX'S TOUR IN NEWFOUNDLAND.

The reader will easily judge of the rude ignorance of the inhabitants of places thus lonely and scarcely accessible. One of Archdeacon Wix's frequent employments was to write letters for them, or to read those which they had received, perhaps weeks before, from far-distant friends, without being able to find any person to decipher them. Charms, witchcraft, and spectral appearances, were popular articles of belief. Still, as they did not wish to be thought either ignorant or irreligious by their ecclesiastical visitor, they devised such stratagems as the following, to set forth both their goodness and their attainments.

"I was glad to find that the children were accustomed to put up a short thanksgiving before and after meat, and to observe morning and evening prayers, although, from the manner in which some of the poor creatures went through the several services, and the blunders which they made, it seemed they had little of understanding in their devotion. I remember, that, in a family which I visited, the eldest daughter was the domestic chaplain; I was not willing to interfere with her functions, when she was called forth by her mother with a sort of pride to officiate, before the family meal. But the poor girl made and repeated the mistake, when alluding to God's bounty, by saying 'bounteous liberty' instead of 'bounteous liberality,' which the sease obviously required, and which the original grace, which had been handed down by tradition in the family, must evidently have contained. On this I was emboldened to lead the family in the use of a form which was better calculated to express their simple gratitude. I have often lamented, as I have seen, much of the same objectionable vanity in the drawing-rooms and nurseries of those of the higher classes, who are endeavouring to bring up their children religiously; nay, I may confess that I have, in former years, felt a degree of the same vanity myself—what parent has not?—but I think I have learned a lesson, from the exhibition of this general disposition of the human mind in many a fisherman's cabin, which will go far towards putting me upon the guard against this error in myself, and I shall truly rejoice if my remarks may be the means of calling the attention of other parents to the same.

"It was strictly within my province to make inquiries respecting the religious habits of the families which I visited. The attention paid to the daily read-

ing of the Scriptures, was a subject of inquiry,—the observance of morning and of evening prayer,—the employment of the Lord's-day,—it will be seen, were questions calculated to draw forth the love of the display of the religious acquirements of their children, in persons of vain minds. Accordingly, the observation was made, behind my back, to one and another who might accompany me, for some distance, on my trip,—'Surely, the Archdeacon must think us heathens, to ask such questions as these; we must shew him that we learn our children their prayers;—mind, my dear, that you do not be content with the parson's prayers to-night, but let him hear you all saying your prayers, after you get to bed.' Accordingly, it has more than once occurred, that through the thin partition which separated my sleeping cabin from that of a nest of children, I have heard, for an hour or two after I have retired to bed, the little voices of the younger branches of the family, strained to an unnatural pitch, repeating the Ten Commandments, the Duty to God and our Neighbour, the Belief, and other portions of the Catechism, and perhaps a hymn or two of Dr. Watts, (all, in fact, which could be brought from their scantily stored memory,) all as prayers."

The Archdeacon gives a mournful description of the poverty of the people in some of the districts. Their food and clothing are coarse and scant; and their dwellings are so confined and wretched, that sixteen human beings were found living in a "tlt" of sixteen feet by twelve feet ten. Their only luxury is liquid poison, of which they consume inordinate quantities. It is melancholy to read such statements as the following:—

"Much of the character of a settlement must, of course, depend, for several generations, on the character of its original settlers. The descendants of some profane, run-away man-of-war's man, or of some other character as regardless or ignorant of decorum and delicacy, are likely to shew to a third and fourth generation a general licentiousness of conversation and conduct, which betray the foul origin of their stock. Between the people of the Bay of Islands, and those of Bay St. George, there was a difference as wide, as between the untutored Indian and the more favoured child of refinement. There were acts of profligacy practised, indeed, in this bay, at which the Micmac Indians expressed to me their horror and disgust. The arrival of a trading schooner among the people, affords an invariable occasion for all parties (with only one or two exceptions, and those, I regret to say, not among the females!) to get into a helpless state of intoxication. Women, and among them positively girls of fourteen, may be seen, under the plea of its helping them in their work, habitually taking their 'morning' of raw spirits before breakfast. I have seen this dram repeated a second time before a seven o'clock breakfast. The same, the girls among the rest, are also smoking tobacco in short pipes, blackened with constant use, like what the Irish here call 'dudees,' all day long. The instant they drop into a neighbour's house and are seated by the fire, there is a shuffling of the clothes, and the pipe, already partly filled, is drawn from the side pocket, and applied to the ashes for lighting.

"One woman was pointed out to me here, who, in her haste to attack a quantity of rum, which she had brought on shore with her from a trading vessel, and under the influence, at the same time, of a certain quantity which she had drunk on board, left an infant of six months old upon the landwash, and forgot this her sucking child, till the body of it was discovered the next morning, drowned by the returning tide. The father, immediately after the discovery of the awful disaster, went on board, unwarned, and apparently unaffected, for another gallon of the poison for the wake, or wicked drinking revel, which the custom of the island has too commonly made an appendage to a funeral. The same person, for I can scarcely call the monster Woman, had overlaid another child of two years old, when she had retired to bed once in 1822, in a state of intoxication. 'It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them'—unblushingly—it can scarcely be said—'in secret.'

"The habitual conversation of the people is of the most disgusting character; profanity is the dialect, decency and delicacy are the rare exceptions; children swear at their parents, and frequently strike them."

"On conversing with J. G., I found that he had been twenty-one years in the country, and was still penniless, the poor servant of the other Englishman, H. M., from Redcliffe, who was scarcely less poor than himself. His fondness for ardent spirits, he informed me, had kept him thus poor, and he could trace to this source all his lapses, and all his misfortunes. He assured me in our conversation, that he had foresworn the further use of spirits. I told him of a strength greater than his own; this I entreated him to improve. He was much affected by a prayer in which I proposed he should join me in this till: he kept a standing posture when I commenced, but the poor fellow soon sunk upon his knees, and, before the conclusion of my prayer on his behalf, he was weeping like a child. It will give some idea of the prevailing use of spirits in this island, and of the consequent discouragement which the mini-ter is doomed to experience, if I mention, that, notwithstanding all which I had said against the use of this intoxicating stimulant, in all which he had heartily acquiesced, and, bringing the test of his own melancholy experience, had declared voluntarily, that he had left it off, he yet offered to myself, on my rising from my knees, what is called 'a morning,' from a little keg, which he drew from under his straw bed; and on my reminding him, when about to help himself, that he had engaged to break off this habit, he excused himself by saying he had made a reservation for the use of the remaining contents of that keg. I was reminded of Jeremiah xiii. 23. I promised the poor fellow a prayer-book, which he was most anxious to possess; a few other suitable books shall accompany it, and I pray, though almost against hope, that he may be assisted to keep his resolution."

A Trifling Request.—When the Duke of Ormond was made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in Queen Anne's reign, one of his friends applied to him for some preferment, adding, that he was by no means particular, and was willing to accept either a bishopric or a regiment of horse, or to be made Lord Chief Justice of the King's bench. This, however, is surpassed by Horace Walpole's anecdote of a humane jailor in Oxfordshire, who made the following application to one of his condemned prisoners: "My good friend! I have a little favour to ask of you, which, from your obliging disposition, I doubt not you will readily grant. You are ordered for execution on Friday week. I have a particular engagement on that day; if it makes no difference to you, if you would say next Friday instead?"—*Life of Couper.*

A liberal Priest.—Mr. Blake mentions a case where a liberal Catholic priest was ordered by the bishop to denounce a school. Being, however, on the more friendly terms with the rector of the parish, he said to him, "I am going to curse the children to-morrow, but just never mind it a bit; go on your way, and after a day or two they will come to school again."—*Barrow's Irish Tour.*

A Countryman.—Collins, the freethinker, or deist, met a plain countryman going to church. He asked him where he was going. 'To church, Sir.' 'What to do there?' 'To worship God.' 'Pray, whether is your God a great or a little God?' 'He is both, Sir.' 'How can he be both?' 'He is so great, Sir, that the heaven of heavens cannot contain him; and so little that he can dwell in my heart.' Collins declared that this simple answer from the countryman had more effect upon his mind than all the volumes which learned doctors had written against him.

Eloquence.—True Eloquence is good sense, delivered in a natural and unaffected way, without the artificial ornament of tropes and figures. Our common eloquence is usually a cheat upon the understanding; it deceives us with appearances, instead of things, and makes us think we see reason, whilst it is only tickling our sense.—*Baker.*

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