

THE DYING SCEPTIC'S CONFESSION.

F—was an intelligent and irreligious young man. His influence over a circle of associates was destructive in its tendency, and led some into the path of open impiety and error which he had chosen. He had pious friends, who shed tears of prayerful concern upon his descending way, but their kind interposition only wreathed his lips with a scornful smile.

A startling providence fell upon the community; death suddenly removed an acquaintance of F—, and spread gloom over all hearts but his own. The morning of the day appointed for the funeral came, and when a pious relative inquired if he would attend the burial service, he replied, "If I cannot employ my time better." To display his reckless indifference, he secured the companionship of two youths, and went to the forest in pursuit of game.

To start an object into view, he struck a tree with his gun pointed towards himself. In another moment he was weltering in his own blood. The ball passed through his body. With the help of companions, he reached his home, faint, and groaning piteously. He said to those partakers of his sin, "Oh, that you could pray for me." A humble saint entered the room, and he exclaimed, "Edward, I have hated you, because you were a Christian; but how differently you look to me now. Pray for me." Soon the apartment of death was thronged, and while life was ebbing, he added with a clear and thrilling tone, "I have tried to disbelieve in a future hell; how vain the attempt! and now, I know that I shall be eternally damned!" Strong men turned pale, and reeled out of the room. For hours the dying sceptic lingered, pointing his comrades to the Bible he had neglected, and to the flaming abyss, to which he assured them he was sinking.

This is one of many warnings on the threshold of eternity, to beware of building on the sand a refuge for the imperishable soul. The sneer of scepticism and the laugh of folly vanish before the light of the world to come. How rational and imperative the mandate of God, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little."—*Am. Mes.*

HOW TO BREED TATTLERS.—If you wish to cultivate a gossiping, meddling, censorious spirit in your children, be sure when they come home from church, a visit, or any other place where you do not accompany them, to ply them with questions concerning what every body said and did—and if you find anything in all this to censure, always do it in their hearing. You may rest assured, if you pursue a course of this kind, they will not return to you unladen with intelligence; and rather than it should be uninteresting, they will by degrees, learn to embellish in such a manner as shall not fail to call forth remarks, and expressions of wonder from you. You will thus gradually render the spirit of curiosity—which is so early visible in children, and which, if rightly directed, may be made the instrument of enriching and enlarging their minds—a vehicle of mischief, which shall serve only to impoverish and narrow them.

YOUTHFUL NEGLECT.—Walter Scott, in a narrative of his personal history, gives the following caution to youth: "If it should ever fall to the lot of youth to peruse these pages, let such readers remember that it is with the deepest regret that I recollect in my manhood the opportunities of learning which I neglected in my youth: that through every part of my literary career, I have felt pinched and hampered by my own ignorance, and would this moment give half the reputation I have had the good fortune to acquire, if by so doing I could rest the remaining part upon a sound foundation of learning and science."

JEWISH NEGROES.

The Rev. Dr. Philip, missionary in the north of Africa, gives the following details concerning that country. A Russian Jew, resident at Meadah, gave him information concerning a great number of Israelites inhabiting the oases of Sairara and dwelling also at Bathlor, his-Wrabi, Tauggurt, Bousara, Bein Uzab, Loquas, etc.—There are in each of these places as many as a hundred families, and in some more. In one place he found six hundred families with numerous synagogues, and about a hundred copies of the Law, written upon parchment, some of which were more ancient than any he had ever seen.

But this is not all; other curious details reached Dr. Philip from another source. A Jew who had accompanied a German traveller as far as Timbuctoo, found near the boundary of the kingdom of Dambara, a large number of Jewish negroes. Nearly every family possesses the Law of Moses, written upon parchment. Although they speak of the prophets, they have not their writings. Their prayers differ from those of other Jews, and are committed to little leaves of parchment, stitched together, and contain numerous passages derived from the Psalms.—These Jews have mingled some of the superstitions of "oral law" (which they have not committed to writing) with those of their neighbors, the Mohammedans and the Heathen. They enjoy equal liberty with other subjects of the African chiefs, and have their synagogues and their rabbis. The explanation which they give of themselves, in connection with their black skin, is this. That after the destruction of Jerusalem, at the time of the first captivity, some of their ancestors, having neither goods nor lands, fled to the desert. The fatigue which they endured was so great, that nearly all the females died by the way. The children of Ham received them with kindness, and by intermarriage with their daughters, who were black, communicated their colour to their children. These children became, generation by generation, of a deeper hue, until no difference of colour now distinguishes the children of Shem and those of Ham. The form of their features, however, is very different from that of the negroes around them.

These are highly interesting facts, and create a strong desire that these unexplored regions may be speedily opened to intercourse with the civilized world. Access to these ancient manuscripts, which are probably older than any other now extant, would be of great value in correcting the received Hebrew text, or in throwing light upon doubtful passages.—*Jewish Chronicle.*

EFFECTIVE PREACHING.—The most effective preaching is that which springs from the experimental piety of the minister—from the deep and practical working of religion upon his own heart. He cannot declare the whole counsel of God, who has not walked with God, and held communion with him on the mount of prayer. He cannot truly preach Christ and him crucified, in whose heart Christ has not been formed the hope of glory, and whose life is not hid with Christ in God. He may give the shape and form of truth, but it will be a cold and lifeless carcass of theology: something within is wanting—the beating heart, the heaving breast, the blood, the breath of spiritual life. "The minister," it has been well said, "must achieve one-half of his work in his closet"—not at his desk and among his books, but upon his knees, at the throne of grace. Then will he go out to his people, as Moses came down from the mount, with a face shining with communion with God, and he will reflect the brightness of his piety throughout the camp of his own spiritual Israel. Such preaching cannot but be eloquent: it is eloquent with love, with grace, with holiness, with truth—an eloquence that does not, like the aurora borealis, flash its coruscating fires in the sky, while a polar winter reigns below; but rather like the sun, warms and

vivifies the world beneath, while at the same time it "glads and glorifies the heavens."—*Rev. Dr. W. B. Stevens.*

A JESUIT'S SERMON.—The missions of the Jesuits continue in Germany, and I can give you a specimen of a Jesuit's sermon. Father Rieger preached, in a small town in Silesia, on the judgment of the world. After he had unfolded the punishments of hell, he seized hold of the crucifix attached to the pulpit, and said—"Beloved little Jesus, allow me yet one question, 'Is there, then, no mercy for sinners?' Upon which he answered, in the name of the image, in a subdued tone, 'Oh yes' if they pray 36,000 paternosters, which may also be changed into masses, which are more effectual." The Father continued—"Now, dear little Jesus, still one question. 'There are yet many heretics, are they also eternally lost? Is there no salvation for them?' The little Jesus answered, 'Oh, yes; when they return into the bosom of the church, which alone can save, then there is heaven upon earth, and in heaven there is joy over every sinner that repents.'" Once more the father asked—"Now, dear little Jesus, still one question: 'Is there no forgiveness for the teachers of heresy, who lead others astray?' Then the little Jesus was full of wrath, and answered, with a deep voice, 'No, and all who are not Romish priests shall be cursed, and given over to the devil, to fearful martyrdom, and to the punishment of hell.'"

COMPARATIVE STRENGTH OF POPERY AND PROTESTANTISM.—Protestantism reckons as its followers nearly one-half of the number that Popery claims as its adherents. And although numerically one half less, in all the great elements of character and progress it is vastly its superior. In wealth, in enterprise, in rational liberty, in literature, in commerce, in all the elements of political and moral power, Protestants are to Papal nations as the sun and moon in the heavens are to the fixed stars. That you may see this, blot from the map of Europe all that it owes to Protestantism, and what is left for the people to desire. Blot from those nations all they owe to Popery and it would be like Moses lifting up his wonder-working rod heavenward, and rolling back the darkness that enshrouded Egypt. If this does not picture our idea, stop, for a month or a year, all that Protestantism is doing to civilise, enlighten, and bless the earth, and the world is moved and astounded, from its centre to its circumference; even old Austria, the Sleepy Hollow of the world, would spring to her feet and ask, What is the matter? Stop for the same time all that Popery is doing for the same ends, and it would be no more missed than is the light of the lost Pleiad from the sky.—*Kirvan.*

DUKE OF WELLINGTON.—The noblest fact in the history of Wellington was the put on record by Mr. Gleig, who had the best opportunities of ascertaining that, wherever the great Duke travelled in his later days, his companion and his counsellor was the Word of God, which was read by him day by day.

PULPIT STYLE AMONG THE PURITANS.—"The preachers in the time of the Commonwealth," says *Harper's Magazine*, "looked upon coughing and hemming as ornaments of speech, and when they printed their sermons, noted in the margin where the preacher coughed and hemmed. The practice was not confined to England, for Oliver Malhiard, a Cordelier, and famous orator, printed a sermon at Brussels, in the year 1509, and marked in the margin where the preacher hemmed once or twice, or coughed."

Two mites, two drops, 'twas all her house and land,
Falls from a steady heart, tho' trembling hand:
The other's wanton wealth foams high and brave,
He boldly cast away, she only gave.