

THE GUARDIAN.

"HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."

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POETRY.

From the Presbyterian.

MUSINGS—THE SABBATH IN THE COUNTRY.

The Sabbath comes. That holy day of rest,
Above all other days the brightest, best,
A blessing brings to all—the sick—the poor,
The man of learning, and the simple boor.
The rude unlettered hind, who scarcely knows
Aught that's beyond the fields, his farms inclose;
The giant mind, with high and mighty birth,
Not satisfied with what it finds on earth,
Searches the heavens and seeks to know their rule,
(Perchance he finds at last he's still a fool)
Welcome thy sacred hours of peace and rest,
Bringing a holy calm to every breast.—
The morning dawns; the gentle air that breathes
O'er hill and valley, scarcely moves the leaves
Of the fair flowret, hanging o'er the stream
That steals its noiseless way along the green.
The birds have hushed their merry note to-day,
With nimble hop among the greenwood stray.
The patient herds are tethered to their stalls;
O'er man and beast a holy stillness falls.—
Awakened by the rising beams of day,
First in his chamber doth the cotter pray,
Then in the parlour, with his family round,
The little band pour forth the holy sound
Of praise to God; then humbly kneel in prayer,
While faithful to his promise, God is there.—
The chiming bell breaks on the ambient air,
And points the assembling crowds to the house of prayer.
With solemn mien, befitting well the day,
The gathering worshippers pursue the way,
Deck'd in their best; a neat, tho' homely garb,
(Tis not the outward man that finds reward;
'For in His service only such have part,
As bring the offering of the humble heart.)—
An aged sire, with tottering gait and slow,
With bended form, and locks like winter's snow,
And shaking limbs, finds support from his son,
While at his side his fond grand-children run;
With streaming eyes, he stands before a tomb,
And reads the epitaph; 'tis that of one,
In former days, his fond and faithful wife;
His crowding thoughts rush back upon his life.—
The bell has ceased—within the house of God
The attentive audience listens to his word.
No idle jest, no whispering meets the ear,
No wand'ring glance profanes the house of prayer,
As seen too oft in cities, prouder fane
'Mong worshippers who only bear the name;
Who act as tho' they worshipped gods of stone,
Forgetting, to the Lord, e'en thoughts are known.
Hark! 'tis the voice of praise to heaven ascends,
No organ's sound with Zion's music blends,
The simple offering of the lip and heart,
Unperfumed and unvarnished by man's art.
Such praise ascends like incense to the skies,
More grateful far, than evening sacrifice.
The priest of God now takes his solemn text,
Not anxious that his hearers should be vexed.
With various points of morals well discussed,
Which prove, instead of bread, a broken crust,
On which souls starve. O folly most absurd!
Can guilty man be righteous with the Lord?
Salvation is his theme; how Jesus died,
And by his offering sinners reconciled
To their offended God; his law obeyed,
And his obedience offered in their stead.
God now is righteous, though he pardon sin,
For Christ has died this righteousness to win.
The sexton's care hath closed the sacred door,
The public worship of the day is o'er;
Retiring groups pursue their homeward way,
And evening twilight closes in the day.
The gentle moon, the beautiful queen of night,
Throws o'er the scene her flood of silver light.
The day is past; the day that God has given
To fit the soul for brighter days in heaven.
The Sabbath day, fit type of heaven above,
Where all is peace, and all is perfect love.

THE SABBATH.—He that remembers not to keep the Christian Sabbath, at the beginning of the week, will be in danger to forget before the end of the week that he is a Christian.

Religious Intelligence.

SABBATH IN THE WEST-INDIES.

It was painful, however, to observe the general and flagrant violation of the Sabbath, by the negro population. It is true that one half of the congregation was usually composed of coloured people. But the Sabbath is the market day. As the slaves are compelled to work for their masters during six days of the week, the seventh is the only one in which they can bring for sale the produce of the small patches of ground allowed them by their owners. Accordingly they come in great crowds on that day, from the surrounding plantations, each one with his little store. Some will walk many miles, to offer for sale their single bunch of bananas, or solitary tray of oranges; while others bring star apples, melons, yams, or quantities of other tropical fruits and vegetables.—The large square appropriated to the purposes of a market is thronged with slaves, and noisy with business on the Sabbath.

On passing through this square, on the way to public worship, one could not easily refrain from melancholy, and even indignant reflections. There poor creatures, condemned to unrequited toil during the week, (for that labour is not requited which is repaid only with the bare necessaries of life,) are compelled, or at least sorely tempted, to forego the precious rest of the Sabbath, with all its spiritual privileges. The day which might be employed in preparing for a happy eternity, and gathering consolation under their hard lot, is so spent as to exhaust their bodies and harden their hearts. Either the slave should be so provided for as to render the market unnecessary, or some other day of the week should be appropriated for the purpose.

On the first Sabbath after our arrival the communion was administered in the church. After the whites had gone forward and received the ordinance, I was interested in observing the various groups of coloured communicants who successively approached the altar. Most of them had no expression in their faces, unless the dull, vacant, rigid features of ignorance can be called expressive. But it was gratifying to observe that some of the free persons of colour were tastefully dressed, and very intelligent in their appearance.

One old and poverty-stricken slave particularly arrested my attention. She was so weak that she staggered against the pew, and was obliged to take hold of the railing to support herself. Her emaciated form, long skinny arms, and skeleton like face, were disgusting objects to look upon. Yet she received the emblems with evident seriousness of feeling. "Who can tell," thought I as I looked at her, "the sorrows and scenes through which that woman has passed? When a child, she knew little of laughing, sporting, joyous childhood. When old enough to carry a piece of sugar cane, she toiled in piling the trash, and thence onward in life she never saw any thing in the future but a dark, interminable series of toilsome days; she never felt any thing in the present, but actual labour and exhaustion. She married; but what knew she of conjugal and domestic bliss, more than the very beasts that toiled by her side? She brought forth children; but she could not educate or control them—an owner reared them for labour, as he did his beast of burthen. What must be a mother's agonies, when even the babe on her bosom is not her own? Perhaps this poor woman, in the awards of eternity, may take precedence of many a learned and celebrated christian; when her soul shall mingle with kindred spirits before the throne of God, honored and loved as His child."—*New York Com. Adv.*

SABBATH IN SCOTLAND.

KILSYTH SACRAMENT.

The religious awakening in the parish of Kilsyth having begun at the time of the last communion in July, an earnest desire was soon afterwards expressed by the people, to repeat the observation of that solemn ordinance, and the minister and session cordially concurring in this desire, after due deliberation, fixed Sabbath last for its celebration. This having become generally known, an immense concourse of Christians was attracted to the place. Towards the end of the preceding week, a great number of persons from all parts of the country had taken up their residence in the town, to be present on the occasion, and such was the willingness with which the people accommodated them, that we have not heard of any who were disappointed. On Thursday a fast

day was kept; the great body of the people abstaining from their ordinary employments, and repairing to the house of God, where there were three services, conducted by Mr. Brown of Edinburgh, Dr. Malan of Geneva, and Mr. Macnaughtan of Paisley. On Friday evening there was sermon by Mr. Middleton of Strathmiglo; and on Saturday a large congregation assembled in a field adjoining the town, and was addressed in a most Scriptural and judicious manner from the text, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" by Mr. Burns of Dundee. In the evening Mr. Somerville of Anderston preached in the church. On Sabbath there could not be fewer assembled than 12,000 or 15,000 persons, and seldom has such a solemn and interesting scene been witnessed. The church bell rang at nine o'clock, and the services commenced both in the church and at the tent shortly before ten. The church was densely crowded, and the number present at the tent has been estimated variously at from ten to fifteen thousand. Our own impression is, that it did not much exceed ten thousand. The action sermon was preached by Mr. Burns, the excellent and judicious minister of the parish, from the text, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; he that believeth in me shall never thirst." The tables were afterwards fenced by Mr. Brown, and were then served successively by Mr. Burns, Mr. Martin of Bathgate, Mr. Dempster of Denny, Mr. Brown, Mr. Somerville, Mr. Duncan of Kirkintilloch, Mr. Rose of Glasgow, and Dr. Dewar of Aberdeen. About 1300 persons communicated, and in order to avoid the undue protraction of the services, the whole of the lower area of the church was occupied by the communicants. Mr. Burns stated at the close that upwards of eighty new communicants had been admitted, their ages varying from thirteen to seventy, and he never before had had so much pleasure in conversing with persons desiring admission to the ordinance. Mr. Rose delivered the concluding sermon, which commenced, without any interval, at about seven o'clock. In the tent, and from a stair adjoining the church, sermons were preached during the day by Dr. Dewar, Mr. Burns jun. Mr. Rose, Mr. Martin, and Mr. Dempster; and in the evening Mr. Burns, jun. preached to an audience of several thousands by moon-light. Next to the imposing number assembled at the tent, nothing struck us more, in the appearance of the audience, than the large proportion of men in the crowd; there must have been two or three for every female. The solemnity and order of the various audiences were remarkable, and we have heard different persons say they never enjoyed so delightful a communion. The sermons were plain, scriptural, and searching, without any thing having an undue tendency to excite.—On Monday, as on the fast day, there were three services, conducted during the day by Dr. Dewar and Mr. Burns, jun. in the tent, and in the evening by Mr. Brown in the church after which a very solemn meeting for prayer was held, as there had been the previous evening, which continued to a late hour.—We understand the sacrament was dispensed at the same time in the Relief church. We earnestly hope this large confluence of ministers and Christians will be blessed as the means of spreading the revival to other parts of the country.—*Scottish Guardian.*

OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH, IN ENGLAND.

Through the exertions of the Lord's-day Observance Society, established in the metropolis, this important subject is attracting much interest throughout the country, and there is evidently a growing disposition in the public mind to observe and honour the Sabbath-day. Branch Associations have been established in a number of the provincial towns, and the minds of men have been disabused of the prejudices raised against these Societies, through the explanations given, and the information afforded, by the excellent Secretary to the parent Society, the Rev. W. Rogers, and other clergymen and gentlemen who take a deep interest in the question. It has been generally represented, that the Lord's-day Society, seeks to enforce a religious observance of the Sabbath, by coercing the working classes and the poor, whilst the rich are to be left to enjoy themselves as they please. Nothing, however, can be more contrary to the real purposes of the Society, which are not to compel the working classes and the poor to keep the Sabbath in any particular way, but to obtain for them protection in the enjoyment of this day of rest, which is not only their birthright, but their privilege. The Society de-