

RELIGIOUS LITERATURE.

VALLEY OF DEATH AND IMMORTALITY.

To every thoughtful mind, Death and the Grave will suggest many reflections of a pensive nature, which, but for the cheering intelligence conveyed by the Gospel, might induce a feeling of despair. Behold the death-bed of man! An intelligent creature in the spring of life; or in the prime of manhood; or in the maturity of age, laid prostrate by the derangement of some organ or function of his material frame; deprived at once of all that hope had anticipated, or activity pursued, or experience gathered,—a Captive to death—A Prisoner in the grave.

Look to the Grave!—Multitudes which no man can number of human bodies, once as vigorous as our own, buried in deep forgetfulness, a prey to corruption and the worm! Go into every land, the same appears: all regions are the same—every land is the sepulchre of the dead! The Grave is a melancholy scene, in which more than any other we are personally interested, since that vast emporium of the dead contains a large portion of our dearest kindred, and will soon receive our own mortal remains. Dark indeed would be the end of man, were the grave his final resting-place! and over the wreck of the human family, we might have wept with unavailing anguish, had we not heard the Saviour's voice—"I am the Resurrection and the Life; if any man believe in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live again."

The Bible gives us consoling views of this melancholy theme, in connection with that grand and consoling scheme of grace which gilds with the rays of hope and peace the gloomiest prospects of man. It represents death and the grave, and the region of separate spirits, as being under the jurisdiction and superintendence of the same divine person, who, as the Redeemer of man, exercises a sovereign dominion over all the affairs of the present world. Time with its events, and Eternity with its awful issues, and Death, the passage which leads from one to the other, all are equally under his control; so that into whatever state of untried existence any of his people may be brought, they cannot by any change in their circumstances be placed beyond the bounds of his jurisdiction, or the reach of his guardian care. Death, which severs them from every other connection, and the Grave, which shuts them up from all other help, cannot separate them from his love, nor exclude them from his watchful eye; for he presides over death not less than over life. To him the sepulchres of the dead are as accessible as the abodes of the living; and go where they may, after death he meets with them, and cares for them in the state of disembodied spirits, and will ultimately bring them into the general assembly of the just in heaven. Both worlds are equally subjected to his authority; and the dark pathway betwixt one and the other is also under his special care; so that, whether we live in the body it is because he sustains us; or whether we die, it is because he summons us; or whether we enter into the invisible world, it is because he admits us; and every where, and at all times, on earth, or in the grave, or in the separate state, we are equally under the protection of One who, possessed of infinite power, unerring wisdom, and unquenchable love, will order all things that concern us, so as to fulfil his own gracious purpose in dying for our redemption, and to promote our present progress and our eternal perfection in holiness and peace. These views are strikingly presented in the sublime exordium to the Apocalypse, where, appearing to the beloved Disciple in the august yet amiable character of God-man, the Redeemer declares—"I am he who liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

Therefore, the Redeemer is possessed of absolute power over the course of our lives on earth, over the time and manner of our departure out of the world, and over that invisible state on which our spirits enter when they quit their mortal tabernacles; and this to his disciples may be useful in dissipating their anxieties, and in fortifying their courage, when they contemplate either the future course of their pilgrimage here, or the solemn prospect of its termination, or the still

more solemn, because untried and eternal state on which hereafter they shall enter.

Has the Redeemer the keys of death? Then this consideration ought to relieve our minds both of the anxieties and the regrets which we are too apt to feel in reference to the changes of the present life. It should mitigate the anxiety which often preys upon the mind when we look forward into futurity, and contemplate the prospect of our own dissolution; for it must be consolatory to know that the key of death is in the Saviour's hands, and that come what may we cannot be forced out of the world, till he open the door and bid us depart. It should prevent or repress the anxiety which is too often felt respecting the mode and circumstances of our dissolution, not less than respecting the time of its occurrence. Die where we may, we cannot be beyond the reach of the Redeemer's protection. The fact that he has in his own hand the key of death is a proof that he is present with us—for *there* where we die he summons us, and we should be ready and willing to depart at his call. It is equally fitted to fortify our minds for the last struggle of nature, since Christ will then be with us. We cannot know what it is to die. Who shall attempt to describe what may be passing in the soul when the tie which binds it to the body is breaking? and what renders that scene more awful is—we die alone! In that hour of separation from human fellowship—in that solitude of death, when placed on the verge of the invisible world—O! how consolatory to reflect, that death itself is subject to the Redeemer's power—that he watches over the dissolution of his people, and keeps his eye not only on the busy scenes of life, but also on the secret mysteries of death. There He is, where most we need a friend and comforter, standing at the gate of death, with absolute power over every enemy that can assail us, and with unquenchable zeal for our welfare: for "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

THE CHRISTIAN MIRROR.

MONTREAL, THURSDAY, JUNE 30, 1842.

E D U C A T I O N .

We hope we have not as yet quite exhausted the patience of our readers on this popular topic. Its general interest will, we conceive, warrant our return to the subject.

"Evil communications"—whether by precept, example, immoral works, (the expression is not limited in its meaning)—"corrupt good manners." The text is often repeated, but the moral cannot be too frequently inculcated, or too seriously enforced. In the moral, as well as in the physical world, "nature abhors a vacuum." If good principles are not early imbibed in the mind of youth, bad ones will spring up like weeds, and grow to a fearful height. This is proved by daily experience. Nothing is more pernicious to the tender blossoms of intellect, than a certain class of books, plentifully disseminated in the present day—in which are artfully interwoven with matter of no small interest, the seeds of vice. History, science, useful knowledge, nay, religion itself, are thrown aside as worthless by the majority of young people of this generation, left indiscreetly to the unrestrained freedom of their wills, for novels and light reading of every description, that have the most evil tendency. Hence, impressions are made on the mind which can rarely be eradicated, evincing their results in the very great frivolity which characterises the country; nay, we fear not to assert that this is a melancholy sign of increasing depravity—nor is it confined to any special section of society.

There is, however, a certain class to whom this may apply more especially—an extensive one too. If those who undertake the very important task of educating (if such it may be called) this numerous class, were as careful to keep from them and

their families bad works and licentious song-books—as they are the Word of God—we should then see moral regeneracy make speedy advancement.

This is an awful perversion of the Divine law, to which the eyes of the Canadian people begin to be open. Truth is unfurling her banners, and many are deserting from the ranks of superstition—and, ere long, an exceeding great multitude shall be formed on her side, "fair as the moon, bright as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners," to the entire demolition of the kingdom of Satan.

UNDER the head "Religious Intelligence," will be found some interesting details of the progress and present state of Christian Missions in foreign countries, extracted from the New York Observer—to which we beg to direct the attention of the friends of Missions. Through violent and determined opposition, it will be seen, the Gospel is winning "its widening way," and the heralds of the Cross are enabled to shout "victory through the blood of the Lamb."

A WRITER in the New York Observer states, that "twelve dollars a year, or one dollar a month, will, in the course of six or eight years, give a young man what is there at least (in India) equivalent to a collegiate education here; and place him in a situation where there is much probability of his conversion and salvation, and of his becoming the means of saving many others;" and then introduces the following forcible arguments, which we insert for the benefit of our readers:—

"When you build, or repair and ornament your house, will you not remember that there are hundreds of youth in Madras district and other parts of India, who would be glad to live in a house the walls of which are mud, the floor earthen, and the roof grass, that they may attend school? When you buy furniture, will you not remember that these youth would be content to have only one dish for their food, and set it on a mat on the ground when they eat; and to sleep on a mat spread on the ground? When you purchase clothing will you not remember that these young men are willing to go without a coat for their back, shoes for their feet, or a cap for their heads, though to be respectably dressed as students, they should have them; and to wear only a single piece of plain cotton cloth wrapped about them, in order to obtain the advantages of a good education in a mission boarding school, and not have it cost more than one dollar a month? When you spread your table abundantly with comforts, and perhaps with luxuries, will you not remember that they would be glad to live day after day, and month after month, on rice, with a little seasoning of salt fish, or fruit, or a pungent gravy called curry? But the missionaries are obliged to refuse them admission to the schools for the want of one dollar a month to feed, clothe and lodge them? And when you put your money at interest, or invest it where you hope it will be accumulating, for your own or your children's benefit, will you not think of those youth, and the benefit it might confer on them, and, through them, on thousands of their benighted countrymen?"

You want your handsome and convenient house and elegant furniture, and fashionable clothing, and delicious fare, and increasing property: but will you not recollect to ask yourself whether you need them, and especially need them in so great profusion, as much as those youth need an education, and the frequently saving influence of a missionary boarding school? If what these things cost you were used to educate some of those young men for respectability and usefulness in this life, and very probably for heaven! might it not make you also, and your family, more happy? If it would bring you more enjoyment by being laid out for conveniences, elegancies, luxuries, or accumulation, for the next 10 or 20 years, would it for the next 1,000?"

We have been favoured by the Rev. T. Osgood with a copy of some "Friendly Hints," purporting to be the outlines of a plan for the estab-