

But dear young friends, our main design in addressing you is, to call your attention to the things of eternity. If you should be careful to learn well what is to be of use to you for a few years, or even the whole of your life, how much more should you be careful to know the things that will concern your best interests for ever. If you were sure that your doing some particular crime would bring upon you shame and disgrace, and punishment for a week or a year, would you not be on your guard not to commit that offence?—And would you not shun the society of those who did such things? Again, if you knew that a course of obedience to the wishes of a parent or friend, would bring you respect and honour, and suitable rewards all your days, would you not diligently seek to please that parent or friend? We feel assured you would. That must be a hardened and a wicked child, whom neither the fear of shame and punishment, the hope of honour and respect, nor love to parents and friends, could deter from evil. Just reflect for a little on eternity. It will have no end. When we have counted the longest line of figures that we can enumerate and supposed each one to be thousands of years, these many years would take nothing from eternity.—Eternity will be forever beginning, but never becoming shorter. God is eternal—He had no beginning, and will have no end. You too have souls that will live forever—happy in heaven or miserable in hell, and does it not deeply concern you to gain the one and avoid the other? The Bible which teaches us all we know aright of God and of ourselves, tells us that God is holy and just and good; that all mankind, young and old, are sinners, and as such can neither love God nor be beloved of Him. We need not go far for proof of our sinfulness. How often do we see it even in very young persons! in their wilfulness, disobedience to parents, unkindness to others, using bad words, not speaking the truth, wasting precious time, profaning God's name and His holy day, and in many other ways breaking His law. If we knew nothing more of God than this, we would all be shut up to despair. But the Bible tells of God's love and mercy. It tells us of Jesus Christ the Eternal Son of God, who is a great Saviour, able and willing to save the greatest sinner, and who is inviting sinners, young and old, to come unto Him that they may be saved. It is worthy of notice, how pressing His calls are to the young—Ps. xxxiv. 11; Matt. xix. 14; Mark x. 4; Luke xviii. 16; Prov. viii. 17—32. Turn up these passages in your Bibles. There is much danger in putting off repentance, Prov. xxix. 1; Isaiah lv. 6; Jer. xiv. 10; Micah iii. 4; Zech. vii. 13; Heb. iii. 13; and xii. 17. We do not know that we may ever have mercy offered to us again.—Death may be very near, even to the youngest child who may read this, or hear it read. Now is the proper time to go to the Saviour. He has promised the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. He has promised a new heart also. He will work such a complete change in all who accept His mercy, as to cause them to hate whatever is evil, and to love Him and all who are His.

Dear young readers, we would exhort you to go to the Lord Jesus Christ for all the grace you

need. God, the Father, has given Him all power in heaven and in earth. In Him all fulness dwells. He said, when on earth, suffer little children to come unto me. He is by His own word, and by the lips of parents, teachers, and ministers saying the same thing to every one of you. Think not that it is a gloomy, cheerless thing to be a child of God. You will lose nothing that is worth having, by giving yourselves to Him. You will gain all that can do you good. Religion will take away no innocent enjoyment. It is itself the only true enjoyment. Who that is every moment in danger of falling into a lake of fire and brimstone, could really be happy? Those only who have been saved from that dangerous condition, can rejoice with joy unspeakable.

Perhaps all of you have been taught about God and Christ, about your own sinfulness, and about heaven and hell. These things may have been so often repeated to some of you, that you almost cease to be affected by them. When we began to write, we intended to tell you about poor heathens who never heard these things—whose gods are idols of wood and stone, yes, and clay—worthless things that you would not take for toys; but we have just got a nice little book, with an account of an interesting people, which we believe will please you.

On some large maps you will see a small island in the Atlantic, 140 miles west of the mainland of Scotland. It is about three miles long, and perhaps two miles broad. It is separated by a rocky coast and a stormy ocean from the rest of the world. There are 109 people on the Island, who rarely see the face of a stranger. The name of the Island is

ST. KILDA.

The Free Church Schooner, *Breadalbane*, visited the island last summer. One of the party who went to preach to the poor people, gives the following account:—

"Before going there, we had fancied, from what we had heard of the place, that it was a mere rock, of no very great size, rising suddenly out of the water, and presenting a frowning wall of inaccessible cliff on every side. What, then, was our surprise, on going upon deck on Sabbath morning, the first morning after our arrival, to behold the scene. A spacious and lovely bay, sheltered from the wind on every side but one, and at the head of the bay three noble hills, clad with verdure to their tops. Such was the picture that met our astonished gaze. Still it must be remembered that it is one thing to see St. Kilda in a calm summer's day, and another to see it when lashed by the fury of a winter's storm.

"The highest hill is 1500-feet above the level of the sea; a great height, when the size of the island is considered, and when it is remembered that the western side of it rises perpendicularly from the water's edge, till within a few feet of the summit. The singular appearance of the cottages of the inhabitants is the first thing that arrests the attention of a stranger. They are evidently built with the view of braving storms, such as few cottages on the mainland are exposed to. Their form is oval; the walls are very low and massive; the doors and windows small, and the thatched roof, which springs not from the outer, but the inner edge of the wall, is rounded, and held down by ropes, to which heavy stones are attached. Accordingly, when seen from a little distance, straggling in the form of an irregular crescent, round the head of the bay, they look as like a row of bee hives as can well be conceived. Round their cottages lie their little patches of oats and potatoes, the only cultivated land on the island; and a little to the right may be seen the

church and manse. Every other side of the island is inaccessible. In some places the rocks rise to a stupendous height, and assume the most grotesque and fantastic form. They are the habitation of innumerable multitudes of sea fowl, which prey upon the fish with which the sea abounds. When they are disturbed, they rise in swarms so numerous as almost to darken the air; and the wild babel of their discordant cries can be compared to nothing but the dismissing of a large school for the summer holidays, when every little happy urchin is rending the air with his shrill vociferation.

"But it is time now to say something of the people who inhabit this remote and rocky island of the ocean. They are low in stature, and of a fair complexion; and though a little uncouth in their manners, one could tell from their countenances that they were a highly intelligent race. The only repulsive thing about them is the strong oily smell of feathers, from which their clothes and cottages are never free. This arises from the nature of their occupation, which is the catching of wild sea fowl, on the flesh of which they mainly subsist, while out of the feathers they pay their rent. This way of gaining a livelihood is often a perilous one. Frequently when in search of nests, they will clamber up precipices which it would make any ordinary head giddy to look at, and where if they but lost their balance or missed a step, that moment they would be in eternity. We saw one pretty, modest looking boy, whose father had fallen over the rocks last year, and who was therefore obliged, for the support of himself and his mother, to follow the same hazardous employment. We asked him if he was not afraid when he went to look for the birds. Poor little fellow! the tears gushed into his eyes as he thought of aim who was gone, and answered,—"Yes, very much afraid."

"The late Dr Macdonald, Ferintosh, whose recent death so many thousands have reason to bewail, visited them years ago, and proclaimed the gospel among them. They have all accordingly a most tender regard for his memory, and were affected even to tears when the circumstances of his death and funeral were told them. They are, without a single exception, devotedly attached to the Free Church; but since the Disruption they have had no minister among them to care for their souls. They have, however, two excellent elders, men of piety and prudence, who conduct their Sabbath meeting and watch over their spiritual welfare. Every one has a Bible, and can read it; and the eagerness which they manifested to hear the gospel preached, might well put to shame the carelessness of those who are far more highly favoured. While we were on the island the sacrament of the Lord's supper was dispensed, an event which had not taken place for at least six years before. And certainly we never witnessed a more solemn and affecting scene. During the sermon, there was the deepest attention and the utmost stillness, broken only by an occasional half-suppressed sigh; but when the elements were brought forward, and the communicants had taken their seats at the table, their feelings quite overpowered them. Some were sobbing in silence; others wept aloud; and one poor woman was so much overcome that she had to be removed from the table till she became more calm. It was an occasion on which there is reason to hope many old impressions were revived, and some new ones made. It was, we believe, the doing of the Lord, and marvellous in our eyes.

"Next day we had to leave the island, and bid its interesting inhabitants farewell. Many of them wept at parting; and the feeling which they all manifested, showed that they were warm-hearted people, and that they valued the gospel and its ordinances highly. We left them not without regret; breathing in their behalf the fervent prayer, that in the absence of an earthly shepherd, He that neither slumbereth nor sleepeth would himself be their Shepherd, and preserve their souls."