

POETRY.

From the Sunday School Visiter.

SUNSET.

I mark'd the sun in glory sink
Behind the distant hills,
One gorgeous mass of gold and pink
The whole horizon fills.
I mark'd the waters dark and still
Illumined by the light,
Till o'er the waters and the hill,
Fell soft the veil of night.
And thoughts came o'er me, dark and drear,
The thoughts of other days,
When life's young son shone bright and clear,
With nought to dim its rays.
But clouds arose, the dews were gone,
The grass was parch'd and dry,
And still I wander'd on forlorn,
And still I fear'd to die.
Again it sank, the dews distill'd
Their pearly drops apart;
'Twas then the Holy Spirit fill'd
My sear'd and scorching heart.
O may life sink as calm and mild,
As did that glorious sun;
And at his rising, I appear,
A heavenly mansion won.

A PARISH CLERK.

For forty years, James Crocker was the generally respected clerk of our parish. From an early age, he is said to have had a thirst for knowledge, and a mind far beyond the generality of those in humble life; and his highest delight was to read and read again the books he could get, when stealing a moment from his daily work, or returned from the field to the cottage hearth.

More, perhaps to the credit of his spirit of inquiry, than to the establishment of his character for self-restraint, it is related, that having many years since been entrusted with the key of the Rectory, during the absence of its bachelor proprietor, it was his custom, after the toils of the day were ended, to find his way into the study, take down volume after volume from the shelves; and after having attentively coned over many a broad page, carefully to replace them in their respective positions. The general information he had in this way required was truly surprising; and I have often been amazed by the rough eloquence with which he recited the numberless events in English and Church History, which his good memory had never suffered to slip. Equally wonderful was his head knowledge of the Gospel itself. A large portion of the Scriptures he had at his fingers' end, and the greater part of the Psalms, both in prose and verse, he had by heart. His conversation on the best subjects was always sprightly, and often apparently spiritual, but ever, alas, unsatisfactory. There was the surface cultivation, but not the deep-rooted grace; the broad leaves of the fig tree, but not the fruit; the alabaster box, but not the fragrant perfume. No one could help admiring the expanded intellect, and the leafy memory, so unusual in such a situation; but alas, neither heavenly-mindedness, nor fervent charity, nor any other bird of paradise, was found building its nest in the character of our precentor.

Contemplating our demi-clerical friend, an observer would have seen the altar erected, the trench dug around, the wood laid in order, and even the victim bound; but where, would he ask, is the enkindling fire, or where the flame to cover the sacrifice, consume the wood and lick up the water? Nor more certainly from heaven came the fire on Mount Car-

mel, than from heaven came the grace which, after long delay, melted, humbled, and refined the heart of James Crocker.

Never would I forget my surprise and delight when, on hearing of my poor neighbor being confined by the same epidemic that had for some time detained myself from visiting him, I called at his cottage, and heard him utter, with godly sorrow and lively emotion, the long-looked-for words, "Oh! Sir, I am a poor miserable sinner. I have had a dark, dark time (he went on to say) since I saw you; the mighty hand of the Lord has been upon me, and I have been brought nigh unto death. Like the Psalmist, I can truly say, 'all thy waves and storms have gone over me.'"

Lost in admiration at God's own gracious dealings, I said little at this interview; but finding on the following day that the depression of his mind continued, I ventured to whisper a word or two of comfort; and rejoiced to learn, on my next visit, that the Spirit of peace, following the deep conviction which had prepared its way, had taken up his abode in the now contrite heart. Never before had I beheld so striking a display of the difference between self-confidence, and Gospel peace; the one the dazzling gleam, suffused from the impending cloud and foretelling the coming storm; the other the calm serenity of the summer's evening, with the sky clear, the air elastic, and the horizon radiant, with full-orbed glory descending into the bosom of the waiting believer.

From this time, how wonderfully was the manner and conversation of my friend altered! His motto now seemed to be that of the apostle, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." No longer did I hear of Josephus, and Rollin, and Rapin; nor any allusion to the old legends which he had carefully collected from numberless sources, and had ever on his tongue: and his theme was now what Christ had done, and what Christ would do. Often would he take the words out of my lips when I endeavored, at the side of his bed, to present his prayers to the mercy seat; and frequently at the midnight hour was he heard to utter the humble sigh and the heaven-sent aspiration. Alluding to his own rapidly declining strength and frequent sufferings, but following his own characteristic vein's, he said to me, in reply to an expression of condolence, "Ah, Sir, it is far better to go with Elijah in Jacob's rough wagon to heaven, than it would be to ride with Dives in Elijah's bright chariot to hell."

Standing near his bed not long before his death, he stretched out to me his feeble hand, already beginning to tremble under the final conflict, and grasping mine with all his remaining strength, he affectionately exclaimed, "Oh! Sir, I have loved you very tenderly on earth, and I think I shall not lose sight of you in heaven. If it be permitted the saints to look down upon the things below, I know what my employment will particularly be till you join me; it will be that of the mother of Siseria, to look out of heaven's window, and say, 'Why are his chariots so long in coming?'" He then with great fervor joined me in repeating those stanzas of Doddridge:—

When death o'er nature shall prevail,
And all the powers of language fail,
Joy through my swimming eyes shall break,
And mean the thanks I cannot speak.
But oh! when that last conflict's o'er,
And I am chain'd to flesh no more,
With what glad accents shall I rise,
To join the music of the skies!

Much to my regret, I was prevented from being present at the closing scene; but delighted was I to hear that he summoned many of his neighbors around him, and conversed with them with as much affectionate earnestness as his ebbing strength would permit, concerning their eternal prospects. On his weeping partner saying, "O my dear husband, what shall I do when you are gone?" He exclaimed, "Do, Mary, do as I have done, do as the dying thief did; say, Lord remember me! My Saviour has remembered me, and oh! fear not, he will remember you." These were the last words which ever fell from his lips. It seemed as if the Saviour had responded and said, "To-day thou shalt be with me in paradise."

But a few moments after, and mortality was forever laid aside, and death swallowed up of life. I

entered just as the final struggle had ceased. He heavenly the smile which still lingered on the tired worn countenance. It seemed to say, "the last of my is vanquished, and now, (like the beloved disciple,) I sleep on my master's bosom." The morning of the event was one of unusual brilliancy for the season of the year, and the unclouded sun, as it gild the prospect from the window of the chamber death, afforded a faint emblem of that heavenly light which had now commenced shining upon the glorified spirit. Assembling the attendants around the placid remains, I expressed our common sentiment of thanksgiving to Him who had constituted servant more than conqueror, and commended the widow and the fatherless to the God who never leaves, and much less ever forsakes. Rising from our knees, the voice, once respondent at the close of every prayer, was silent; but as I drew after me the door of the house of morning, I heard the deep-toned passing bell from the neighboring steeple taking the answer for him, and announcing to the village that he, who for many years had sustained their public devotion was adding another amen to the anthem of the redeemed in the Church triumphant.—(London) Friendly Visiter.

An appalling fact.—In 1833, there were in the state of New York, 9849 persons. An equal number in proportion to the population would make in the United States 70 thousand. Seventy thousand persons in jail in the United States!!! These persons, if congregated together, would fill several churches; would crowd a larger amphitheatre than ancient Greece or Rome possessed; would man seventy large ships of war; would make a city larger than any except four, we have in America; could cultivate twenty thousand respectable farms, and raise provisions for the maintenance of 200,000 people if marching four abreast, and three feet apart, would make a procession ten miles in length; if formed to an army, would compose one four times as large as Washington ever had to effect the revolution if connected with three times their number, are the disgrace and trouble of 200,000 innocent individuals if they were virtuous and industrious, would diffuse happiness and intelligence through a large circle, and hand down a blessed inheritance to succeeding generations.—*Epis. Rec.*

Parliamentary usage in Arkansas.—The power of Gospel needed in high places.—On Monday, the 10th, a member upon the floor of the Arkansas House of Representatives having thrown out some allusion personal towards the Speaker, that personage sprang from the Chair with a drawn Bowie Knife, and laid the offender dead at his feet! The murdered member, before he received his death wound, almost severed one of the hands of the Speaker from his arm, and severely cut the other hand. The Speaker was forthwith arrested by the civil authorities, and his name stricken from the roll of the House, by a nearly unanimous vote. He is pronounced "an amiable gentleman." We are not aware of the standard of amiability in Arkansas.—*Ibid.*

Gospel Consolations.—It is a mercy, to have taken from us, which takes from God and Christ.

Let the chain of second causes be ever so long, the first link is always in God's hand.

God will never leave any until they first leave him.

Riches cannot purchase for us peace of mind, and poverty cannot deprive us of it.

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