

looking at his bee-hives, where the industrious little insects were very busily engaged in storing up their sweets.

Old Jasper had not much hair on his head, and that little was as white as snow. The furrows of age were deeply graven on his brow, and a staff was necessary to support his steps; yet there was a calmness in his face, and a brightness in his countenance, when speaking of serious things, which showed that the troubles of this world had not deprived him of his hope of that which is to come.

"You are leaning upon your staff," said the traveller to him; "but I trust that you have a still stronger staff to lean upon, even the promises of God."

"An old man, like me, would be badly off, sir, if he had no better staff than this," replied Jasper, lifting up the piece of ash that he held in both his hands. "This may do very well to bear up for a time the poor crazy body, but when a man's flesh and heart fail him, he needs a support that will be the strength of his heart, and his portion for ever." "It is an excellent thing," said the traveller, "when we draw near the grave, to have a bright prospect beyond it; and that I trust, is your case." "Blessed be God," replied Jasper, "through mercy, it is as you say: if we are destitute of Divine grace, the glory of this world is of little value; but when God gives us the hope of everlasting life in his Son Jesus Christ, even death and the grave may be looked at without fear."

Old men are usually fond of talking, and when the topic is a favourite one, out of the abundance of the heart their tongues will speak; how long, therefore, old Jasper might have kept up the conversation, if left alone with the traveller, is uncertain; but Edmund, Gilbert, and Leonard manifested some impatience, and did not feel happy till they had got the traveller fairly seated on the old bench beneath the willow tree, in the garden of Jasper Collins.

"This is, indeed, a sweet prospect," said the traveller, looking around him. "The mountains in the distance, the village in the valley, with these go-diy elm trees, and the winding brook, and the cottages, form a fine picture. What a magnificent oak tree that is in the field adjoining!" "Ay," said Leonard, "that is the oak tree that I spoke of." "How bright the sun is reflected from the church weathercock," continued the traveller; "and what waterfall is that yonder, that catches the eye with its white foam?" "I thought before, that I heard something rumbling in my ears." "That is the fall at the mill-pond," said Gilbert; "but I dare say that you have seen waterfalls ten times as large as that."

The traveller admitted this to be the case; when Edmund besought him to enter, at once, on his description of cataracts. "Oh, Oh," said the traveller, "I could not make out why you were so very anxious to get one here; but I begin to suspect that a plot has been laid against me; however, I will agree to your request."

"Having been a wanderer the greater part of my life, and delighting much in solitary places, I have mused by many a waterfall, and gazed with wonder on many a foaming cataract. In every county in England there are waterfalls of different degrees of interest. Some of these in course of time you may perhaps see, but whether you will ever visit those of other counties is a more doubtful matter. In Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmoreland, during the rainy season, the mountains present a picturesque appearance, on account of the many currents of water that come tumbling from their heights. Near the lake of Windermere, there is a fine cataract which most people go to see who visit Ambleside. Some years ago, a tree grew, hanging over the principal fall, and in that tree I once enjoyed a treat in looking down on the raging foam below me."

Gilbert.—I remember, that you once got into a tree that hung over a fearful precipice.

Traveller.—Yes I have been far too rash in such situations. In South Wales, after descending a rock to a frightful depth, I approached a cascade which, though by no means large, attracted much attention, as the common people of the place would have it that the hole at the bottom was unfathomable. The shelving rocks were very slippery as I approached the terrible hole.

Leonard.—Ah, if you had once fallen in there, you would never have been able to get out again.

Traveller.—I had got within half a dozen yards of the hole, when my feet slipped from under me, and away I went, sliding from rock to rock, till my legs splashed into the hole.

Edmund.—What a situation to be in! How did you manage?

Traveller.—By clinging to a rugged part of the rock I escaped

without further damage; but the accident did me good, and made me much more careful in future.

Gilbert.—I dare say it did; it would have been no joke to have tumbled into such a hole as that.

Traveller.—In Devonshire, near the spot where the river Tamar receives the small river Lida, there is a fine fall of water, which descends a hundred feet at once.

Gilbert.—A hundred feet! Why, Edmund, it must be ten times as deep as the fall yonder.

Traveller.—It runs from a mill, and after a course, on a descent of nearly a hundred feet from the level of the mill, reaches the brink of the precipice down which it leaps and dashes against a part of the cliff, rushes from it in a wider cataract, till, at length, it falls into a foaming basin at the bottom.

Leonard.—I would give ever so much to see that waterfall.

Traveller.—At a place called Devil's Bridge, in the county of Cardigan, there is a fall of water still more remarkable. As you pass over the bridge, the river rushes through a rift in the rock, a dark chasm, a hundred and fourteen feet below you. When I first visited the place, it was at midnight, and, as I leaned over the bridge, I heard the rushing flood below me; but it was too deep to be seen, when so little light was in the sky.

Gilbert.—I would not have been there, in the middle of the night, on any account.

Traveller.—The next morning I examined the place well. The river is so pent up in its deep-seated bed, and the roar of its chafed waters is so furious through the gap in the earth, that it is fearful to look upon. About forty yards from the bridge, it is projected down a fall of eighteen feet; its next leap is sixty feet; after that it rushes down a rock of twenty feet more; and then, bursting through the enormous fragments that vainly restrain its wild career, it leaps at once down a fourth precipice of one hundred and ten feet; making, in the whole, two hundred and eight perpendicular feet. It is to this we add a hundred and fourteen feet—the height of the bridge above the first fall, it will show at once the perpendicular depth, from the bridge to the bottom of the last cascade, to be three hundred and twenty-two feet. If you should visit this place, you will find enough to occupy and interest you for a week. Here is a ravine a hundred feet deep; there is a mountain a thousand feet high; and yonder is a rushing torrent, throwing itself from rock to rock, raging, foaming, and bursting through all impediments, till it finds its way to the broad channel at the bottom of the crag.

Gilbert.—I should much like to see the place; but Devil's Bridge is a very ugly name for it.

Traveller.—True, it is an ugly name and very likely it was given by a thoughtless person. We never should jest with anything awful or serious. You will never find people whose minds are deeply impressed with Divine things, willingly taking God's name in vain, on the one hand, or indulging in light conversation respecting the evil one, on the other; both these courses are inconsistent with Christian seriousness and sobriety. In Scotland, the Fall of Fyers, near Loch-Ness, is a vast cataract, which rushes into a darksome glen of a stupendous depth. There is a rude bridge thrown across the gap through which the water rushes. This bridge is formed with the trunks of trees covered with sods, and has a very romantic appearance. As I stood upon it, and gazed on the flood raging at an awful depth below me, I thought on the tremendous consequence of a fall from such a place. The river Keith, in Perthshire, has in one part, a very considerable cataract, and the noise of it is truly deafening to all who approach it. The Grand Cataract, too, of the river Kakag, and the Cascade of Glamma, are very striking; particularly the latter, which being situated amidst the obscurity of woody hills, has a character of great sublimity.

Edmund.—Well, it is wonderful where so much water can all come from.

Traveller.—There is a prodigious cataract formed by the Shannon, which is the largest river in Ireland;—but I must hasten on, and speak of the falls of water in other countries, or you will be keeping me here all day.

Gilbert.—I want to hear about the foreign cataracts in those great rivers which you described to us; they must be very great.

Traveller.—Gazing on a cascade, or a rushing torrent, has, before now reminded me of the tumultuous life of a wicked man, full of strife, clamour, and destruction. On the other hand, the smooth river sweeping serenely through the meadows, and gliding into the ocean, has brought to mind the life of a holy man, useful