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[FOR THE PROVINCIAL WEELMAN.]

Stanzas,

Suggested by seeing the Rainbow, on Wednesday, the 29th ult.

"At evening-time it shall be light."
It shall be light; may, doubt it not,
Behold the clouds disperse and fly,
And, mingling with the sunset hues,
A gorgeous rainbow spans the sky.

The howling winds this morning sweep
Over fading fields, through city street—
And, rapturously, the autumn showers
Upon the stony pavement beat.

But now the winds have died away,
And hazy calms seem to reign,
Alone, within the noisy mart,
And on the green and sloping plain.

And scarcely shall the rainbow tints
Have faded from the glowing sky,
That, one by one, shall peep out,
And the bright morn'g sail gaily by."

Omen of happier days, I hail,
Sweet Nature, thy reviving smile,
Which bids the downward heart look up,
And will not let sorrow's self beguile."

To earthward bowed, with folded wings,
Hope, drooping, all day long hath been:
Faith, hovering in the rugged path,
And courage with dejected mien.

Life's horizon, overpass'd with clouds,
Dreary and endless seemed to sweep—
While, guardian of the toilsome way,
Dare care-reviving vigils keep.

But now my fainting strength revives,
For Nature whispers, sweet, to me,
"Not always shall the darkness last,
Nor thorny path shall endless be."

"But, as succeeds to gloomy morn'
A glowing eye, a sunset bright,
Life will again be glad to thee."
At evening-time it shall be light."

M. E. H.

Youthful Piety.

The God of heaven has special claims upon the young. It is one of the most lovely features of His dispensation of mercy, that its claims meet them at the dawn of their existence; that the riches of His grace are equal with their want and need. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," is His loving command. His precious invitation. None of the young in Christian lands are to be found with whom His Spirit does not pour some rays of heavenly light, and to whose awakened consciences He has not found access. Most delightful is it when the young listen to such admonitions of heavenly wisdom; not it is safe to resist such claims as these. There is, for a time a deep sea of troubled feeling in many youthful minds; but at length it settles into a tranquillity, the calm of death. It is easy then for such a mind to keep on in the path of alienation from God; it slumbers on, and wakes to learn that it is lost for ever.

Youthful piety is specially beloved by God.—It is when the first green buds, and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell. The graces of the Spirit are then engrained on the green, fresh stalk, before it is withered and riven by the blasts of winter. "In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth." They may not be the richest and most splendid robes with which youthful piety is adorned, but they are the least sullied; they sparkle like the spangles of the early dew. "I remember that I was once a young man; and the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wast afar in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness to the Lord, and the first-fruits of His increase." How precious the thought to the youthful Christian, that amidst all his inextricable perplexities, in all his conflicts with the world, the flesh, and the devil, He whom his young heart has chosen as his portion and refuge, remembers him, and will never leave him nor forsake him!

Youthful piety is the most useful piety.—There is a vast difference between the growing brightness of that piety which is early entered upon, and the fluctuating, dull light of that religion which is commenced in advanced years. It is not often that the light shines so brightly as in the first years of age; nor is it possible it should shine long. The day gives the brightest promise that rises clear: even though obscured by a passing cloud, it sweeps its strong and steady course brightly to the western sky. Alas! history, all biography, all observation and experience show that comparatively few become pious much beyond the period of youth. "On examining the biography of nearly thirty Christian men and women, who were greatly distinguished for their piety and usefulness, I have found," says one, "that it was a more rich and varied experience of the goodness and mercy of God; of the way in which He leads His people; of the discipline by which He weans them from the world, and trains them up for heaven; and of His unchanging faithfulness, than the piety which is not subjected to this early and long-continued teaching and trial. These are experiences which cannot be crowded into a short compass; the mind cannot at once grasp them; nor can they ever be so vividly felt as when they make their first impression on the youthful heart. Youthful piety gives full proof of the declaration, that 'the ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.' The youthful Christian makes religion his joy. It is his relaxation from toil, his comfort in the midst of grief, and the discharge of her religious duties, and left the society. Being now free from the salutary restraint which

periods of human life, that is almost as fixed as the law of intellect and moral nature. The enjoyments of men, to some extent, arise from visions of the past. There is enough in the retrospect of those who from childhood entered the school of Christ, to fill them with self-abasement and humiliation; but there is something else to look back upon. There is the awakening power of God's truth; there is the begun work of His Spirit, and there is the life-giving influence of His Grace. And these are precious memories. There is the dawn of life and hope; there is the joy of the first-born soul when it first puts on the garments of gladness and salvation. There are songs in the night. There are strongly-marked times and seasons of fellowship with God, when the soul was led in green pastures and by the still waters. And when in the more advanced period of his history, the scars of autumn begin to fall, and the winter of life sets in, memory throws her thoughts backward, and is cheered by the sunshine of bygone years. Yesterday is forgotten: in the more immediate past there is a chasm, in which the mind takes little interest; memories slight upon earlier days, and more vivid scenes; and these are made glad by the light of God's countenance. This is one of the rewards of early piety. It relieves the natural imperfections of age, comforts its despondency, and soothes its sorrows, and cheers its loneliness. No man can be refreshed by the retrospect of scenes that never existed. With those who become pious in advanced life, the proximate past is often forgotten just as it is with the young. And if they were days of abstinence and self-denial; if the second-time of life run to waste, and its summer was uncheered and barren; if it was not until autumn or winter that the ground was planted; it is no marvel if the frozen soil yields to a scanty crop of grain. Memory runs back upon time and opportunity lost; the imagination rests upon scenes that are mournful; and if the Sun of righteousness breaks in upon the frozen heart, it makes a sweep low down in the southern sky; the joys are not bright, and have none of the freshness of the new-born spring.

The young are slow to learn that the winter of life is coming on. We counsel them not to add to it the bitterness and burden of youthful impiety. It were wisdom to sow their seed in the spring, when the light is not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain. It will be no grief of heart on a dying bed that you were early adopted into the family of God. It will not be matter of regret when God shall bring you to His judgment. Who will say, when that untried scene arises, "I was pious too early; I was beloved of God, I was happy, too soon?"—*Youth's Instructor.*

Death of a Backslider.

"He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

On a bleak winter's night, in the year 1844, after having retired to rest, I was suddenly aroused by the repeated mention of my name. On hastening to discover the cause, I found that two Christian persons had come earnestly to request me to visit an aged and dying apostate. The distance from the house of the sufferer, and a slight indisposition of body, at first induced me to refuse. "O come, do come," she is dying; and says that she is eternally lost! Overpowered by their solicitations, and the sense of duty, and indolence, the thought that perhaps God designed me to be the messenger of peace to the poor creature, I felt compelled to accompany them. The night was cheerless, dark, and dreary; the sky was starless, and everything around us seemed but a dim image of the sad scene to which we were hastening. The wind whistled wildly, and appeared as if it conveyed with it a "double-tongued voice," the groans of the dying sinner. This, added to the deathlike stillness of all besides, predisposed my mind for the chamber of sickness. As we approached the house, her cries of despair were distinctly heard; and with these ringing in my ears, I was ushered into her room. From the snoring of time, which were scattered thickly over her head, and the numerous wrinkles on her brow, it was evident that she had long since passed the boundary of "three-score years and ten." As soon as she saw me, with a wild, fitful light shooting into her sunken eyes, and which were rolling fiercely in their deep sockets, and in a tone expressive of the awful agony of her soul, she exclaimed, in the language of the Gethsemane, "Art thou come hither to torment me before the time?" "No," I replied; "but rather to assist you in obtaining the mercy you need." "Mercy! there is none for me! I tell you I am forsaken by God! I loved him once; but now—"

"The same blessing you then enjoyed is held out to you now, upon the exercise of a similar faith," I replied. "I cannot, I dare not, I will not, believe again; I have been deceived!" The peculiar emphasis laid on the latter part of this sentence, induced me to make inquiries as to her previous history. It appears that in early life she became seriously awakened, under the ministry of a devoted servant of Christ, and soon after obtained peace with God, and joined herself to the Independent Church in the town in which she then lived. For many years she adorned the Christian profession by her most exemplary character. Her evidence of acceptance with God was undoubted, and fear seldom disturbed her peace; she emphatically walked

"High in salvation, and the climates of bliss!"
At length, from the peculiar tenets to which she was peculiarly attached, she imbibed, in a carnally presumptuous way, the doctrine of final perseverance. The influence this had upon her mind was soon perceptible; others have held this doctrine in connection with much prayerful jealousy over themselves, and thus have neutralized the possible effects of a statement which we think unsupported by Scripture; but she became indifferent as to her present experience; the power of religion was lost; reality declined to dead formality; and yet, when spoken to on the subject, she regarded herself as perfectly safe, and unable finally to fall! She eventually became careless in her attendance on the means of grace, and the discharge of her religious duties, and left the society. Being now free from the salutary restraint which

union with a Christian church imposes, she soon grew careless. When warned of her danger, and referred to her preceding life, she seemed devoid of all religious feeling; and, in extenuation of her sin, fondly boasted that she could not be lost, for she was once a child of God! Her increasing years only increased her guilt, and hardened her heart. She continually abused the goodness of God, and presumptuously sinned, that grace might abound; till old age, with its attendant infirmities and afflictions, laid her upon the sick-bed. Now, when death's chilling grasp was felt, and the sad reality of an eternal world were disclosing themselves, she saw and felt the rottenness of that foundation on which she had built her hopes of salvation. Trembling under a fearful apprehension of that which awaited her, and with a full consciousness of her past folly, she uttered the words above, "I have been deceived!" The beams of the morning sun now began to scatter themselves upon the earth, and daybreak gradually dawned; but no ray of light to shine upon the poor sufferer's soul; the most precious moment had passed, the fearful presage of the "blackness of darkness forever," thickly enveloped her spirit! I returned to her room, resolving to make another, perhaps the last, effort to snatch her brand from the burning; over whose lake she was suspended by the attenuated and breaking thread of life. She appeared to be grappling with her conquering foe; her bosom heaved heavily, and her fearful sobs echoed through the room. I opened upon the 31st Psalm, and endeavored to soothe her in the most appropriate manner, the fearful presage of the "blackness of darkness forever," thickly enveloped her spirit! I returned to her room, resolving to make another, perhaps the last, effort to snatch her brand from the burning; over whose lake she was suspended by the attenuated and breaking thread of life. 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