

at their post half an hour before the procession begins, and dressed suitable to the character impersonated by each. The miscreant who hangs upon the cross (we shudder to relate such abominations) has only a belt and his middle, the cross being so constructed as to lessen the difficulty of his posture. About an hour and a half after sunset, he proceeds, in their pontifical robes, issue from the church, accompanied by all the civil authorities, and by a great concourse of citizens dressed in mourning and carrying lighted torches in their hands. On the way they kneel down before every platform, offer up a prayer, and sing a part of some sacred hymn. This impious ceremony is performed with becoming gravity, so soon as the priests and the bulk of the procession draw nigh to the respective platforms; but before their arrival, and after their departure, the scene presents a most revolting and disgusting spectacle. Many of the lazzaroni go round, laughing and shouting, and address those who impersonate our Saviour and the Virgin, in the most insulting and profane language—“You may hear many saying, ‘Ha, ha! thou art here, Theresa!’ ‘Thou art the Virgin, art thou not? Ah! you—’ (modestly forbids us to repeat the remainder of the sentence). ‘Ah! Francesca, thou art the Magdalen!’ By my troth, it is not long since thou repentedst—or, ‘Oh, Paul! Paul! there is some mistake. Thou oughtest to represent the impudent robber, and not the Christ, thou arrant thief!’ But we must draw a veil over the rest of that infernal scene. “So abhorrent is idolatry to the Court of Rome!”—*Nicolini's History of the Jesuits*, pp. 131, 132.

#### WOMAN WITHOUT THE GOSPEL.

One can faintly imagine,” says Mr. Tyler, who is labouring among the Zulus, in South Africa, “the pitiable condition of females in heathendom, till he has seen it with his own eyes. The slavery both of body and soul which we daily behold, is most abject.” Let us look with his eyes upon some of the scenes which he is constantly called upon to witness.

See that group of females, coarse in features, clad only in the native dress, and offensive to all that is refined and pure in manners, conversing earnestly with a missionary. They are three wives of the man who possesses a neighbouring kraal. He has four others. They have not come, however, to be taught the way of life. They have no enquiry to make in respect to an improvement of their condition. What they wish is, to strike a bargain for the purchase of a heavy Kaffir hoe, which they will pay for by digging in the missionary's garden. He does not want such help; but as it will afford some opportunity, not otherwise easily gained, for him and his wife to do them good, he yields to their proposal.

Behold that company wending their way along the hill-side, in the cold dew of the morning. All but one are women, each of whom carries a heavy basket of corn on her head, while their husband saunters on at his ease. Their destination is at last reached, the baskets are emptied, and their master orders them home, while he wraps the blankets around him which he has thus purchased, and proceeds to his kraal at his leisure.

Brandy has been dispensed with a prodigal hand on the view which now lies before you. Flowers of rare sweetness and delicacy are everywhere springing amidst the verdure that carpets the valley and the swelling hills which surround it. How busy, too, the scene at this time of preparing the ground for seed. But those swarms of labourers, so diligently plying their unwieldy picks in digging up the ground over the valleys, are female, the wives of the men who own the kraals that are scattered along the hill-side. So also are those others, wearily climbing the steep ascents to their huts, with heavy pots of water on their heads. One reason why the men pursue, as their chief end, the object of procuring as many wives as possible is, that they may thus use them as beasts of burden.

Go now to a kraal when the work of the day is done. Are these huts the places where women, capable of such refinement, and with whom we instinctively associate so much delicacy of feeling, must lodge? And yet, comfortless as they are, they might be put up with, if love too had her abode there. But you can discern slight tokens of affection. The husband does not welcome his wives from their toil with any manifestation of regard, and few are the acts of sisterly kindness which they perform for each other. Nay, you have no cause for being shocked at that harsh contention which begins to arise. What should hinder, what under the circumstances could hinder these wives from quarrelling with each other and with their husband? Must not jealousies of necessity burn between them; must they not often look upon him as, what in fact he is, a selfish, lazy, unfeeling tyrant? He often resorts to the tyrant's weapon, and inflicts serious beatings on those who ought to enjoy his protection; so that at times they endeavour to escape from his power, in the forlorn hope that they may fall into the hands of some one who will treat them with more of consideration.

Shall not these wretched ones have our sympathy? Will we not stretch out our hand to lift them from their degradation? How tender as well as constraining is the appeal which their condition makes to woman's heart—woman as she is blessed by the gospel? That which has availed to make woman's condition so pleasant a one in our land is of equal efficacy for them. On some few places it is beginning to take effect. If supplied to them in the fulness with which it is in our power to bestow it, woman there will soon occupy her appropriate sphere in a multitude of happy homes.

#### THE RIVER JORDAN.

The manner in which the Jordan has lately come under our notice, and the prominence given to that river in the Sacred Books, awaken the de-

sure to know something of that famous stream. This desire we are enabled to satisfy with more advantage than at any former period, for the portions of Scripture which are a source of any Scriptural interest, and which, in consequence, were taken out of any two or three points have now been explored throughout their whole length. This portion is that which extends between the Lake of Tiberias, the Dead Sea, and the explorer is Lieutenant Lynch, of the American navy, who, at his own request, was sent by the government with a party of picked men and with proper boats, on this expedition and very interesting service. This was in 1848. It is true that in the preceding year, the whole of this portion of the river had been explored by one of our own officers, Lieut. Molyneux, of H. M. S. *Spartan*. But the river was too low to enable him to pass down in his boat from one lake to the other, as the Americans did. It was carried partly on a camel, and this officer made his journey by land. Besides, even if he had done this, the public would not have respected the benefit, for his untimely death prevented the results of his observations from being imparted to the world. The notes which he left were also in cypher, and not likely to be rendered available; and their value is now, indeed, superseded by our acquaintance with the more complete exploration by Lieut. Lynch and companions.

The boats provided in America for this service were of metal—one of copper and the other of galvanized iron. These were mounted on trucks and drawn by camels from the sea shore across the country to the Lake of Tiberias. Here the only native boat upon that once populous lake was taken into the service of the party, and the three proceeded together to thread the whole course of the lower Jordan to the Dead Sea.

There was, in fact, an important geographical problem to solve. It had been ascertained that the Dead Sea was more than a thousand feet below the level of the Lake of Tiberias—and as the distance between the two was but sixty miles, this would give a fall of about twenty feet per mile—greater, it was then thought, than any river in the world exhibited. The Mohawk river in America was held to be the one of greatest fall, and that averages not more than four or five feet to the mile; but it is now known that the Sacramento in California has a fall of two thousand feet in twenty miles, or an average of one hundred feet to a mile. It was then, however, that such a fall as it seemed necessary to suppose in the case of the Jordan, from the difference of level between the two lakes which it connected, was without example; and as its course was presumed to be tolerably straight, and as it was not known to contain any rapids, an error in the calculation of the difference of level was more than suspected. This problem it was left for Lieut. Lynch to set at rest.—The boats plunged down no less than twenty-seven very threatening ones, besides a great number of lesser magnitude; and then, although the direct distance does, as stated, not exceed sixty miles, the course of the river is made at least two hundred miles by the exceedingly tortuous course of its stream. This reduces the fall to not more than six feet in the mile, for which the numerous rapids in the river sufficiently account.

The descent by the river occupied no less than a week. So great were the difficulties caused by the rapids, that in two days not more than twelve miles were accomplished; and on the third day the wooden boat brought down from the Sea of Galilee was abandoned on account of her shattered condition. None but metal boats could have stood the severe work of the passage. It was, nevertheless, made at the time of flood—at the same season that the Israelites passed the river—and which, although the most unfavourable without boats, should be the most favourable with them. In fact, it is stated, that a few weeks earlier or later the passage down the river in boats would, as in the case of Lieut. Molyneux, have been impracticable, from the want of sufficient water to carry them over the rapids.

The wide and deeply depressed plain or valley (Ghor) through which the river flows, is generally barren, treeless, and verdureless; and the mountains, or rather cliffs and slopes, of the river uplands, present for the most part, a wild and cheerless aspect. We have no generalized description of the river; but the following condensed description, which applies to the central part, may be taken as sufficiently indicating the general character of the whole:—

“The mountains towards the west rose up like islands from the sea, billows heaving at their bases. Deep rooted in the plain, the bases of the mountains heaved the garment of earth away, and rose abruptly in naked pyramidal crags, each scar and fissure as plainly distinct as if it were within reach, and yet we were hours away; the laminations of their strata resembling the leaves of some gigantic volume, wherein is written, by the hand of God, the history of the changes he has wrought. The plain, that sloped away from the bases of the hills, was broken into ridges and multitudinous conelike mounds, resembling tumultuous water at the meeting of two adverse tides; and presented a wild and chequered tract of land, with spots of vegetation flourishing upon the frontiers of irreclaimable sterility. A low, pale, and yellow sidge of conical hills marked the termination of the higher terrace, beneath which swept gently this lower plain with a similar undulating surface, half redeemed from barrenness by spare verdure and thistle-covered hillocks. Still lower was the valley of the Jordan—the sacred river! its banks fringed with perpetual verdure, winding in a thousand graceful mazes; the pathway cheered with the songs of birds, and its own clear voice of gushing minstrelsy; its course a bright line in this cheerless waste. Yet, beautiful as it is, it is only rendered so by contrast with the harsh encircled earth around.”

\* Lynch's Narrative of the Expedition to the Dead Sea and the Jordan, pp. 232, 233.