

The Watchman.

"I HAVE SET WATCHMEN UPON THY WALLS O! JERUSALEM THAT SHALL NEVER HOLD THEIR PEACE, DAY NOR NIGHT."

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Poetry.

BETHANY.

BY CAROLINE MAY.

As we ponder o'er the story
Of the love, and grief, and glory,
That was shown to sinners, when
Jesus Christ abode with men;
As His sacred steps we trace,
Travelling from place to place,
Often do we find that He
Trod the path to Bethany.

At the foot of Olivet,
(Haunt of all the favorite;)
Near the garden where He prayed
For His hidden Father's aid;
Freshened by the breeze that blew
From the mount and garden too;
Stood, in calm serenity,
Quiet, hallowed Bethany.

There it was, abased for sin,
Drooping Mary Magdalen,
Shed upon the Saviour's feet,
Heart-warm tears and ointment sweet;
And the tenderest words we know,
Strong to soothe the repentant wo,
And rebuke the Pharisee,
Jesus spake at Bethany.

Lazarus and his sisters, there,
Martha kind, though full of care,
And the meek forgiven Mary,
Proved the love that cannot vary;
Gladness filled each glowing breast,
When the Master was their guest,
For His friendship full and free,
Blessed their home at Bethany.

There, the sisters' faith to try,
Lazarus was doomed to die,
That their friend, and guest, and Lord,
Might be known the Son of God.
Alibiter of life and death,
He restored the dead man's breath,
And displayed His deity
To the Jews at Bethany.

And when He himself had risen
From His angel-guarded prison,
Sufferings past, and glory nigh,
Ere He would ascend on high,
He led forth to that dear spot
His loved band, not one forgot,
And with last fond blessings, He
Parted there—at Bethany.

So—when burdened sore by sin;
Or when wounded deep within,
By the coldness of some friend,
Who loves not "unto the end;"
Or when true hearts cease to beat;
There we may find solace sweet,
Pardon, peace, and love, if we
Go with Christ to Bethany.

Miscellany.

THE BIBLE vs. SLAVERY.

Knowledge is always the precursor of freedom, and before its powerful influence, slavery of every description must fall prostrate in the dust. So long as men remain ignorant of their own degradation, and are unable to draw a line of demarcation between the position which they and their more enlightened neighbours occupy in the wilderness of life, they are at least contented and partially happy. In such a case ignorance is said to be bliss; but man, the lord of creation, the most noble specimen of the Creator's handy work, is, in that situation, placed scarcely one remove above the beasts of the field. To himself he is an unfathomable mystery; to all around him, an object not of pity, but of contempt. From the blessings of even a limited education he is forever debarred, and his mind is never suffered to expand beyond that which may justly be termed natural instinct. Such, it is well known, is the deplorable situation of the unfortunate Africans whom our American neighbors retain in bondage, and it is evident from the subjoined extract, that however much the Yankees may boast of the blessings of freedom, the ennobling power of knowledge, and the superiority of their Republican Institutions, their conduct with respect to the education of their slave population would disgrace the most benighted nation on the face of the earth.

They seem to be afraid that if the mind of the slave was cultivated, or even partially enlightened, he would become dissatisfied with his situation, and very probably burst the bonds with which he is surrounded. Viewing the matter in a political light, we have no doubt that such would be the case, especially in a Republican country, where all

men are said to be free and equal; but according to the manner in which it is brought before us in the following presentation, the slave-holders had nothing to fear from the knowledge sought to be imparted.

A knowledge of the Scriptures may make men better husbands, better fathers, or more useful members of society, but it will not render them forgetful of the duties which they owe to their fellow men, nor implant the seeds of discord or discontent within their bosoms. By obtaining this knowledge the slave discovers treasures which before were hidden from his eyes, he becomes acquainted with the true nature of the relationship between himself and his divine master, but he finds nothing there to teach him disobedience to his earthly owner, nor to urge him to break the compact which has been entered into for his bodily service while he remains in the world. Why then the inhuman slave owners place a veto upon the reading of the Scriptures, or prohibit their *chateaux* from feasting their minds upon the truths of divine revelation? Such, however, seems to be their invariable practice, but the law which enables them to do so, will, while it remains un repealed, be an imperishable stain upon the escutcheon of the United States.

Will it be believed in England, or in any part of civilized Europe, that the "free and enlightened" inhabitants of the State of Virginia, assembled in the capacity of Grand Jurors, would so far forget their duty as men and Christians as to declare upon oath that the teaching of the holy scriptures by one human being to another was a "pernicious example," and "to the great displeasure of Almighty God?" Yet incredible as it may appear, and inconsistent with the boasted character of the nation and state in which the presentment was made, it is a fact which admits of no contradiction. We need not weary our readers with a lengthened comment, the indictment speaks for itself, and will be viewed according to its deserts by every lover of truth and justice:—

"WOOD COUNTY, to wit:—The Grand Jurors empanelled and sworn to enquire of offences committed in the body of said county, on their oath present: That Martha Christian, late of said county, being an evil-disposed person, on the fourth day of July, in the year of our blessed Lord one thousand eight hundred and forty seven, at Righteous Ridge, in said county, not having the fear of God before her eyes, but moved and instigated by the Devil, wickedly, maliciously, and feloniously, did teach a certain black and negro woman, named Rebecca, alias Black Beck, to read, in the Bible, to the great displeasure of Almighty God, to the pernicious example of others in like case offending, contrary to the form of the statute in such case made and provided, and against the peace and dignity of the Commonwealth of Virginia."

Martha was tried and duly convicted of this heinous offence of teaching the Scriptures "to the great displeasure of Almighty God," and sentenced by the humane Judge, who presided during the case, to ten years in the Penitentiary!

DOING AND DREAMING.

In our multifarious correspondence there is a class of letters capable of more extended application than the writers imagine. These letters are confidential communications, generally from young men discontented with their position in life, and anxious for advice as to how they may contrive to emerge into circumstances better adapted to their taste and genius. Almost all of them state frankly their reason why they have been induced in this emergency to address themselves to the "Journal;" and that reason is, that it is the Journal which has touched with unwonted light "the sleeping images of things," which has stirred up their ideas from the bottom, and imparted a restlessness to their minds that seeks to relieve itself in some new course of action. Such, however, is not declared to be the effect of the mere expansion of mind, brought about through the agency of literature; it refers more particularly to the authentic pictures we delight to give of the successful strugglers of merit, and the rise of lofty and heroic spirits into power and fame, in spite of the adverse circumstances of fortune. Musing on these histories, warmed into generous enthusiasm, and stirred with emulative ardour, our inexperienced readers mistake the vague and romantic yearnings of youth for the throes of genius, and fancy that all they want to arrive at distinction is to be set upon the path.

Now we are not opposed to a moderate indulgence of the imagination; we think, on the contrary, that it tends to good. The inner life of a man is as important as his outer life; and the former, like the latter, must have its moments of unending and recreation. Our dreams of fame may give birth, when the proper circumstances arrive, to action calculated to assist in realizing them;

and, in the meantime, they serve, at odd moments, to relieve, as well as amuse, and to float the free spirit above the cares and vulgarities of life. But the danger is, that this may go too far; that the dreamer may conceive a distaste or contempt for his ordinary avocations; and that, in fancying future greatness, he may neglect the sources of present comfort and respectability. It is, therefore, worth while to consider whether the vague aspirations alluded to afford any evidence of our being really superior to our present employment, and calculated to shine in another.

What has been the course of those remarkable persons who have risen from poverty and obscurity to the cynosure of the world? Did their minds wander about in search of suitable employment? Did they feel an indistinct consciousness that they could do something if they only knew what it was? Did they ask their way of the passers-by to the temple of fame or fortune? No such thing. They did their appointed work, not only without aid and without a question, but in defiance of remonstrance and opposition. If mechanics, they converted into magical rods the humblest tools of the humblest trades; if philosophers, the phenomena of nature were as open to them in a hovel as in a palace; if poets they poured forth their golden songs from the garret or the plough-tail.

"They lisped in numbers, for the numbers came."

It would seem, in fact, that vagueness and uncertainty are indications of a want of power, and that the very circumstance of a man's asking for advice shows his inability to act upon it.

Let us look into literature for an illustration of what we mean. The profession is thronged by individuals who have no chance, and never had a chance, of success. How does this come about? Through dreaming. They mistook sympathy for talent, the power to admire for the power to create, and plunged madly into a business for which they were prepared by no study, and qualified by no natural gifts. The history of persons destined to succeed in literature is different.— Their efforts come from them, as it were unawares. Not fully, timidly, they cast their bread upon the waters, ignorant of the process it will undergo, and incredulous of the form in which it will return to them. But it does return; and in a form which makes their hearts beat and their eyes dazzle—Money! They care not for money abstractedly; but in this case it gives them assurance that the coinage of their brain bears a distinct value in the estimation of their fellow-men. God bless that first guinea! No after-fortune can compare with it. The most intellectual of us all may sink gradually into the peddling, shopkeeping propensities of a common man; but in the midst of the very basest part of life we return proudly—and some to the recollection of our first guinea!

It is rare, as Sir Walter Scott has observed, should be used as a staff, not as a crutch. Remarkably few are able to make it the sole means of a respectable livelihood. At the very least, no rational person would embark in literature as a profession without having previously ascertained whether he had the power to live by it. With definite and manly plans we have of course no fault to find—let such be formed, and receive due examination; but what we allude to is that unsettled cloudy state of the mind which visits us for the present without having any influence upon the future. This state of the mind is more common and more fatal in youth than is usually supposed; and it is not the less so from its being induced by a mere mistake, which confounds the capability of doing with the habit of dreaming.

Again, we find from the history of men who have risen from obscurity to eminence, that, although they may be in the phrase, "the architects of their own fortunes," they are not the contrivers of those circumstances which have placed them in the way of fortune. While apparently preparing for what is to come, they are in reality merely following the bent of their own inclinations, till they are sucked, either gradually or suddenly, as it may happen, into the current of events.— This another lesson for dreamers. Things should be allowed to come about naturally. There should be patient submission to circumstances; but let the best be made of them, and the rest will follow. If young persons have a consciousness of any state or talent of a desirable kind, let them cultivate it quietly till the proper opportunity comes, and they can trust to it for their advancement in the world. A remarkable instance may here be mentioned, of the sort of fatality which governs the struggling genius. There was once a village lad whose name was Nicolas, and whose dream was Rome. This was no idle dream with him, for he painted from his childhood. He would paint—he could not help it; and at Paris, to which he found his way, that he might look at better pictures than he could see at home, he copied some engravings from Raphael which gave a still firmer bent to his genius. A

gentleman who admired the arts took him with him to Polton, from which he returned moneyless, painting his way as he went along to Paris. He became unwell, and went home to his native place—the village of Andeli on the Seine—and dreamed of Rome as he lay on his sick bed. When he got better, he actually set out for Rome, and painted his way as far as Florence; but not a step could he get beyond that, and he returned almost in despair to Paris. Here at length he found a patron, who encouraged him to turn his face once more towards Italy; and in 1624 he did arrive at Rome. The result is thus told:—"Here Nicolas lived for a long time, miserably poor but supremely happy; starving his body, and banqueting his mind. He fell in with a sculptor called Francois Lamant, whose circumstances were similar to his own, and these two lived and labored in a corner together, surrounded by dreams and monuments of genius, and stealing out every now and then to sell their works for any pittance that ignorance would bid or avarice afford. But the pictures of Nicolas at length began to attract attention; and the humble artist was drawn from his solitude.— This change of fortune went on; for although poverty or envy may retard the rise of genius for a time, when once risen, any attempt to repress it, however powerful, is like opposing a tempest with a fan. Every tongue was now busy with the young painter's name; every eye was fixed upon his face or his works; all Rome was shaken with his fame. This was soon told at Paris, and he who on former occasions had travelled thither a lonely, friendless, half-starving youth, was led to the capital of France in triumph, and overwhelmed by Cardinal Richelieu and the king with honors and distinctions. After the minister's death, he returned to Rome and died in the seventy-first year of his age, leaving the illustrious name of Nicolas Pous-sin a rich and glorious legacy to his country."

It occasionally happens that the present business of our clients is of a nature which they think beneath their means, and obstructive of their aspirations. In a state of incipient rebellion against their present employment, they long to be something else. A young draper heart-sick of the counter, asks our advice—a teacher in a country school is dying to be a man of letters. We have no patience with these dreamers. Why will they not let things take their course? Earnest all the time in their respective callings, these can be no objection to their looking out for opportunities of advancement. For our part we should like as well as anybody to better our condition; and indeed sometimes when we see public affairs going wrong, we have a wonderful notion of a seat in the cabinet? But after all, as their must be a variety of employments, and people to fill them, the best way to manage is for each of us to deserve promotion, and hold fast to what we have got till we get something better. It is not the employment that makes us respectable, but our conduct in it. A footman on the stage, whose sole business is to deliver a message, has not a very dignified occupation; but nevertheless we expect him to get through it with intelligence and propriety; and if he fails to do so, from any notion that the part is beneath him, he becomes at once an object of indignation or contempt. This footman may be author of the piece, or he may be capable of writing a better one; but the fact has nothing to do with his personation of the character which is his actual share of the performance.

And this brings us to a point at which our homily may conclude. The supposed capabilities of a man for another employment should never have the effect of making him despise or neglect his present one, however humble it may be. If it is worth our while to do a thing at all, it is surely worth our while to do it well. If there may be false shame on the subject, it ought to be banished by the reflection, that there are vast numbers of men of worth and talent superior to ours laboring, and laboring cheerfully, at still meaner employments. Besides, it should ever be borne in mind that, even in comparatively obscure situations in life, there may be, and is, the greatest earthly happiness. By a due culture of the faculties, by refining the sentiments, a common blacksmith may enjoy a satisfaction of mind equal to that of the greatest man in the parish. One who values genius merely as means of the advancement in the world, cannot know or feel what genius is. Yet on this false estimate are based a great proportion of the dreams which disturb the existence and fritter away the energies of youth. It is not spiritual, but temporal glory for which the common visionary pants; it is not the souls of men he desires to take captive, but merely their pockets; the paradise which opens to his mind's eye beyond the counter is composed of fine houses, &c., The meaness of such aspirations enables us to say, without compunction, that he who indulges them no more possesses the intellectual capabilities he fancies, than he is likely to enjoy the substantial rewards of industry and perseverance.