

## POETRY.

The following beautiful Stanzas appeared recently in the American Presbyterian, and are stated to have been composed by a lady in Easton:—

### SABBATH REMINISCENCES.

I remember, I remember, when Sabbath morning rose,  
We changed for garments neat and clean our soiled week-day clothes,  
And yet no gaudy finery, nor bronch, nor jewel rare,  
But hands and faces polished bright, and smoothly parted hair.

'Twas not the decking of the head, my father used to say,  
But careful clothing of the heart, that graced that holy day—  
'Twas not the bonnet nor the dress;—and I believed it true;  
But those were very simple times, and I was simple too.

I remember, I remember, the parlour where we met;  
Its papered wall, its polished floor, and mantel black as jet;—  
'Twas there we raised our morning hymn, melodious, sweet, and clear,  
And joined in prayer with that loved voice, which we no more may hear.

Our morning sacrifice thus made, then to the house of God,  
How solemnly, and silently, and cheerfully we trod!  
I see e'en now its low thatched roof, its floor of trodden clay,  
And our old Pastor's time worn face, and wig of silver gray.

I remember, I remember, how hushed and mute we were,  
While he led our spirits up to God, in heartfelt melting prayer;  
To grace his action or his voice no studied charm was lent,  
Pure, fervent, glowing from the heart, so to the heart it went.

Then came the sermon, long and quaint, but full of gospel truth—  
Ah me! I was no judge of that, for I was then a youth;  
But I have heard my father say, and well my father knew,  
In it was meat for full-grown men, and milk for children too.

I remember, I remember, as 'twere but yesterday,  
The Psalms in Rouse's Version sung, a rude but lovely lay,  
Nor yet, though fashion's hand has tried to train my wayward ear,  
Can I find aught in modern verse so holy or so dear!

And well do I remember too our old precentor's face,  
As he read out and sung the line, with patriarchal grace;  
Though rudely rustic was the sound, I'm sure that God was praised,  
When David's words, to David's tune, five hundred voices raised!

I remember, I remember, the morning sermon done,  
An hour of intermission came; we wandered in the sun—  
How hoary farmers sat them down upon the daisy sod,  
And talked of bounteous nature's stores, and nature's bounteous God;

And matrons talked, as matrons will, of sickness and of health—  
Of births, and deaths, and marriages, of poverty and wealth;  
And youths and maidens stole apart, within the shady grove,  
And whispered 'neath its spreading boughs perchance some tale of love!

I remember, I remember, how in the church-yard lone,  
I've stolen away and sat me down, beside the rude grave-stone,  
Or read the names of those who slept beneath the clay-cold clod,  
And thought of spirits glittering bright before the throne of God!

Or where the little rivulet danced sportively and bright,  
Receiving on its limped breast the sun's meridian light;  
I've wandered forth, and thought if hearts were pure like this  
sweet stream,  
How fair to heaven they might reflect heaven's uncreated beam!

I remember, I remember, the second sermon o'er,  
We turned our faces once again to our paternal door;  
And round the well-filled ample board sat no reluctant guest,  
For exercise gave appetite, and loved-ones shared the feast!

Then ere the sunset hour arrived, as we were wont to do,  
The Catechism's well-conned page we said it through and through;  
And childhood's faltering tongue was heard to lisp the holy word,  
And older voices read aloud the message of the Lord.

Away back in those days of yore, perhaps the fault was mine,  
I used to think the Sabbath-day, dear Lord, was wholly thine;  
When it behoved to keep the heart and bridle fast the tongue,  
But these were very simple times, and I was very young.

The world has grown much older since these sun-bright Sabbath days—  
The world has grown much older since, and she has changed her ways—

Some say that she has wiser grown,—ah me! it may be true,  
As wisdom comes by length of years, but so does dotage too.

Oh! happy, happy years of truth, how beautiful, how fair,  
To memory's retrospective eye, your trodden pathways are!  
The thorns forgot; remembered still, the fragrance and the flowers;—

The loved companions of my youth, and sunny Sabbath hours!

And onward, onward, onward still, successive Sabbaths come,  
As guides to lead us on the road to our eternal home;  
Or like the visioned ladder once, to slumbering Jacob given,  
From heaven descending to the earth, lead back from earth to heaven!

## LITERATURE.

### BIOGRAPHY.

There is no species of reading so generally engaging or better calculated to instruct, than biography. The history of men, should be, to men, the most interesting. Not only is curiosity gratified in observing how our predecessors, in the race of life, have conducted themselves under its various changes; but important lessons may be learned, which may materially assist us in encountering the vicissitudes through which we may have to pass. The recorded follies of others may serve to warn us, their virtues to excite emulation. Motives and doctrines are exemplified, and as they are thus presented to our view embodied, their influence is better appreciated, than when exhibited in an abstract or didactic form. General history, as it is mainly confined to great and prominent events, by which the fate of empires has been affected, does not present us with those minutely delineated portraits which it is the province of biography to furnish. When we read *Tacitus*, our minds are occupied with actions in which masses of men indistinctly pass before us; but when we read *Plutarch*, we are admitted, as it were, into the privacies of the actors who have distinguished their respective ages. The latter on this account, will always attract more readers than the former. The abuses of this kind of writing arise from the effort to give prominence to individuals, who are in no sense entitled to the distinction. Political motives will often lead to the attempt to magnify what is intrinsically little, and supply the place of indisputable facts, by bloated exaggeration and fulsome panegyric. An amiable, though indiscreet fondness is often the cause of similar abuse.—If an individual is beloved in the private circle, and regarded by those, whose fond prejudices render them incompetent judges, as possessing some extraordinary trait, the world which regards the matter more coolly, must forthwith be invited to listen to details, which can have no possible interest beyond the domestic circle, or at least neighbourhood, of the subject. Biographies are thus multiplied in amount, while their intrinsic value is in a very slight degree augmented. The truth is, that very few deserve to have their personal history thus perpetuated. Although it is not expected that the subject of biography is to be a perfect man, yet he should never be a subject for the study of future generations, unless his life present one or more traits so strongly developed, and in such marked relief, as to be worthy of contemplation. It is a practice too common in the writers of biographies, to make their subjects as perfect as possible, as if they were showing their skill in the composition of a fancy picture, instead of drawing a portrait from nature, in which there must be some imperfect features. Truth is expected, and when it is violated in a single instance, the correctness of the whole delineation is discredited. We might amply illustrate our remark from known instances, but it would appear invidious. The experience of every reader will furnish him with the proof, that it is not the life of every scholar, or every statesman, or every brave soldier, or every true Christian, man, or every brave soldier, or every true Christian, man, or every brave soldier, or every true Christian, man, which will furnish the materials of instructive Biography. To attempt to force public interest, therefore will not only be futile, but injure the memory of the worthy dead, who should have been embalmed in the hearts of their friends, without the exposure attendant upon an abortive attempt to give them notoriety. We need scarcely say, that religious biography, from the tenderness of the associations which Christian friendship is apt to awaken, is peculiarly liable to abuse. Our shelves groan beneath volumes of this kind, which, although they may interest for a moment, like an oral communication, can never be reverted to a second time for solid instruction. We can conceive of no reason why such memoirs are not

indefinitely multiplied, except that many die who do not number among their friends one capable of working on small materials, or the fear of expense incurred by publication. We are aware that it may be said, that the mass of Christian readers would be discouraged, if they had placed before them only the biographies of individuals of less remarkable piety and zeal. This however, is a grievous mistake. A high standard of piety, embodied in the history of an eminent Christian will excite the reader to effort, in self-improvement; whereas a low standard, would not only fail to awaken effort, but in all probability, delude the reader into the belief, that his piety, not sensibly falling short of that of the subject of the memoir, was all that could be required. The intelligent reader can easily test this matter for himself, by noting the effect produced on his own mind by the perusal of various modern biographies, and then comparing it with the impression he has received when rising from the perusal of such memoirs as those of Brainerd or Halyburton. The former may interest him, but the latter can scarcely fail to set him about the work of self-examination, and constrain him to inquire why, if he possesses the grace of God at all, it does not lead him to the same devotion to Christ, and the same profound experimental knowledge of religion. The perusal of choice biography has many advantages. It is the most popular and attractive form in which sound instruction can be conveyed. As a history of the human heart and human life, it finds a responsive chord in every bosom. As partakers of humanity, we are naturally solicitous to learn how others have usefully pursued and happily finished the journey of life which lies before us. We have heard of good rules of conduct, but we are anxious to see them as practically exemplified; we wish to know with what temper good men have encountered unmerited injuries; with what spirit they have borne bereavements; with what zeal and faithfulness they have discharged their duty; how they surmounted temptations; what was their daily practice which led to such eminent piety; what sentiments and doctrines they found most edifying and comforting; how they succeeded in self control; what was the influence of grace on their hearts and minds in regulating their exercises; and with what feelings they encountered that solemn crisis which terminated their connection with this world. This is desired not as a mere matter of curiosity, but for the purpose of learning lessons which may be useful to ourselves. The living embodiment of religion is an argument for its truth, which often impresses, where all other arguments fail. A holy and consistent life, terminated by a peaceful and triumphant death, speaks to the heart as well as to the understanding. It cannot be gainsaid; it stops the mouth of the infidel, as well as encourages the faith of the believer. It is in this view that the personal history of the Lord Jesus Christ is so deeply interesting. Had the system of religion which he taught been a matter of direct revelation from heaven, delivered in a didactic form, it would have been worthy of all acceptance; but when we bear it delivered from his lips on different occasions, and see each and all of its divine truths strongly and perfectly exemplified in his holy life, it seems to be invested with a double power. His benignity, meekness, forbearance, self-denial, compassion, spirituality, patience, untiring benevolence, heavenly conversation make a perfect example. We attempt to imitate him and we are perfect in proportion to our success; and the biography of his disciples is instructive and valuable, just so far as it exhibits traits of character in them, approaching to the perfection of this divine pattern. The recorded deeds of the hero of a hundred battles, of the traveller who has explored the distant and untrodden places of the earth, of the statesman who has guided the affairs of nations, of the scholar who has gathered his harvests from every field of science, utterly fail in interest when compared with the exemplification of principles which teach us how to live, and how to triumph over death.—Presbyterian.

### WHAT EDUCATION IS.

Education does not mean merely reading and writing, nor any degree, however considerable, of merely intellectual instruction. It is, in its largest sense, a process which extends from the commencement to the termination of existence. A child comes into the world, and at once his education begins. Often at his birth the seeds of disease or deformity are sown in his constitution, and while he hangs at his mother's breast, he is imbibing impressions which will remain