

POETRY.

I HAVE NO FATHER THERE.

I saw a wide and well-spread board,
And children young and fair
Came one by one,—the eldest first,
And took their stations there.

All neatly clad and beautiful,
And with familiar tread,
They gathered round with joy to feast
On meats and snow-white bread.

Beside the board, the father sat,
A smile his features wore;
As on the little group he gazed,
And told their portions o'er.

A meagre form arrayed in rags,
Anear the threshold stood;
A half-starved child had wandered there
To beg a little food.

Said one—"why standest here my dear,
See there's a vacant seat,
Amid the children,—and enough
For them and thee to eat."

"Alas for me!" the child replied,
In tones of deep despair.
"No right have I said you group,
I have no father there."

O hour of fate, when from the skies,
With notes of deepest dread,
The far resounding trump of God
Shall summon forth the dead.

What countless hosts shall stand without
The heavenly threshold fair,
And gazing on the blest, exclaim,
I have no father there.

Ecclesiastical Intelligence.

SABBATH SCHOOL UNION FOR SCOTLAND.

In those days when every means which Christian philanthropy can suggest, for the spiritual enlightenment of the people of our land is vigorously and strenuously employed, when the pulpit, the platform, and the press, are all used as the instruments of promoting the salvation of souls, and the well directed energies of societies, and individuals, are devoted to the advancement of the same great and glorious end; it must be remembered that there is one engine which has been most successfully employed in time past, for accelerating the grand interests of Messiah's kingdom, and from which, in time to come, much good may confidently be expected to accrue; we mean the Sabbath School,—for ye hesitate not to affirm that there is no means more likely, or better calculated to insure the temporal and spiritual amelioration of the present and the future generation, than the establishment in every corner of our beloved land, of a school to which the young and rising generation may be enabled to resort on the evening of the Sabbath day, to be instructed in the things which belong to their everlasting peace, to hear of a God and a Saviour, of the way of escape from the horrors of hell, and the means of access to the glories of heaven. Nor do we give this prominence to the Sabbath school on mere vague and ill defined grounds, for we speak advisedly and from an appeal to experience, when we say that the Sabbath schools of our country have been, and will continue to be the grand and efficient cause, under the favour and blessing of the Redeemer, of transforming into nurseries for heaven, those regions of our land which are sunk in ignorance, and degraded by open profligacy and vice, and converting the cities and hamlets of Scotland, in which, perhaps, there was heard before nought but the voice of discord and dissension, and nought before seen but neglect of God, and open disregard for all that is invested with the character of holy, into scenes of happiness and peace, in which we would find families and communities distinguished by their love to God, devotedness to the Saviour, respect for his name, obedience to his commands, and observance of his holy ordinances; and individuals in earnest after a personal and saving interest in the blessings of salvation. Were we asked by the civil rulers what we deemed the most probable means of promoting the peace, order, and well-being of society, diminishing the number of youthful and adult delinquency, thinning the wards of our jails, and our bridewells, and transferring throughout all ranks of society a love of virtue and a desire of pursuing the path of honourable conduct, we would without hesitation say,—establish in every district throughout the length and breadth of the land a Sabbath school, where the children of the surround-

ing neighbourhood shall be assembled on the evening of every Lord's day, and taught their duty to God and to man. And were the question put to us by the most likely to be effectual in reclaiming from spiritual darkness, and arousing from the sleep of spiritual death, the souls of those around us, we would give the same reply, for it has always appeared to us, that in endeavouring to storm the adversary's battlements, and, in overthrowing his reign in the hearts of men, to establish that of the blessed Jesus, it is with the young that we must commence, the young, whose hearts are yet susceptible of deep and lively impressions, whose feelings and affections are still uncontaminated; and to whose souls there is a way of access which is not to be found to the heart of the old and confirmed sinner, who for years, it may be for a whole lifetime, has been given up to the love and service of the devil. And while this is to be regarded as the most likely means, in the hand of God, of raising up a future generation who shall fear and praise the Lord, we would not despair of it operating beneficially even on the Lord may make the youngest child at the Sabbath school, a successful, though a youthful missionary, in the circle of his own fireside, and bless the conversion of the father's son and daughter for the father's soul.

Such being the value and importance of Sabbath schools, the Christian must doubtless value every opportunity afforded him of increasing their number and extending their usefulness. Such an opportunity is presented to him in the SABBATH SCHOOL UNION. This Society has existed for upwards of twenty years. It aims at three objects: 1. To economise the formation of Sabbath schools in every part of the country where their establishment is required. 2. To publish suitable books and tracts for the schools; and 3. To form a central point of union for the schools, whence hints as to teaching may be given, knowledge and experience of the different establishments in connection with the society, may be diffused over the whole. Already has this society been the means, under the blessing of God, of doing extensive good, and now that it aims at still greater usefulness, we call on all to whom, as the servants of the Lord Jesus, their aid and countenance pleading in behalf of its claims with their brethren of mankind, and more especially praying in its behalf to the great Head of the Church.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CORNWALLIS, July 16th, 1839.

Messrs. EDITORS,

The enclosed, from a New York paper, is at your disposal, should you think it worthy a place in your valuable periodical.

Yours,
H. L. D.

AN ANGEL VISIT.

On the evening of the thirty-first of December, I had been cherishing the humiliating and solemn reflections which are peculiarly suitable to the close of the year, and endeavouring to bring my mind to that view of the past, best calculated to influence the future. I had attempted to recall the prominent incidents of the twelve months which had elapsed; and, in little my memory could retain even of that most important to be remembered. I could not avoid, at such a period, looking forwards, as well as backwards, and anticipating that fearful tribunal at which no occurrence shall be forgotten; while my imagination penetrated into the distant destinies which shall be dependent on its decisions.

At my usual hour I retired to rest; but the train of meditation I had pursued was so important and appropriate, that imagination continued it after sense had slumbered. "In thoughts from the visions of the night, when dead sleep falleth upon man," I was mentally concerned in the following scene of interest:—I imagined myself still adding, link after link, to the chain of reflection, the progress of which the time for repose had interrupted; and while thus engaged, I was aware there remained but a few moments to complete the day. I heard the clock as it tolled the knell of another year; and, as it rung slowly the appointed number, each note was followed by a sting of conscience, bitterly reproaching me for my neglect of precious time. The last stroke was ringing in my ears, painful as the groan announcing the departure of a valuable friend,—when, notwithstanding the meditative posture in which I was sitting, I perceived that on lifting my eyes to discover the cause, I was terrified at perceiving that another being was with me in my seclusion. I saw one before me whose form indeed was human; but the bright burning glance of his eye,

and the splendor which beamed forth from every part of his beautifully-proportioned form, convinced me, at a glance, that it was no mortal being that I saw. The elevation of his brow gave dignity of the highest order to his countenance; but the most acute observation was indicated by his piercing eye, and inexorable justice was imprinted on his majestic features. A glittering phylactery encircled his head, upon which was written in letters of fire, "The Faithful One."—Under one arm he bore two volumes; in his hand he held a pen. I instantly knew the Recording Angel—the Secretary of the terrible tribunal of Heaven. With a trembling which convulsed my frame, I heard his unearthly accents. "Mortal," he said, "thou wast longing to recall the events of the past year: thou art permitted to gaze upon the record of the Books of God. Peruse and be wise." As he spoke thus, he opened before me one of the volumes which he had brought. In fearful apprehension, I read in it my own name, and recognized the history of my whole life during the past year, with all its minute particulars. Burning words were those which that volume contained; all the actions and circumstances of my life were registered under their respective heads in that dreadful book. I was first struck by the title, "Mercies received."—Some were, there, the remembrance of which I had retained; more which were recalled after having been forgotten; but far the greater number had never been noticed at all. O! what a detail of preservations, and deliverances, and invitations, and warnings, and privileges, and bestowments! I remember that "Sabbaths" stood out in very prominent characters, as if they had been among the greatest benefits. In observing the recapitulation, I could not but be struck with one circumstance; it was, that many dispensations which I had considered curses, were enumerated here as blessings. Many a woe which had riven the heart—as many a cup, whose bitterness seemed to designate it as poison, was there, verifying the language of the poet,—

"E'en crosses from his sovereign hand
Are blessings in disguise."

Another catalogue was there, it was the enumerations of "Transgressions." My hand trembles as I remember them?—What an immense variety of classes! Indifference—thoughtlessness—formality—ingratitude—unbelief—sins against the world—against the church—against the Father!—against the Saviour!—against the Sanctifier!—stood at the head of their crowded battalions, as if for the purpose of driving me to despair. Not one sin was forgotten there; neglected Sabbaths—abused ordinances—misimproved time—encouraged temptations;—there they stood, with no excuse, no extenuations. "There was one very long class I remember well,—"Idle words;" and then the passage flashed like lightning across my mind—"For every idle word that men speak, they shall give account in the day of Judgement."

My supernatural visitor here addressed me:—"Dost thou observe how small a proportion thy sins of commission bear to those of omission?" As he spoke, he pointed me to instances in the page like the following: "I was hungry and thou gavest me no meat; I was thirsty, and thou gavest me no drink; I was sick, and thou didst not visit me." I was conscience stricken. In another part of the record I read the title, "Duties performed." Alas! how small their number! Humbled as I had been accustomed to think the estimate of my good works, I was greatly disappointed to perceive that many performances on which I had looked back with pride were omitted; "because," my visitor informed me, "the motive was impure." It was, however, with feelings of the most affecting gratification, I read beneath this record, small as it was, the following passage:—"Whosoever shall give a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

While I gazed on many other similar records, such was the intense feelings which seemed to be awakened within me, that my brain grew dizzy, and my eye became dim. I was awakened from this state by the touch of my supernatural instructor, who pointed me to the volume in which I had read my own terrible history, now closed, and bearing a seal, on which with sickening heart, I read the inscription, "Reserved until the day of judgment." "And now," said the Angel, "my commission is completed. Thou hast been permitted what was never granted to man before.—What thinkest thou of the record? Dost thou not justly tremble? How many a line is here, which dying, you would wish to blot! I see you already shudder at the thought of the disclosure of this volume at the day of judgment, when an assembled world shall listen to its contents. But if such be the record of one year, what must be the guilt of your whole life?—Seek then an interest in the blood of Christ; justified by which, you shall indeed hear the repetition, but not to condemnation. Pray that, when the other books are opened, your name may be