

THE TRIFLER.—Though the trifler does not chronicle his own vain words and wasted hours, they chronicle themselves. They find their indelible place in that book of remembrance with which human hand cannot tamper, and from which no erasure save one can blot them. They are noted in the memory of God. And when once this life of wondrous opportunities and awful advantages is over, when the twenty or fifty years of probation are fled away; when mortal existence, with its faculties for personal improvement and serviceableness to others, is gone beyond recal; when the trifler looks back to the long pilgrimage, with all the doors of hope and doors of usefulness past, which he skipped in his frisky forgetfulness; what anguish will it now be to think that he has gambolled through such a world without salvation to himself, without any real benefit to his brethren, a busy trifler, a vivacious idler, a clever fool!—*J. Hamilton.*

AN OPEN EYE.—The whole book of Job seems to have been chiefly written and placed in the inspired volume, in order to show the value of natural history, and its power on the human heart. I cannot pass it by without pointing out the evidences of the beauty of the country that Job inhabited. Observe, first, it was an arable country. "The oxen were plowing, and the asses were feeding beside them." It was a pastoral country; his substance, besides camels and asses, was 7,000 sheep. It was a mountain country, fed by streams descending from them. "My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the stream of brooks they pass away; which are brackish by reason of the ice, and wherein the snow is hid: What time they wax warm they vanish: when it is hot, they are consumed out of their place." Again: "If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean." Again: "Drought and heat consume the snow-water." It was a rocky country, with forests and verdure rooted in the rocks. "His branch shooteth forth in the garden; his roots are wrapped about the heap, and he seeth the place of stones." Again: "Thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field." It was a place visited, like the valleys of Switzerland, by convulsions and falls of mountains. "Surely the mountain falling cometh to naught, and the rock is removed out of his place." "The waters wear the stones; thou wastest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth." "He removeth the mountains and they know not; He overturneth them in His anger." "He putteth forth His hand upon the rock: He overturneth the mountains by the roots; He cutteth out rivers among the rocks." I have not time to go further into this; but you see, Job's country was full of pleasant brooks and rivers rushing among the rocks, and of all other sweet and noble elements of landscape. The magnificent allusions to natural scenery throughout the Book are, therefore, calculated to touch the heart to the end of time.—*John Ruskin.*

SELF-KNOWLEDGE.—I know not how strong others may be in spirit, but I confess I cannot be as holy as some profess to be; for whenever I do not bear in mind the word of God, I feel no Christ, no spirit and joy. But if I meditate on any portion of Holy Writ, it shines and burns in my heart, so that I obtain good courage and another mind. The cause is thus: We all discover that our minds and thoughts are so unsteady that, though we desire to pray earnestly, or meditate on God without his word, our thoughts scatter it in a thousand forms before we are aware of it. Let any one try how long he can rest upon any one idea he proposed to himself, or take one hour, and now, if he will, tell me all his thoughts. I am sure he will be ashamed before himself, and afraid to say what ideas have passed through his head, lest he be taken for a mad dog, and be chained. This is my case, though engaged in serious thoughts.—*Luther.*

THE CLOAK LEFT AT TROAS.—Philip Grey was a hard-working man who loved his Bible. In the evening, when his labours were over, and he sat down to rest himself for an hour or so, his usual companion was a large printed and well-used copy of God's word. And Philip was not satisfied, as some persons are, with simply reading the Bible; he always tried to understand what he read, and to receive the truths which it taught him.