

From the Christian Guardian.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. SAMUEL KNIGHT.*

Mr. Knight was little more than comfortably settled in his new residence, when the event occurred which prepared the way for his removal to the Vicarage of Halifax. On the 11th of December 1817, Dr. Coulthurst was suddenly taken off by a stroke of apoplexy while visiting at the house of a friend in the neighbourhood of Wakefield. And on the 29th of December, Mr. K. received an official intimation of his appointment to the vacant living.

As vicar of Halifax, Mr. Knight was fully aware of the vigilance and circumspection which it behoved him to evince in every step he took. He knew that many eyes were fixed upon him, and that he was called to act the part of a wise and faithful steward. He regularly preached on the Sunday morning, and alternately with his curate in the evening; and during the summer months, in conformity with the practice of his predecessor, he visited, in the forenoons, the several chapels of ease dependent upon the vicarage, preaching at each in its turn, and thus keeping up a friendly and pastoral intercourse with the congregations as well as the ministers of the respective chapels.

His attachment to the different societies established for the dissemination of the Holy Scriptures, and the conversion of the unenlightened part of mankind may be properly mentioned in this connection. He considered 'The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge,' and 'The Society for propagating the Gospel in foreign parts,' as having direct claim upon every consistent churchman; though he did not come forward to advocate the whole of their proceedings, or maintain that they deserved the unequalled approbation of the Christian public.

To the Church Missionary Society, likewise, he was a warm and constant friend. So far from viewing this admirable society with an eye of suspicion, as if it were inimical to kindred institutions already in operation, he hailed it as their sister and coadjutrix. He saw, with satisfaction, the piety and the zeal of its active promoters, and the extent and efficiency of their labours, and he said to them, out of the fulness of his heart, "Go on, and the Lord prosper you." But, of all our religious institutions, the British and Foreign Bible Society stood the highest in his estimation. Concerning this noble society it may truly be said, that he watched its movements with intense interest, and forwarded its objects by every means that lay within his power.

Nor did he amidst his numerous engagements entirely relinquish those studies in which he had formerly been wont to take considerable delight. He retained his taste for the classics to the end of his life. Even when he was fatigued both in body and mind he would enter into the spirit of a chorus in a Greek tragedy with as much zest and animation as ever he had done in the height of his vigour. Within three or four years previous to his decease he read, during some of his leisure hours, nearly the whole of Euripides, besides large portions from other classical authors. But his retirement was chiefly occupied in that kind of reading which stood connected with higher and more sacred subjects. He expressed himself much pleased with several of the biblical criticisms contained in Dr. Zouch's life; as well as with many of those of Bishop Horsley. Vitringa and Bishop Hall were favourite writers with him; and he spoke of the great satisfaction he had often felt in the perusal of Dr. Wardlaw's excellent work on the book of Ecclesiastes. His Greek Testament was his daily companion, and with this he had attained a familiarity which shewed itself on every occasion when a passage or expression came to be discussed in the social circle. His accuracy might generally be depended upon, and his opinion was seldom given but as the result of previous thought and investigation.

Thus did he spend his time and employ his talents. Residing entirely at Halifax, and seldom absenting himself from home, even for the short period of two or three weeks at once, he was ready at every call of duty; he was incessantly occupied, and was accessible to the meanest of his parishioners, when an opportunity was thereby afforded him of imparting salutary relief, or conferring a suitable favour.

*Continued:

For six or eight months previous to the affliction which put a final period to his public labours as a minister he had been subject to frequent hoarseness, though generally so slight in degree, and of such short duration, as to excite no apprehensions either in himself or his friends. On the evening of Christmas-day 1825, he took leave of his congregation as a preacher (though he then knew it not) from the words of holy Simeon, "Lord now lettest thou," &c.

The sermon was striking and impressive in itself; but the affecting circumstance of its proving to be his farewell discourse rendered it doubly interesting. In after days, to the recollection of his more attached and serious friends. On the 28th he was suddenly seized with hoarseness, which, before the close of the day, terminated in an almost total loss of voice, and on the following morning was accompanied with a relaxed sore throat and extreme difficulty in swallowing; so that for some weeks he could not take even a teaspoonful of liquid without its producing a most painful excitement.

Towards the close of February his indisposition assumed a more violent and alarming character, owing, in part, to the means which it had been deemed necessary to adopt for the removal of the disorder in his throat, and the restoration of his voice. These means, however, were so far efficacious that the most distressing symptoms of the complaint in a great measure disappeared. From that time he was enabled to swallow with comparative ease; but his voice was irrecoverably gone. It does not appear that, during this stage of his illness, he ever anticipated the event of immediate dissolution; and to this perhaps it may be attributed that he was far less communicative concerning the religious state of his mind than at a subsequent period. Still, sufficient was imparted to afford much consolation to all around him. That habitual readiness to acknowledge his many remaining mercies which had so pleasingly marked the first days of his affliction did not now desert him, and his strong confidence in God, as a sure refuge in trouble, was unshaken. He seemed to discover a singular beauty and sweetness in the 107th Psalm. It was repeatedly read to him, by his own desire, and each time he made appropriate remarks on the various kinds of distress there enumerated; pointing out, with much feeling the line of conduct pursued by each distinct class of sufferers, together with the success attending it. "Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble and he saved them out of their distresses;" and dwelling, with distinguished emphasis, on the fervent ascription of praise which this repeated goodness elicited from the admiring Psalmist, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

To be continued.

From the Southern Churchman.

QUEEN VICTORIA'S PROCLAMATION.

The following is a graphic passage from the correspondence of the Rev. Mr. Cheever, formerly of Salem, Mass., but now travelling in Europe. It gives us a vivid idea of a London crowd.

On the day of Queen Victoria's proclamation, I got wedged in amidst the multitude assembled in High street, and had personal experience of the sooty character of the mass of beings who ordinarily come out on such an occasion. The closeness of the atmosphere, even in the open air, from the effluvia of the crowd, was like that in a crowded, unventilated church; and the stench and filth made it almost suffocating. I could not but think of the graphic description of the mob in "Coriolanus."

An admirable opportunity was afforded in London, of beholding the populace of that immeasurable city on occasion of the illuminations for the birth-day of the Princess Victoria. To be sure it was the better part of the populace, the splendor of the illuminations being chiefly towards the West End, and the streets being crowded, not only with the common people, but with many gentlemen and even ladies to gaze upon the scene. It was therefore a better dressed and better behaved multitude, considering its vastness, than perhaps could be witnessed any where else in the world. In the United States, it would not have been possible to have collected so astonishing a

mass of human beings in one assemblage from any city, I dare not undertake to compute the circumference of space within which every foot of ground was occupied, but certainly enough streets to have formed alone a respectable city were filled with so densely packed that it was almost impossible to move. From the Strand, opening to Trafalgar Square, to Pall Mall, Regent Street and Haymarket with the streets in every direction around the Court Houses, it was one compacted mass, agitated, swaying to and fro, in the movement of which it was difficult to avoid having one's clothes torn from the body by the very pressure, and wherever the great thoroughfares intersected from brilliantly illuminated points, the rough rush was like that of cutting seas furiously whirled by the opposite currents into a vortex. Carriages and horses were immovably wedged amidst the multitudes, so that you might glide fearlessly under the heads of the animals between the wheels, to pass from one point to another. It was matter of gratitude to have plunged to the depths of so tremendous a crowd, and come out safe again, and glad we were to pass from the blaze of the illumination squares and palaces into comparative darkness of Albermarle street; but when all the pressure of the mob, we witnessed very little disturbance. It is true, the police men were scattered thickly at every corner and in every street, looking watchful and busy enough, but there was little occasion given for their interference; and except here and there a knot or wedge of riotous fellows stemming the current at an angle with the hope to create a row, a vast multitude seemed only to get a fair view of the greatest splendor of the illumination and then work their way back again.

The lights were brilliant and some of them beautifully arranged, gas-lights and lamps intermingled, the letters V. P. cresting the fronts of houses, and stars, circlets, and crowns glittering profusely, and here and there such a flood of light poured from the front of some large pile of buildings that looking towards it from a more distant street where only the united light, but not the tremulous flames of gas were visible, the glare thrown into the sky and across the streets, was like that of a distant midnight conflagration. But nothing arrested our admiration so much as the ample front of a bridge across the river at the end of Waterloo bridge, showing the appearance by night of the battlements of some lofty castle crested with a belt of flames that threw their blaze full upon the statue of a majestic lion, above the front of the building, leaving the whole scene beside in utter darkness. It had a wonderful effect to the imagination, towering above the city, and gleaming in a long line across the water with the lion looking out from the centre of the blaze, like a throned monarch of the capitol. On the whole, the interminable vastness, rush, and agitation of the crowd, the splendor of the illumination and the appearance of regal magnificence in the buildings, certainly constituted together a scene imposing grandeur. Nor was it without moral lessons. Even human art can sometimes bring together from material things types of eternal splendor. When multitudes of immortal beings mingle in a scene, gleams of eternity, the Judgment, Heaven, Hell, thwart its insignificance, and the soul is pressed with the thought how few, in all this mighty throng of undying spirits, ever devoted one solitary hour to the consideration of their eternal destiny. They are perpetually seeking for spectacles, thirsting for excitement, but shutting out the wonders of eternity, and putting far off its evil day. They will cry out at midnight, by thousands and hundreds of thousands, to gaze and be astonished at a glaring show of gas-lights, but the PYRE OF ETERNAL BURNINGS is throwing up its vast and awful light over the soul's horizon, they will not notice. *Madness their hearts while they live, and then, the dream over, Heaven is lost, and Hell,— themselves are forever.*

CHARITY.

He that cannot attend the sick, may reclaim the vicious. He that cannot give much assistance himself, may yet perform the duty of charity, by inspiring the ardor of others, and recommending the actions which he cannot grant.