

For the Colonial Churchman.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

"While from the Serpent's wounds we pine,  
Saviour! to Thee we turn, and drink anew  
Thy healing might."

Among the remarkable types of Christ crucified, the lifting up of the brazen Serpent by Moses in the wilderness is preeminent. We find the inspired account of this prefiguration of our blessed Saviour recorded in Numbers, 21st chapter, and spiritualized and applied by Him, in 3 John, 14, 15. Upwards of 1400 years before our Saviour was made flesh, this type spake movingly and plainly of Him to the soul of the believing Israelite.

Seven times had that rebellious people mutinied against their leader, and as often had they been warned by awful threatenings, or scourged by divine punishment. They now meet with difficulties in their journey, and forgetting that He who permitted dangers to approach, could also carry them through in safety; they complain of the very manna which fell from heaven.

God himself avenged his own honour: and although the serpents of the wilderness had proved to his chosen people harmless and stingless, yet now their harm is made more deadly; their stings piercing and fiery. "Now the people," writes Bishop Hall, "seek to Moses unbidden. It were a pity men should want affliction, since it sends them to their prayers and confessions. All the persuasions of Moses could not do that which the serpents have done for him. O God! Thou seest how necessary it is that we should be strong sometimes, else we should run wild, and never come to a sound humiliation. We should never seek Thee if Thy hand did not find us out."

The children of Israel spake not only against God, but against Moses; but at once "he prayed for them." True type of Christ who prayed for his persecutors and for his fainting disciples. "I pray for them," 14 John 9. In answer to the prayer of the prophet, God directed him to lift up a brazen Serpent on high, so that all might behold it. In obedience to the promise, such of the wounded as looked thereon, straight were cured; and, by God's blessing on the means, ceased to die. But the words of scripture are ever the best. "And it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." We must not doubt but that while their wounded bodies thus were healed, their souls were strengthened by faith. "O Saviour, it is to Thee we must look, and be cured. Thou art for our nourishment, our refreshing, our cure; as hereafter, so even now, all in all!"

I now, Messrs. Editors, endeavour to present the leading features of this lively type, and of its gracious fulfilment, trusting that your readers may humbly and prayerfully fill up, in their own minds, this scanty outline.

TYPE.

The serpents were fiery, inflaming the body, and causing torment to all bitten by them.

The brazen serpent was lifted up before the numerous people, then journeying thro' the wilderness. Those even at the outermost parts of the camp might look on and be healed.

To the few devoid of humility and faith and resorting to merely human reason, this mode of cure must have appeared quite inadequate to the promised cure.

The Hebrew word translated "pole," means "a banner, or ensign."

The Israelite looking to the serpent as the instrument for his cure, must first have felt the need of that cure.

SIGNIFICATION.

Satan is the old serpent; sin is his biting; it is as the gall of asps; biteth like an arrow.

"So was the Son of Man lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish." 3 John. All are invited to look with faith on a crucified Saviour, and to be saved.

Salvation by Jesus Christ was, to the great majority of the Jews, a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness, and not a most merciful means of sure refuge.

Christ is declared by the Spirit of Inspiration, 11 Is. 10, to be "an ensign for the people."

By faith we must look unto Jesus, 12 Heb. 2, and thus be saved, 47 Is. 22. We must feel our helplessness, as well as His power and sufficiency.

SIGNA.

October 20th.

"Truth is strange—stranger than fiction." If the following startling tale be true, well might the poet say so—It is from the pen of a correspondent:—

STRANGE OCCURRENCE.

In the month of June, 1835, upon the account reaching Youghal that Mr. John O'Connell was declared the sitting member for that borough by a committee, of the House of Commons, the priest ordered a general illumination. One house in Youghal, was above all the others, conspicuous for the splendour and variety of its light, and the eager multitude stopped to admire and to praise the fair lady of the mansion who sat within, gorgeously and beautifully arrayed, in full view of the passing throng. But one object arrested the attention of all. It was apparently human, stretched upon a low sofa in the front dining room, dressed in all the sombre guise of death, and partly covered with a pall—four large candles burned upon each side of the body, and two at the head and two at the feet. Many were invited to enter and view the corpse, wondering how so much joy could dwell in a place where death had just visited, when lo; the mystery was explained. The fair lady of the house, to give full vent to her patriotic feelings, had dressed up a figure to represent Mr. T. B. C. Symth, the defeated candidate, and this figure she waked as before described. Mr. Symth, she said, was politically dead, and there he lay. Shortly after this tragic event, the leading agitator of the borough took this fair lady for "better or worse," and she became Mrs. ——. Amid the rejoicings generally attendant upon this event, Mrs. —'s patriotism was the theme of panegyric, and it may be well believed that even at the wedding the wake was uppermost in the minds of the guests—at least it was often talked about. Time passed by, and found Mrs. — in the enjoyment of an honest independence, happy as the day was long in the society of her husband, whose agitating propensities she took good care should not slumber. In August, 1837, another election came on—the man of her choice (Howard) is about being returned—that day, she proposes, shall be a day of joy—the lights are prepared to illuminate; she, herself, is to go forth to witness the triumph—when fate severs the thread of her own existence, and the very hour that witnessed Mr. Howard's return, found Mrs. — a lifeless corpse. Oh! it is awful to dwell on the suddenness of that departure. It cannot be thought upon without bringing to mind how, upon the day of a former victory, this inanimate body, had mocked that death which now, even in the hour of triumph, has overtaken herself. When the news of the death of this lady spread abroad, a universal sympathy was felt by the peaceful crowd. The leaders of the movement forbid the notes of joy which were in preparation to be sung, and the loud din of the exulting multitude was hushed into a calm. —Dublin Record.

"One leak will sink a ship, and one sin will destroy a sinner. He that forgetteth his friend is ungrateful to him; but he that forgets his Saviour is unmerciful to himself. He that lives in sin and looks for happiness hereafter, is like him that soweth cockle and thinks to fill his barn with wheat and barley. If a man would live well, let him fetch his last day to him, and make it always his companion. Whispering and change of thoughts prove that sin is in the world. If the world that God sets light by, be so counted a thing of that worth by man, what is heaven that God commended? If the life that is attended with so many troubles is so loth to be let go by us, what is the life above? Every body will cry up the goodness of man, but who is there that is affected as he should be by the goodness of God? We seldom sit down to meat, but we eat and leave; so there is in Jesus Christ more merit and righteousness than the whole world has need of."—Bunyan.

Forms of Prayer.—Calvin used a form of prayer; and composed one for the Sunday service, which was afterwards established at Geneva. BEZA.

Those persons expect too much from the spirit in our day, who wait for an inclination to pray from immediate dictates of the Spirit of God. WARRA.

Forms of prayer are used by nineteen-twentieths of the Christian church.

knew it not, as containing the "pearl of great price." But though I had thus far lightened myself, the money still weighed heavily, yet being unwilling to part with it, I tried all my strength, and continued swimming. After some time, and when I must have made considerable way, I turned to see whether my Bible was in sight. I could not suppose it possible, for I thought it must have sunk into the waters; but to my great surprise, I found it borne up by the wave, and now close to my shoulder! My very heart thrilled with joy; I seized my precious book, and could not help crying out, "Oh my Bible! so you would not leave me, though I cast you away; well then, come what will, you and I will never part." Gladly did I put it in my jacket, and then emptied my pockets of my money. At length I reached a rock; and there as I rested my weary limbs, and refreshed myself with a few crumbs of soaked biscuit which I found in my pocket, I opened my Bible. The words, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little;" "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him," were the first that met the eye. As I laid myself upon my rocky bed, and closed my eyes, these words still sounded in my ears. Pinched with cold and hunger, my tongue burning with thirst, I feared that I was doomed even now to perish under the wrath of an offended God. In my distress I called upon the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me out of all my troubles. After passing two long days upon the rock, to my great joy a ship hove in sight, homeward bound to Liverpool. Oh with what overwhelming anxiety did I watch its coming. I exerted all my strength to wave my handkerchief. Happily it was perceived. A boat was immediately sent off, and I was taken on board the vessel. I soon regained my strength, and with a grateful heart renewed my vows to consecrate my life, so providentially preserved, to my heavenly Father; and may he grant me that grace and strength which is needful for me.—Sunday School Teacher.

F A B L E.—THE DISCONTENTED ASS.

A certain Ass always grumbled at his condition.—In the winter he complained of the bitter cold, and wished that spring would come. When spring came there was work to be done, and Jack was forced to work from morning to night. This he did not like, for he was idle. He wished for summer; summer came; and then he was too hot; and flies teased him sadly. He thought he should be better in autumn, but in autumn he had to carry to market baskets loaded with apples, and pears, and potatoes. He could hardly find time to sleep. "Ah," said he, "what a fool I was to dislike winter; that was best after all; for then I could rest idle in my shed, and do nothing all day long." This same old ass belonged first to a gardener, who carried greens to market. "Ah," he said, "how hard it is that I should be forced to rise so early, and trudge to market every day!" He next went to a currier, then he had to carry skins, and he could not bear the smell. At last he was taken by a coalman. His load was heavier than before, and his master often beat him. "I was a fool," said he, "to leave my first master; then I often got a meal of nice greens, but now I get nothing but blows.

In every condition there is good and evil. A wise man will make the best of his lot, and not complain. Discontented people are never happy; and those who change often, mostly change from bad to worse.—Gos. Mess.

Philosophy and Religion.—Philosophy is a fire of rotten sticks flickering in a desert, with all around cold and dark. Religion is the glorious sun, cheering and illumining universally.—Walker's Original.

Maxims.—Religion is the best armor in the world, but the worst cloak.

The hypocrite is never so far from being a true Christian, as when he looks the most like one.

It is always term-time in the court of conscience.

We may be as good as we please, says Barrow, if we please to be good.

Sects and sectaries are the caricatures of pure, primitive, and undebilitated religion.