

I appeal to you. Have you not felt this peace which has kept you up among all your troubles? And it shall be ever with you, for "the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed," &c.

We observe, again, that there is a rich profusion in the gift itself. Our fellow-creatures, when often asked a favour, wearied with solicitations, say, "This is the last time I will do it;" but the more we ask of the Saviour, the more will he be liberal. His peace is represented as a "great peace"—flowing as a river—"peace which passeth all understanding"—peace in death—peace in judgment. "He is willing to exceed abundantly above all that we can ask or think" and says "open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it."

Another peculiarity in the bequest is, that it extends to everlasting ages; and if any of us possess it now, it will be with us to the countless ages of eternity, &c.

This will supply us with one or two inferences. First. That the gospel is "worthy of all acceptation." I would recommend it to every individual, because you all stand in need of peace, and the gospel gives it. Are there any bowed down with sorrows, not knowing where to look for rest? To such I would say, Well, my sorrowful friend, burdened with afflictions, turn from man to the Saviour, and you shall there find what you in vain seek for in the world. Have recourse to him, and he "will give you rest," &c.

Again. The gospel disposes to charity, and diffuses peace around, and the more we have of this peace, the more happy shall we be, &c. And the ultimate results of the gospel shall indeed be glorious. I will conclude with a passage from Isaiah, that beautiful picture, where, speaking of the latter-day glory, he says, "And the cow and the bear shall feed," &c. May God hasten that happy event through Jesus Christ.—Amen.

LITERATURE.

THE AURORA BOREALIS.

Silent from the north

A blaze of meteors shoots: ensweeping first
The lower skies, they all at once converge
High to the crown of heav'n, and all at once
Relapsing quick, as quickly reascend,
And mix and thwart, extinguish and renew,
All ether coursing in a maze of light Thomson.

THE AURORA BOREALIS, sometimes called Streamers, is an extraordinary meteor, or luminous appearance, shewing itself in the night time in the northern part of the heavens; and most usually in frosty weather. It is generally of a reddish colour, inclining to yellow, and sends out frequent corruscations of pale light, which seem to rise from the horizon in a pyramidal undulating form, and shoot with great velocity up to the zenith. The aurora borealis appears frequently in the form of an arch, chiefly in the spring and autumn, after a dry year. The arch is partly bright, partly dark, but generally transparent; and the matter of which it consists, is also found to have no effect on rays of light which pass through it. Dr. Hamilton observes, that he could plainly discern the smallest speck in the Pleiades through the density of those clouds which formed the Aurora Borealis in 1763, without the least diminution of its splendour, or increase of twinkling.

This kind of meteor, which is more uncommon as we approach towards the equator, is almost constant during the long winter, and appears with the greatest lustre in the polar regions. In the Shetland Isles, the "Merry Dancers," as the northern lights are there called, are the constant attendants of clear evenings, and afford great relief amidst the gloom of the long winter nights. They commonly appear at twilight, near the horizon, of a dun colour, approaching to yellow; they sometimes continue in that state for several hours, without any perceptible motion; and sometimes break out into streams of stronger light, spreading into columns, and altering slowly into ten thousand different shapes, and varying their colours from all the tints of yellow, to the most obscure russet. They often cover the whole hemisphere, and then exhibit the most brilliant appearance. Their motions at this time are most amazingly quick; and they astonish the spectator with the rapid changes of their form. They break out in places where none were seen before, skimming briskly among

the heavens, are suddenly extinguished, and are succeeded by a uniform dusky tract. This again is brilliantly illuminated in the same manner, and is suddenly left a dark space. In some nights, they assume the appearance of large columns, on one side of the deepest yellow, and on the other, gradually changing, till it becomes undistinguished from the sky. They have generally a strong tremulous motion from one end to the other, and this continues till the whole vanishes.

As for us, who see only the extremities of these northern phenomena, we can have but a faint idea of their splendour and motions. According to the state of the atmosphere, they differ in hue; and sometimes assuming the colour of blood, they make a dreadful appearance. The rustic sages who observe them, become prophetic, and terrify the spectators with alarms of war, pestilence, and famine. Nor, indeed, were these superstitious presages peculiar to the northern islands: appearances of a similar nature are of ancient date; and they were distinguished by the appellations of "phasmata," "trabes," and "halides," according to their forms and colours. In old times they were either more rare, or less frequently noticed; they were supposed to portend great events, and the timid imagination formed of them aerial conflicts.

In the northern latitudes of Sweden and Lapland, the Aurora Borealis are not only singularly beautiful in their appearance, but they afford travellers, by their almost constant effulgence, a very beautiful light during the whole night. In Hudson's Bay the Aurora Borealis diffuses a variegated splendour, which is said to equal that of the full moon. In the north-eastern parts of Siberia, according to the description of Guelin, these northern lights are observed to "begin with single bright pillars, rising in the north, and almost at the same time in the north-east, which, gradually increasing, comprehend a large space of the heavens, rush about from place to place with incredible velocity, and finally, almost cover the whole sky up to the zenith, and produce an appearance as if a vast tent were expanded in the heavens, glittering with gold, rubies, and sapphire. A more beautiful spectacle cannot be painted; but whoever should see a northern light for the first time, could not behold it without terror. For however fine the illumination may be, it is attended, as I have learned from the relation of many persons, with such a hissing, crackling, and hissing noise through the air, as if the largest fire-works were played off. To describe what they then hear, they make use of the expression, 'The raging host is passing.' The hunters, who pursue the white and blue foxes in the confines of the icy Sea, are often alarmed in their course by these northern lights. Their dogs are then so much frightened, that they will not move, but lie obstinately on the ground, till the noise has passed. Commonly, clear and calm weather follows this kind of northern lights. This account has been confirmed by the uniform testimony of many, who have spent part of several years in these northern regions, and inhabited different countries from the Yenisei to the Lena; so that no doubt of its truth can remain. This seems, indeed, to be the real birth-place of the Aurora Borealis."

ON THE NEAT STYLE.

What is called a Neat Style comes next in order; and here we are got into the region of ornament; but that ornament not of the highest or most sparkling kind. A writer of this character shews, that he does not despise the beauty of language. It is an object of his attention. But his attention is shewn in the choice of his words, and in a graceful collocation of them; rather than in any high efforts of imagination, or eloquence. His sentences are always clean, and free from the incumbrance of superfluous words; of a moderate length; rather inclining to brevity, than a swelling structure; closing with propriety; without any tails, or adjections dragging after the proper close. His cadence is varied; but not of the studied musical kind. His figures, if he uses any, are short and correct; rather than bold and glowing. Such a Style as this may be attained by a writer who has no great powers of fancy or genius, by industry merely, and careful attention to the rules of writing; and it is a Style always agreeable. It imprints a character of mod-

erate elevation on our composition, and excites a decent degree of ornament, which is not unsuitable to any subject whatever. A familiar letter, or a law paper, on the driest subject, may be written with neatness; and a sermon, or a philosophical treatise, in a Neat Style, will be read with pleasure.—Blair.

LANGUAGES.

There are said to be no less than 3,121 known languages in the world: of which 937 are Asiatic, 57 European, 276 African, and 1,024 American languages and dialects.

HUMAN CURIOSITY.

Human curiosity, though at first slowly excited, being at last possessed of leisure for indulging its propensity, becomes one of the greatest amusements of life, and gives higher satisfaction than what even the senses can afford. A man of this disposition turns all nature into a magnificent theatre replete with objects of wonder and surprise, and acted up chiefly for his happiness and entertainment; he industriously examines all things, from the minutest insects to the most finished animal; and when his limited organs can no longer make the discovery, he sends out his imagination upon new enquiries.

DEFINITION OF WIT.

"Wit," says Barrow, "is a thing so versatile and multiform, appearing in so many shapes, so many postures, so many garbs, so variously apprehended by several eyes and judgments, that it seemeth no less hard to settle a clear and certain notion thereof, than to make a portrait of Proteus, or to define the figure of the fleeting air. Sometimes it lieth in pat allusions to a known story, or in reasonable application of a trivial saying, or in forging an opposite tale; sometimes it playeth on words and phrases, taking advantage from the ambiguity of their sense, or the affinity of their sound; sometimes it is wrapped up in a dress of humorous expression; sometimes it lurketh under an odd similitude; sometimes it is lodged in a sly question, in a smart answer, in a quirkish reason, in a shrewd intimation, in cunningly diverting, or smartly retorting an objection; sometimes it is couched in a bold scheme of speech, in a tart irony, or a lusty hyperbole; in a startling metaphor, in a plausible reconciling of contradictions, or in acute non-sense; sometimes a scencial representation of persons or things, a counterfeit speech, a mimical look or jesture, passeth for it; sometimes affected simplicity, sometimes a presumptuous bluntness, gives it being; sometimes it riseth only from a lucky hitting upon what is strange; sometimes from a crafty wrestling, obvious matter to the purpose. Often it consisteth in one knows not what, and springeth up one can hardly tell how. Its ways are unaccountable and inexplicable, being answerable to the numberless roving of fancy, and windings of language. It raiseth admiration, as signifying a nimble sagacity of apprehension, a special felicity of invention, a vivacity of spirit, and reach of wit more than vulgar; it seemeth to argue a rare quickness of parts, that one can fetch in remote conceits applicable; a notable skill that can dexterously accommodate them to the purpose before him, together with a lively briskness of humour not apt to damp those sportful flashes of imagination. It also procureth delight by gratifying curiosity with its rareness, or semblance of difficulty, by diverting the mind from its road of serious thoughts; by instilling gaiety and airiness of spirits; by provoking to such disposition; of gaiety in way of emulation or complaisance; and by seasoning matters otherwise distasteful or insipid, with an unusual and then grateful savour."

MISCELLANY.

ELEVATION OF THE SOUL TO GOD.

When I am enabled to elevate my soul to God, I begin to answer the end for which I was placed in this world, and enjoy an antepast of that felicity which awaits me in the celestial regions. How trifling and contemptible do the vain amusements of the age appear, when my heart accustoms itself to seek its felicity in the Creator, and how am I humbled in my own eyes when I compare my meanness and obscurity with the infinite majesty of