

Christian Mirror

AND GENERAL MISSIONARY REGISTER.

"MANY SHALL RUN TO AND FRO, AND KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED."—DANIEL xii. 4.

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POETRY.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MIRROR.

"GO AND SIN NO MORE."

Say, child of dust, with all thy sins, durst thou approach that throne,
Where 'mid the greatness of his power Jehovah reigns alone?
Does not thy trembling bosom heave, with feelings of despair,
That God will ever pardon thee, or listen to thy prayer?
Are not thy past transgressions seen by his all-searching eye—
Are they not written in his book—recorded in the sky?
How oft in mercy has he shown a Father's fond regard,
Nor doom'd thy wickedness to meet its only just reward.
Yet has it never made thee think, when summon'd to the grave,
How thou canst rest thy hope on Him, who only then can save;
When thy rebellious heart has turned, and sought his saving grace,
Has he denied thee thy request, or hid from thee his face?
Then why so oft forsake his path, why tempt him to fulfil
The judgments he has doomed on all who break his holy will?
In early life a parent's love on thee hast been bestow'd,
And thou hast felt the fond regard, which from their bosoms flowed,
Providing for thy many wants, their first, their constant care—
In all their happiness a part, in all their joys a share.
Oft have their watchful footsteps crept in silence to thy bed,
And o'er thy suffering couch of pain, has sleep their eyelids fled.
To such say could'st thou e'er refuse, thy warmest fondest love,
Or e'er forget how good they were, or e'er ungrateful prove?
No!—Thou could'st never steal thy breast, 'gainst ties so dear, so strong,

To bid defiance to their laws, to see them suffer wrong.

Thou could'st not—Yet is not their love, how great so'er it be,

Like the regard, the boundless love, which God has shewn to thee.

He is the Parent we should serve, with more than mortal zeal,

His goodness fails not, and his Love no tongue can e'er reveal.

April, 1843.

J. D. M'D.

GENERAL LITERATURE.

AN ALLEGORY.

I BEHELD, and there was before me a garden of vast extent, possessed by one master, to whom every labourer in the garden is responsible, and to whom all come for orders. The garden is in a state of gradual cultivation and improvement. I observed that the labourers were of both sexes and of all ages; not one who was willing to labour there was ever rejected on account of any infirmity or defect, for their employer could give power to the faint, and to them that have no might he could increase strength: but it was very remarkable that none ever voluntarily applied there for employment; they were all first solicited.—The Lord of the garden sometimes sent forth his messengers to look for labourers, and sometimes went himself; and he not only invited them, but he inclined their hearts to comply with the call, making them willing in the day of his power.

I saw part of the garden separated from the rest by a little hedge, and here the labourers seemed very numerous; advancing, I at first saw nothing very interesting; but, at the moment, I remembered what I had often heard, that the Lord of this garden "seeth not as man seeth." I looked again; there was a large wide bed, in which were plants that appeared but like dead sticks, which many a gardener would have thrown away; but here they were planted in the finest mould, and watered with perpetual care, if peradventure they might shoot again. "Yours must be a discouraging task," I said to a young labourer, as he stopped a moment, and looked at his work. "I am cast down indeed," he answered; "I may say with truth that I have seen no fruit of my labour, while a young companion who entered the garden later than myself was appointed to the fertile bed on the other side, and see what beautiful plants has he reared! Many still flourish around him, and some he has triumphantly carried away to decorate the king's own palace." An aged fellow-labourer close by looked upon him as he ended; a deep blush covered the cheek of the younger man: it was not the first time that his aged companion had been grieved by his murmuring, and now he meekly said these few words—"Do you not remember who planted these?" "Our Master," was the reply. "Yes," replied the venerable man, "these, as well as the flourishing and lovely shrubs, these are the planting of the Lord;

and he will be glorified in them. It is honour enough to labour for him."

Near this was another bed filled with plants different indeed, but not much more promising: they seemed strong and vigorous plants which had been neglected when young, and which, now that they had attained their full growth, were for the first time brought under the hand of the cultivator; the pruning-knife was greatly needed here, and the labourers had a difficult task to train the stubborn branches.

I soon reached another set of labourers; one I saw anxiously examining a beautiful tree, "green as the bay-tree, evergreen." I could not but congratulate him on its healthy appearance. "Alas!" he said, "these, beautiful and ornamental as they are, are but leaves; and leaves produce no fruit." Another tree, equally verdant in its foliage, and wreathed with brilliant flowers, grew near. "This one, then, promises well," said I. "Yes, it promises, and it promised last year, and the year before; O that the blossoms may not disappoint us now! But you know not how often a fair prospect is blasted; the most abundant blossoming has often failed, dashed off by the bleak winds. Nothing," he added, "but fruit satisfies our Master; the external beauty of a plant is nothing in his eye." I said in reply that there are many sorts of trees and plants which are valuable in their kind, although it is not their nature to produce any fruit. "Such trees," he said, "are never planted in this garden—every plant here has a capacity of producing fruit, some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold, some a hundred-fold; and, if it should not do so, it will at last inevitably be hewn down, and cast into the fire." "And how long," said I, "does your Master wait before he pronounces this sentence?"—The labourer replied—"He gives not account of any of his doings. None can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" For some he waits much longer than for others; and, though we do not now know the exact rule of his conduct in these things, he has assured us that the time will come when we shall know it."

There was one division of this garden lately brought in from the waste, and but partly cultivated. Now I found that those who went to labour there had some privations from which the other labourers were exempt; they were few in number, and consequently separated from many who had once been their dearest associates; moreover, the situation of that part of the garden was so very unhealthy that death was ever busy there; the warning was frequently, perhaps usually, very short: the labourer might be seen busy at his work one day, the next laid on a dying bed, and the succeeding one carried out and buried by the little band of his survivors: but it was a happy and an honoured station; many were the visits the labourers received from their beloved Master, and many and rich the consolations he afforded them. And, for the plants they cultivated, they had indeed been suffered to grow wild and unpruned for a long time; but some well repaid the care of the husbandman