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Poetry.

TO MY FATHER.

BY MRS. EMILY C. JUDSON.

A welcome for thy child, father,
A welcome give to-day;
Although she may not come to thee,
As when she went away;
Though never in her olden nest
Is she to fold her wing,
And live again the days when first
She learned to fly and sing.
O happy were those days, father,
When gathered round thy knee,
Seven sons and daughters, called thee sire;
We come again but three;
The grave has claimed thy loveliest ones,
And sterner things than death
Have left a shadow on thy brow,
A sigh upon thy breath.
And one—oh one of the three, father,
Now comes to thee to claim
Thy blessing on another lot,
Upon another name.
Where tropic suns forever burn,
Far over land and wave,
The child, whom thou hast loved, would make
Her hearth-stone and her grave.
Thou'lt never wait again, father,
Thy daughter's coming tread;
She ne'er will see thy face on earth,
So come her with thy dead;
But in the land of life and love,
Not sorrowing as now,
She'll come to thee, and come, perchance,
With jewels on her brow.
Perchance—I do not know, father,
If any word be given
My erring hand, among the guides,
Who point the way to heaven;
But it would be a joy untold
Some erring foot to stay;
Remember this, when gathered round,
Ye for the exile pray.
Let nothing there be changed, father,
I would remember all,
Where every ray of sunshine rests,
And where the shadows fall,
And now I go, with faltering foot,
I pass the threshold o'er,
And gaze, through tears, on that dear roof,
My shelter never more.

N. Y. Recorder.

THE NIGHT FLOWER.

There is a flower, they say, that blooms
The faintest at the hour of night,
And sweeter sheds its rich perfume
Than when the day-beams gild its bright.
When other flowers are folded up
Upon the night dews and chilly air,
This meekly lifts its golden cup
To the bright stars so coldly fair.
This may our hearts in sorrow's hour,
The darkest night to mortals given,
Scented as this trusting flower,
Pour a rich incense stream to heaven.

Christian Miscellany.

"We need a better acquaintance with the thoughts and reasonings of pure and lofty minds."—Dr. Sharp.

Simplicity of Faith.

The simplicity of faith was once illustrated to me in another, and a very different manner.

I was preaching my ordinary weekly lecture in the evening; when I was sent for in great haste to visit a woman who was said to be dying, and who very much desired to see me. I closed the service as soon as I could, and went immediately to her house. She was a member of my Church, whom I had known very well for years; with whom I had been acquainted ever since her first serious impressions, before she became a communicant. As I entered the room where she lay, I found it filled with her friends, who had gathered around her to see her die. Making my way through the midst of them, I reached the side of her bed, and found her apparently in the last agonies of death. She was bolstered up in her bed, gasping for breath, almost suffocated by the asthma; and the whole bed shook by a palpitation of her heart, which seemed to be shaking her to

pieces. It appeared to me that she could not live the quarter of an hour. I said to her,

"Mrs. M., you seem to be very sick?"
"Yes," said she, "I am dying."
"And are you ready to die?"
She lifted her eyes upon me, with a solemn and fixed gaze; and, speaking with great difficulty, she replied:
"Sir, God knows—I have taken him—at his word,—and—I am not afraid—to die."
It was a new definition of faith. "I have taken him at his word." It struck me in an instant as a triumph of faith. "God knows I have taken him at his word, and I am not afraid to die." It was just the thing for her to say. I have often tried to think what else she could have said, that would have expressed so much, in such few words.

I prayed some four minutes by her bedside, recited to her some passages of God's word, and was about to leave her, for a moment, to her friends, whom she seemed anxious to address. She held me by the hand; and uttering a word at a time, as she gasped for breath, she said to me:

"I wanted to tell you—that I can—trust—in God—while—I am dying. You have often told me—he would not—forsake me. And now—I find—it true. I am—at peace. I die—willingly—and happy."

In a few moments I left her, uttering to her such promises of the Saviour as I deemed most appropriate. However, she did not die. She still lives. But that expression of faith has been of great benefit to me. It has aided me in preaching, and in conversation with inquiring sinners very often. It gave me a more simple idea of faith than I ever had before. It put aside all the mist of metaphysics, speculation, and philosophizing. It made the whole nature of faith plain. Everybody could understand it—"God knows, I have taken him at his word."

If I am not mistaken, many of the speculations about faith have no tendency to *invite* faith. Rather the contrary. The speculations tend to throw over the exercises of faith an obscurity—tend to give them a dimness and distance, which make them too uncertain and too far off, for either clearness or comfort. We cannot afford to take such long journeys, and through such intricate windings. The Bible never asks us to do it. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart, that is, the word of faith which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." This is all clear; "nigh thee." It is God's word. Speculations cannot improve it. Explanations cannot make it invite faith, only as they make its simplicity understood.

Many of the published Dissertations, on the nature and philosophy of the atonement, may be deep, but they are dark. We cannot afford to travel such weary distances, and through such twilight paths, in order to get at the fact—at what it is that we are to believe and trust in. "The Bible puts it directly before us;—slain for us,—die just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." We are asked to receive it, on God's testimony; not by the aids of philosophy, but on the declaration of the fact. We "make God a liar," if we do not believe the testimony which he has given us of his Son. We must take it on God's declaration. That is faith. The speculations may be useful to silence skepticism; but they never soften hearts. They may make us scholars; but they never make us children, or lead us home. The atonement satisfies God. He says so. That is enough. Leave it there. Men may try; but they will try in vain when they attempt to convert the weapons for defending against infidelity into bread to feed God's hungry children. We must "take God at his word." The philosophy of religion is just faith; nothing more.

Many of our treatises on the subjects of faith, (having a kind of Germanizing about them—a kind of crazy philosophizing) are so filled up with explanations, and laboured

justifications, and attempted analogies, that they have more tendency to awaken doubt than to call forth faith. They have just the effect to make the reader believe, that the authors are not themselves quite certain of *the thing*, since they take so much pains to demonstrate, explain and justify it. They appear to go back of God's work, and invite other people to go along with them, as if God's word needed the props of their philosophy. This is no aid to faith. Let us "take God at his word." No philosophy can prop up a divine promise, or build a scaffolding to reach it. Some of our theologians, having a kind of German baptisma, are more likely to make infidels, than make Christians. The same thing may be said of a great deal of modern religious literature—filled with philosophy, "falsely so called."—*Spencer's Pastor's Sketches.*

Delinquents of Heaven.

It is not on the circumstances or the scenery, the faculties or employments of Heaven, that the Scripture dwells. Some imagery taken from earthly things it necessarily employs, in order to clothe the ideas which it would present to us, and that imagery is noble and exquisitely pure beyond anything to be found elsewhere; but the nature of the figures used, and the rapid manner in which one is exchanged for another, utterly prevent the imagination from fastening upon them, as being themselves the realities of heavenly things. The mind does not rest on the thrones, and golden crowns, and kingly feasts, on the white robes and palms in the hand, and the voice of harpers harping with their harps, and the living creatures and the elders, and the Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, on the sea of glass like unto an emerald, on the city with its twelve gates of pearl and foundations of precious stones, and the river of water shaded by the tree of life. The realities which are shadowed forth in imagery such as this the spiritual mind apprehends, and fastens on them with all the fervour of desire and hope; but they are such as only the spiritual mind can apprehend. In short, the whole revelation on this subject is so constructed, as to address itself exclusively to the instincts of the renewed spirit.

Much might, perhaps, have been revealed which would have enchanted the taste and imagination of one whose heart was unchanged. But, in that case, how frightful would have been the increase of self-delusion in men who have delighted themselves in (what we may call) the accidents of Heaven, while they were unable to apprehend *its essence*; and we should have been bewildered amidst a crowd of dreamers, and talkers, and expectants of eternal things, whose spirit was earthly, and whose portion was with the world. There would indeed have been the appearance of a recompense of reward, which unsanctified minds could have embraced, and the hope of which might have mingled its power with low motives and selfish aims. But from all this Divine wisdom has saved us; by its concealments, as well as its announcements. Much more might have been said of the heavenly inheritance, than that it is "undefiled;" much more of the new heavens and the new earth than that "therein dwelleth righteousness." But when these are the only points put forward, it is alone by the conscience which shrinks from *defilement*, and by the mind renewed in "righteousness" and true holiness, that such anticipations will be fondly indulged. We might have been told much of the details of eternal happiness, and of the society in which it will be enjoyed; but we are told little or nothing, except the one thing which constitutes its essence and its source. "Where I am, ye shall be also;" "The glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. They shall see his face, and His name shall be in their foreheads;" "God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

While this is the whole account of heavenly happiness, the world can see nothing to

attract it. The attraction is felt only by hearts which have already learned, under the teaching of the Spirit, to live by the love of God their Saviour, and whose fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. With them the hope of heaven is the crowning exercise of their highest aspirations. It is no mercenary calculation of future compensations, but a spirit rising directly to the fountain of holiness and truth; longing for the promised enjoyment of the presence and likeness of God; and fixing its eye, not on what Christ may give, but on Christ himself. "It is better to depart, and be with Christ." "Then shall we be ever with the Lord." "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see him as He is." "As for me, I shall behold thy presence in righteousness; and when I awake up after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it."—*Lon. Chris. Obs.*

The Reckonings of Eternity.

In speaking of the profound spiritual lethargy which so widely and strongly prevails among men in view of the solemn realities of the coming world, Dr. Chalmers thus discourses:—

"Though creatures of a fleeting and fantastic day, we tread on earth with as assured footsteps, as if, instead of its short-lived tenants, we were to be everlastingly its lords. And the laugh, and the song, and the festive gaiety, and the busy schemes of earthliness, all speak a generation fast locked in the insensibility of spiritual death.—Nor do the terrors of the grave shake this tranquillity—nor do the still more awful terrors of the judgment-seat. The day of man's dissolution, which is so palpably at hand, and which sends before it so many intimations, fails to disturb him. That day of the world's dissolution, when the trumpet shall be sounded, and the men of all nations shall awake to the high reckonings of eternity, and this earth, and these heavens, shall be involved in the ruins of one mighty conflagration, and the wrath that now is suspended in this season of offered mercy, shall at length break forth into open manifestation on all the sons and daughters of ungodliness—this day, which, when it cometh, will absorb every heart in one fearful and overwhelming interest—now that it only is to come, and is seen through the imagined vista of many successive centuries, has no more effect than a dream of poetry. And, whether from the dimness of nature's sight to all the futurities of the spiritual world, or from its slender apprehension of that guilt, which in the sacred eye of heaven is so enormous, certain it is, that men can travel onward, both to death and to the judgment, and say, Peace, peace, when there is no peace."

Early Instruction.

Religious instruction should be begun early. The intellectual nature must not be allowed to anticipate the moral; but religious truth must shine forth, and mingle its rays with the early dawn of the mind. Advancement in knowledge of any kind greatly depends upon early cultivation. But the condition of our moral nature is such as to require in a special manner the illuminating, preventive, and quickening influences of religion. "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it." The fulfilment of the promise depends upon early beginning, even in childhood; and if the work be postponed there is no promise of success. In the same spirit our blessed Lord left to the church the injunction: "Feed my lambs." "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." The Divine love and care of the rising generation are signally illustrated in the authoritative provisions, to instil early into the youthful mind the principles of piety and truth. In direct conflict with this divine method, is the general system of State instruction in this country. The wisdom of the world arrays itself against the wisdom of God.—*Ch. Treas.*