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Poetry.

SABBATH MORNING.

BY MRS. SIGOURNEY.

Sweet day of rest, begin;
The week hath had its way,
With care, and strife, and folly's din,
And scarce a pause to pray,
The week its leisure hath kept
In mammon's mine to toil,
The votaries wearily have slept,
And early waked to toil.
It as a sower went
Its earthly seed to cast,
And some upon the winds were spent,
To reap the winds at last.
With many a deep regret,
And hope that vainly burned,
The work-day world our tasks hath set,
And we her lessons learned.
The week hath had its fill
Of service, and of speech;
Six days and nights it ruled at will,
But one it may not reach.
We see its dawning gem
Gleam o'er the mountain's breast,
Kneeling, we kiss its garment's hem;
Begin, sweet day of rest.

American Messenger.

A BEAUTIFUL THOUGHT.

BY MRS. BOANE.

Chisel in hand stood a sculptor boy,
With his marble block before him,
And his face lit up, with a smile of joy,
As an angel dream passed o'er him.
He carved the dream on that shapeless stone,
With many a sharp incision;
With heaven's own light the sculptor shone—
He had caught that angel vision.
Sculptors of life are we, as we stand
With our soul uncarved, before us;
Waiting the hour when at God's command,
Our life-iron passes o'er us,
If we carve it then, on the yielding stone,
With many a sharp incision,
Its heavenly beauty shall be our own,
Our lives that angel vision.

Christian Miscellany.

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

A Neglected Duty.

INSTRUCTIVE INCIDENTS.

One morning, just as the day began to dawn, Mr. M. was roused by a hard knocking at his door. On opening the door, he found Mr. R., a friend who lived about three miles distant. "Walk in, Mr. R.," said he. "I hope nothing bad has happened to call you from home at so early an hour."

"I thank you, I won't come in. Mr. L., I believe, owes you a considerable sum."

"He does?"
"Well, you must be wide awake if you don't wish to lose it. He is about to leave the place, and has taken measures for the speedy removal of all his property. I thought you could not well afford to lose your debt, and so I have come over to let you know how things stood."

"I am very much obliged to you; but have you come from home at this early hour on purpose to inform me?"

"I had no other business."

"It was very kind in you to take the trouble."

"It was no great trouble to take for a neighbour. We must help one another: good morning."

"Stop, stop; come in and get some breakfast before you go back."

"I can't stay, for I must be home as soon after sunrise as possible. I have several workmen to attend to; and besides, if you are going to secure your debt, you had better not wait for breakfast."

"Very true."

Mr. R. set out on his return, and Mr. M. went to visit his delinquent debtor. "Mr. R.," said Mr. M. to himself, "is a very good man: very few men would have taken so much trouble to serve another. He is a very kind, upright man; I wish all Church members were as much so."

Now it had so happened that Mr. R., with all his kindness and uprightness, had never spoken to Mr. M. about the danger he was in of losing his soul! It would certainly have been as great a proof of kindness to have warned him against the loss of his soul, as it was to warn him against the loss of his debt. It required no greater gift of speech to do the one than the other.

How fearfully is the duty of warning men neglected! How few make it their business to speak to men respecting their eternal interests!

An unfeeling, obtrusive mode of speaking respecting the interests of the soul is only adapted to do harm; but a warning kindly given, the result of a heart-felt interest on the part of him who gives the warning, seldom fails to exert a beneficial influence.

On a certain occasion a poor day-labourer went to a rich farmer and manufacturer, and said, "Sir, you may think I take too much upon me, but I have been wanting to tell you for a long time that I feel bad about you."

The humility and affection with which he spoke touched the rich man, and led him to request his visitor to say what he had to say to him with freedom. The poor man was silent and embarrassed.

"What did you wish to speak to me about?" said the rich man.

"About your soul."

"Well, what have you to say?"
"I am afraid you will have your only portion here, and won't get to heaven, and that you won't do the good you ought to do with your property and influence."

The conversation was interrupted by one who had business with the rich man, who dismissed his Christian friend courteously, saying, "I am much obliged to you, and will try to think of the matter you mentioned."

The next Sabbath he was seen where he had not been seen for months—in the house of God; and he continued to attend, with a good degree of regularity, from that time onwards. The collector for a benevolent cause was emboldened to present a subscription paper to him; he put down five dollars in the poor man's name, and paid it. Whether any saving results to his soul followed from the conversation above alluded to, is not known to the writer. Certain it is that the warning was kindly received, and produced some good effects.

The neglect of this duty is not always owing to forgetfulness or indifference, but to a strange disinclination to utter from the lips what is felt in the heart.

Two men were engaged in mowing the same meadow. One was a pious man, the other was a profane Sabbath-breaker. The pious man felt deeply for his fellow-labourer, and determined to urge him to break off from his sins, and to seek the salvation of his soul. But he found it difficult to speak to him on the subject. Though they were alone, and it would seem there was nothing in the way, yet day after day passed, and no word of warning was spoken. The pious man was distressed in consequence of his neglect of duty, and on a certain night fully resolved that on the morrow, as soon as they reached the meadow, he would make an affectionate and solemn appeal to his companion.

The next morning that companion did not come to the meadow. The pious man wrought alone till noon, and then went to the dwelling of his fellow-labourer. He found that he was no longer among the living! In the night he was taken violently with the cholera morbus, and died about ten o'clock.

"He spoke of you," said the widow to Mr. S., "and wanted to see you; but I had no one to send for you."

"Did he say anything about dying?" said Mr. S.

"He was in great pain most of the time after he was taken, so that he did little else than groan, but—he was afraid to die."

Mr. S. felt his heart faint within him as those words were uttered. "He was afraid to die." Yes, he might well be; and a professing Christian who was with him daily, and who really cared for his soul, had never done anything to prepare him for death.

On a certain occasion Dr. Chalmers, when away from home, passed an evening in company with a number of pious friends and a former parishioner, who was seventy-two years of age. He was a large, stout man, apparently in perfect health. Though God had spared him more than three score and ten years, yet he had not secured the one thing needful.

During the evening the conversation took a devout turn, and was continued till a late hour. The old man listened attentively, and seemed to ponder what was said.

Dr. C. noticed the attention he paid to the conversation, and felt inclined to speak to him personally respecting his eternal interest, but thought it would hardly be proper in the presence of the company.

The next morning a noise was heard in the old man's room. Dr. Chalmers ran into the room just in time to see him die. It was the second death he had ever witnessed. When it was certain that life was extinct, he knelt down and offered an affecting prayer, and then called together the household, and gave them a solemn exhortation. He was greatly depressed during the day, a large part of which was spent with a friend in the woods. "It was touching," said the friend "to see him sit down on a bank repeatedly, with tears in his eyes, and say, 'Ah! God has rebuked me; I know now what St. Paul means by being instant in season and out of season. Had I addressed that old man last night with urgency, it might have seemed out of season to human eyes, but how reasonable it would have been!'"—N. Y. Observer.

Sudden Conversion.

Sudden conversions are in accordance with Scripture. In the Acts of the Apostles we find that ordinarily conversions were sudden under their ministry. The three thousand conversions on the day of Pentecost all appear to have taken place during the sittings of one assembly, and all the subsequent outpourings of the Spirit with which the first age of Christianity was blessed, seem to have been characterized by conversions of this sort. Though Saul was three days seeking the Lord, yet the jailor of Philippi and all his household were converted in one hour. And we have reason to believe that such conversions were every day taking place under the ministry of the apostles. Not only the example of Scripture, but the general spirit and genius of the Bible, are favourable to sudden conversion. The Bible calls upon men to repent now! It does not instruct them to adopt a course of action preparatory to their doing so, but allows of no delay. Its language is, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Sudden conversions are neither unphilosophical, unscriptural, nor unusual.

A Nail in every Building.

When I used to travel for the London Missionary Society, I went to Peterborough. A farmer there had read the report of that society. He found that we had one hundred and twenty-three missionaries. He sent for Mr. Arundel to say, "I have a great desire to hit out something new." I questioned whether any member of Parliament would have hit it. He said, "I am determined to have something to do with every tract distributed, every sermon preached, every school established; and for this purpose I will give a sovereign for each of the missionaries. Here is a check for one hundred and

twenty-three pounds, in order to do something all over the world."

That is what I call an enlarged idea. But in the meantime another report came out, and stated that thirteen new missionaries had been sent forth. "Well," said he, "I am determined to keep it up," and he gave another thirteen pounds. If all rich young men and young ladies were to say, "I will have something to do with every Home Missionary station; I will give a sovereign for each of the missionaries; I will be interwoven with their efforts; this society would soon be released from difficulties."—Rev. R. Knill.

Winter.

Winter is again upon us. The last ray of Summer that lingered playfully about our northern zone has faded away. The last leaf of Autumn that fluttered in gaudy colours to the passing breeze has fallen, withered and decaying. The mellow warmth of that brief, anomalous season that interposed itself at the very verge of Winter, as if it would turn back the course of nature, and usher in the Spring, has yielded to biting frosts and chilling storms. The winds whistle cold; northward the snow falls thick and fast; the forests moan as the fierce blast sweeps through their naked branches; the streams are transmuted into a solid, glassy pavement; the warbling of birds, the hum and chirp of insects, are succeeded by a dreary silence in the woodland, the meadow, and the glen; the feathered tribes have migrated to a sunnier clime; the insect tribes have betaken themselves to their native caverns; the beasts of the forest burrow in their dens. In the city the cold wind sweeps through the narrow streets, the snow mantles the houses, the ice hangs pendant from the roofs and sleets the pavements, the public walks are thinned, and passengers quicken their pace; families crowd around the hearth-stone or the glowing furnace; the poor shiver in open, fireless garrets, or in dark, damp, freezing cellars.

However the poet and the moralist may discourse of the wisdom and beneficence of the Creator in "the budding Spring," "the beautiful Summer," "the luxuriant Autumn," they must surely be silent now. Winter must chill their gratitude, and freeze their song. Not so. The royal Psalmist finds in Winter, its storms, its frosts, its snow, a theme of glowing praise. In his exhortation to universal thanksgiving to God for his power and goodness in creation and in providence, he enumerates among the grounds of praise, that "He giveth snow like wool; he scattereth the hear-frost like ashes; he casteth forth his ice like morsels; who can stand before his cold?" And in his sublime invocation to all things celestial and terrestrial to join in the praise of God, he summons "fire and hail; snow and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word."

Uninspired poets, also, have found in Winter much to admire and praise, while painters have drawn from it some of their most effective subjects. The poet of the Seasons, Thompson, does not exclude Winter from his lofty hymn of praise.

The Psalmist recognises the hand of God in Winter as in Summer. "The day is thine, the night is also thine; thou hast prepared the light and the sun. Thou hast set all the borders of the earth; thou hast made Summer and Winter." The same hand that clothes the earth with the verdure of Summer, clothes it with the snow of Winter; the same breath that wafts fragrance over the dewy fields, chills them with its frost. Winter is an ordinance of the Creator for the good of man—a part of that vast system of alternation and compensation by which a wise and beneficent Providence governs the world. It was the promise of Jehovah to Noah—the second progenitor of the human race—that "while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and Summer and Winter, and day and night shall not cease."—Independent.