

YOUTH'S COMPANION.

For the Colonial Churchman.

SKETCHES OF SCRIPTURE CHARACTERS.

No. 3.

The last selection of Scripture Characters was, as you will recollect my youthful readers, from among those of the Old Testament. The little work whence I selected them, containing none from the New Testament, I have composed the following for your perusal. The language and sentiments of the Holy Scriptures are so sublime and powerful, that its blessed contents, we might suppose, would rarely be sought clothed in any other dress. If you wish to see how numerous are the passages which urge our constant and humbly study of them, refer to 5 John, 28. 15 Rom. 4. 85 Ps. 8. 119 Ps. 66. 20 Acts 32 — 6 Deut. 6.

MARY MAGDALENE AT THE SEPULCHRE.

20 John, 11 to 14.

The present verses inform us that the penitent Peter and the well-beloved John, had come with Mary Magdalene, to the sepulchre of their Saviour. Oh! that he may be ours also! She wept, but not in inactive repining.—She followed on to know the Lord, realizing the promise, 'then shall ye know'—8 Hos. 2:3. While she was eagerly seeking to see and remove the body of our Lord, He himself appeared. "Thus Christ doth for his prayerful people more than they are able to ask or think." He is ever near them that are of a broken heart. Christ made himself known to Mary, by calling her by name: to us he declares himself by applying his holy word and ordinances to the soul of the individual himself.

When faithful Mary mourned beside the grave
Of Him who came the penitent to save,—
The welcome sweetness of one brief word stole
On her glad ears, entering her inmost soul.
"Mary!" in well-known voice our Saviour saith—
She knew him then—the Conqueror of Death?
May I, with equal faith, our Saviour see,
Gain over Death, the matchless Victory!

ST. PAUL'S DEPARTURE FROM TYRE.

21 Acts, 1 to 7.

Having travelled among the Gentiles, we now find St. Paul turning towards Jerusalem. His chief and anxious inquiry in reaching Tyre was, if there was there any disciples of Jesus, and finding "some there, he tarried seven days." Let us also endeavour to do good wherever the providence of God may direct our steps, recollecting that "wherever we meet with true disciples, either they may benefit us, or we them.

This blessed acquaintance of one week, induced the disciples to "bring the apostle on his way, with their wives and children, and they knelt down on the shore and prayed." Blessed task! to sanctify our trials with prayer.—The sky above; the sea shore beneath, and the deep sea before them—here was a fitting temple made by God's own hand.

His temple is all space:
His altar—earth—air—skies.

When prayer from earthly temple upward flies
Borne by the wings of Faith, to God's own skies,
Angels rejoice, but value not the more.
Than when we kneel and pray e'en on the sandy shore.
Tempest-tost sailor on the troubled main,
Have you not felt your prayers are not in vain?
Prayer should be *always* made and every where,*
No spot so mean whence God disdains to hear.
Where'er the mighty mountain shades appear,
In vale or on the sea, God hears the faithful prayer:
Free service of the heart, to Him is all in all—
Oh! gladsome sight, when friends and wives and all
Gladly went forth to pray with holy Paul.
Oh! may our thoughts daily and evermore:
Be with our God—in Church—at home—or on the
ocean shore!

THE SISTERS AND LAZARUS.

Read 11 John, 41.

* 55 Ps. 17. 2 Luke 37. 1 Tim. 5. 5.

The passage seems too sublime to be offered in other words than those of the evangelist.

Borne up with hope, the sisters tend the bed
Of him who soon is numbered with the dead.
Believers hath claims on him who came to heal,
And make the sorrowful His mercy feel.
Two precious days He stayed, to guide the while
The faithful sisters and their cares beguile.
Christ left—returned—when Martha ran to meet—
But Mary—trusting—fell humbly at his feet;
E'en "Jesus wept," and soon the strong words
spoke—

"Lazarus, come forth."—then did the dead awake.
May the same power enter my inmost soul
Restrain my wandering heart—my thoughts and will
control!

SIGMA.

November, 1836.

From the Christian Witness.

Increase of piety in the Church of England.—We have lately been favoured with the perusal of a letter from a distinguished and evangelical divine of this Church, addressed to the Rev. Dr. M—, and have obtained permission to make a few extracts, which we think will prove interesting to our readers. The writer has charge of one of the largest parish churches in England, and is engaged in active and laborious parish duties. The letter is dated August 25th, 1836.

"Regarding the state of things in connexion with religion in this land, you are doubtless as fully informed as our-selves; and perhaps, across the Atlantic, can view the agitations into which we have been thrown, with a more dispassionate eye than we who are living in the scene of conflict.

For my own part, whilst deeply regretting the course which the great body of our Dissenting brethren have pursued in forming such decided allegiance with the Papists, Socinians, and infidels in opposition to the Church of England, I am at the same time convinced that our Church is daily rousing herself to a more holy and spiritual attitude. Her clergy are more zealous, active, devoted, and prayerful, in the discharge of their important duties: and the Lord is most manifestly rendering her the great instrument of real blessing to the members of his family in this country. The increase from year to year of devoted, spiritually-minded young men to the ranks of the clergy, is a most striking fact, which her bitterest enemies cannot deny; and her pulpits are increasingly found through the length and breadth of the land, to be resounding with the same blessed truths as are proclaimed from her reading desks. In these things, our Episcopalian brethren across the Atlantic will, I am sure, greatly rejoice.

"That some alterations are justly called for, cannot be denied; and it is much to be regretted that our Hierarchy have so long opposed all change. Modifications of some of her external matters, such as tithes,—a better division of the revenues and duties for our Bishops,—are now carrying into execution. So far well; but that of which we most stand in need, viz. restoration of Church discipline, is a point which still seems very far removed.

"The spirit of the age is agitation, division and insubordination; but out of all these evils, the great Head of the Church will, I am persuaded, cause some benefits to flow; and although there is a need be that offences come, and wo is unto him through whom they come, yet all things work together for good to them that love God.

"Our highly esteemed friend, Dr. Wilson, is labouring with much blessing in India; and, through God's mercy, he has, in Dr. Corrie, a most valuable fellow labourer, at Madras. And I rejoice truly, to say, that Dr. Carr, who is just appointed Bishop of Bombay, is like-minded with them. Thus our Church in India will, we may hope and believe, be greatly blessed in having placed there three Bishops who love the truth, and whose main desires are, to glorify God in their important spheres of duty."

Forget not in all your plans and operations that there are two worlds.

For the Colonial Churchman.

THE DYING TESTIMONY OF

Believers. (No. 2.) Unbelievers.

"I accustom myself." "Make no tarrying to turn writes the pious Bradford, unto the Lord, and put not to muse on Death now and off from day to day; for suddenly, the better to be prepared, his wrath shall come, and in the day of vengeance Simeon desired to be loosed, he shall destroy thee."—Eccles. saying 'Dismiss, or loose me, O Lord!'"

The late Bishop Ryder said, shortly before his lamented death—"Others may praise me, and speak of what I have done; but remember, I look upon my best services as nothing, and worse than nothing,—and that I desire to cast myself as a poor sinner at the foot of the Cross."

Jerome of Prague, the associate of Huss in the work of reformation, followed him to the stake in a few months. Arrived at the place, he knelt down and commended himself to God in nearly the same words as Huss did. The whole deportment of this faithful minister of Christ exhibited unshaken courage, and at the same time, holy submission to God's will. When the executioner was about to kindle the fire before him, he said, "Bring thy torch hither; do thine office before my face: had I feared death, I might have avoided it." As the faggots began to blaze, he commenced singing a psalm in a loud voice, until at length he was suffocated in the flames.

The character of Luther, the great Reformer, is well known. The two chief elements of his character were fervent devotion and invincible courage. When any fresh trouble arose, he would say, "Come, let us sing the forty-sixth psalm." When making his last will, he breathed his detestation of popery to his friends and the brethren; and repeated a saying of his own, "I was the plague of popery in my life, and shall continue to be so in my death." A little before he expired, he said often to his friends, "Pray, pray much for the propagation of the Gospel: the council of Trent, (which had sat once or twice,) and the pope, would devise strange things against it." The last words he was heard to utter were these: "Into thy hands I commend my spirit. Thou hast deemed me, O Lord God of truth!"

Thomas Paine the Deist was one who, as some yet alive in the city of New-York, know, yielded up his blooded spirit in a tempest of agony and despair; alternately uttering fearful execrations, and calling on the sulted name of Jesus Christ! The case of Lord P—, detailed by Simpson in his "Plea." He was an apostate, a deist, and a mocker of religion. On his dying bed he was overwhelmed with horror at what he had done. In this agony to "go and bring that cursed book," meaning the work by which he had been seduced into deism; I cannot die until I destroy it!" It was put into his hands. With mingled horror and revenge he tore it into pieces and hurled it into the flames, and soon after died in great horrors.—*Erang. Mag. June, 1797.*

William Pope, of Bolton, was an apostate from religion. He united with a society of deists, who spent the Sabbath day in confirming each other in deism, and in every outrage against the Holy Bible and Christian religion. But the judgment of God soon fell on him. In his fatal illness he exclaimed, "O, I long to die, that I may be in the place of perdition—that I may know the fearful agony, in his last moments, he exclaimed with a doleful moan, "My damnation is sealed!" This he repeated until he expired.—*Simpson's Plea.*

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WHY SHOULD I KNEEL IN CHURCH?

1. Because I am a sinful, weak and worthless creature whom the lowest posture of body, and deepest humility of soul, most fitly becomes in addressing the High and Holy God, before whom Angels, Cherubim and Seraphim veil their faces in the Heavens above.

2. Because I find it a posture most favourable to devotion, and to the keeping my thoughts in the right place. If