

wander away on other scenes and subjects, during the preaching, so that they do not get a connected view of the subject presented; others lose the train of thought by allowing themselves to doze a part of the time. We can not wonder that people are not profited by the word, if they do not give close and undivided attention during the preaching.

4. Because they allow themselves to hear for others, and thus turn the point of the sword in a wrong direction to be pierced by it. They are so very charitable in giving away the precious truth, that they do not receive the portion intended for themselves, and of course are not profited.

5. Because they do not come to the house of God with the expectation and desire of being profited. They do not pray that the Lord would go with them, and give them grace to feed on the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby. They visit the sanctuary from habit, rather than from any definite desire to obtain benefit. Hence as Sabbath after Sabbath passes, without its privileges imparting any blessing to them, they are not disappointed.

6. Because they suffer the influence of the preached word to be counteracted, and effaced from their minds, before it has time to take root. On the way home from Church, or soon after reaching home, conversation on other subjects, or other things choke the word, and prevent good results.

7. Because the word is not preached with sufficient clearness and simplicity, or with sufficient directness and point. The sword, if drawn out of the scabbard, is wrapped about with so many wreaths, that its point and edge are not felt.

8. Because the hearer suffers his attention to be more taken up with the manner of the preacher, than with the word preached. This is apt to be the case in hearing a good minister, especially if he have some peculiarity of manner.

9. Because the word preached is not mixed with faith in them that hear it. This is a very common fault. This is what ruined the Antediluvians, and the sons-in-law of Lot, and the Sarcites in the wilderness. This is what ruins all impenitent sinners.—*New York Evangelist.*

THE BIBLE.

The Bible indeed is no ordinary book, and must be studied with no common diligence, no slight reverence, and no trivial assistance; but when so studied it opens a field alike rich and inexhaustible. It comprises the largest variety of materials, with the closest unity of design, and the most majestic harmony of proportion. All tends to one purpose, all centres in one object, the glory of God, in the salvation, the sanctification, the perfection of his intelligent creatures; or, to speak all in one comprehensive phrase, the final union of all things in Christ, and under Christ, as Head over all things to the Church. And be it observed, that throughout the announcement of this vast design, no capacity, or taste, or disposition of man, is left without its proper food, its just excitement, and its full employment. But holy Scripture is not only or chiefly the instruction of our souls—it is also in a just, though limited sense, the very life of our souls. "The words that I speak unto you," said our divine Redeemer, "they are spirit, and they are life." It is by this truth that we are to have our hearts purified. It is by this incorruptible seed that we are to be born anew. It is by this heavenly nutriment that we are spiritually to increase in wisdom, and stature, and favour with God and man. Happy are they who have acquired a relish for this food of angels! Happy they who drink of this pure water of life, which proceedeth from the throne of God and of the Lamb; and which, while it softly floweth, maketh the wilderness as Eden, the desert as the garden of the Lord! To them the sacred Scriptures are indeed a refuge from the heat, a shelter from the storm, a covert in a waste and weary land; affording a green pasture, and those still waters of comfort, beside which we may be also led by our ever-present and ever-watchful Shepherd.—*Bishop Jebb.*

HOW AMIABLE ARE THY TABERNACLES, O LORD OF HOSTS!—God is love: wherever he dwells, the place must be lovely. His tabernacles are the places where he meets his people, affording them the plentiful supplies of all things necessary for their soul's growth in the knowledge of himself and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, whom to know is eternal life: there he graciously reveals himself unto his people, in all the endearments of an affectionate Father in Christ Jesus, in all the love of a God in covenant with them in the same Jesus. Where God manifests his presence, all must be amiable. His cloudy, fiery pillar speaks his majesty's glory, power, and love; his enemies are terrified; his children, encouraged by him, put their trust in him, glory in him as a just and holy God, as a God of infinite love and amazing condescension. What holy intercourse, what sweet communion, is carried on in God's house of prayer with himself and the redeemed by Christ, when he condescends to draw near to them who are drawing nigh unto him; when he regards their supplications, and restores comfort to his mourners, lifting up the light of his countenance upon them, and causing their hearts, to leap for joy! The convinced sinner comes and hears of divine love in God's giving his Son for sinners and to sinners; and through the loving operation of the Spirit, his heart is open to receive the loving Saviour. The struggling wayfarer Christian, encouraged by the same love of God, is making continual application to Christ, because he is convinced that in him it pleased the Father all fulness should dwell. The poor, mourning, grieving backslider finds God telling him he will heal his backslid-

ings, because he has loved him freely. The sick and afflicted believer rejoices in his afflictions, when he hears in the tabernacles of the Lord that his afflictions are appointed of the God of love, and tokens of his fatherly affections.—*Rev. J. W. Peers.*

THE TENTS OF KEDAR.—The goats of the east are commonly black, and a species of cloth is made from their skins having the same color. This is the article commonly used by the Arabs for covering their tents. In approaching Bethlehem from the direction of the desert, I passed an encampment of this people whose tents were all made of this black cloth, and which presented a striking appearance, especially as contrasted with the white canvass tents to which I had been accustomed hitherto, and which travellers so generally employ in that country. At Tekoa, Amos' birthplace, six miles south of Bethlehem, I beheld a similar scene.—The settlement there consisted of two small groups of tents, one larger than the other; they were covered with the black cloth before mentioned, supported on several poles and turned up in part on one side, so that the person from without could look into the interior. In crossing the mountains of Lebanon, the path of the traveller leads him often along the brow of lofty summits overlooking deep valleys, at the bottom of which may be seen the long black tents of migratory shepherds. It is this aspect of a Bedouin encampment that supplies the comparison in Solomon's Song:—"I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon."—"To the tents of the Orientals, viewed singly," says a certain traveller, "it would be often difficult to ascribe the 'comely,' but as forming part of a prospect they are a very beautiful object." I add for the sake of explanation, that Kedar was the name of an Arab or Ishmaelitic tribe, who, like nomadic wanderers in general, appear to have dwelt in different places at different times. They are mentioned repeatedly in the old Testament. The Psalmist, for instance, cxx. 5, alludes to them in the expression, "Woe is me that I dwell in the tents of Kedar." They seem to have had a bad pre-eminence above others of their race as a quarrelsome, belligerent people.—*Christian Review.*

DOMESTIC HABITS OF OUR ANCESTORS.—Erasmus, who visited England in the early part of the sixteenth century, gives a curious description of the interior of an English house of the better class. The furniture rough, the walls unplastered, sometimes wainscotted or hung with tapestry, and the floors covered with rushes, which were not changed for months. The dogs and cats had free access to the eating-rooms, and fragments of meat and bones were thrown to them, which they devoured among the rushes, leaving what they could not eat to rot there, with the draining of beer-vessels and all manner of unmentionable abominations. There was nothing like refinement or elegance in the luxury of the higher ranks; the indulgences which their wealth permitted consisted in rough profusion. Salt beef and strong ale constituted the principal part of Queen Elizabeth's breakfast, and similar refreshments were served to her in bed for supper. At a series of entertainments given in York by the nobility, in 1660, where each exhausted his invention to outdo the others, it was universally admitted that Lord Goring won the palm for the magnificence of his fancy. The description of this supper will give us a good idea of what was then thought magnificent; it consisted of four huge, brawny pigs, piping hot, bitted and harnessed with ropes of sausages to a huge pudding in a bag, which served for a chariot.

PURITY OF THE PERSIAN SKY.—At the sitting of the London Astronomical Society, extracts were read of a letter to Sir John Herschel from the Rev. Mr Stoddard, an American missionary, versed in astronomy. The letter is dated Oromiah, Persia, October 29, 1852. Mr. Stoddard begins with an account of the surprising distinctness with which distant objects are seen in Persia. The snowy peak of Arrarat, he relates, is just as bright and beautiful when two hundred miles distant as when we stand near its base. Though accustomed to watch the heavens in different parts of the world, he had never seen any thing like the splendor of a Persian summer evening. "Were not for the interference of the moon we should have seventy-five nights in the three summer months, superior for the purposes of observation to the very finest nights which favour the astronomer in the new world." He distinguished the antelites of Jupiter and Saturn with the unassisted eye; deemed altogether telescopic objects before.

A CAFFRE PRAYING IN THE WILDERNESS.—Mr. Gladwin, missionary in South Africa, was once on a journey with an attendant, a Christian Caffre. Night approached, and they lay down to rest under the shelter of a bush: they had no waggon, no tent, nothing to cover them, but the bush—nothing to protect and shelter them, but the good providence of God in whom they trusted. The night was cold, as the nights sometimes are in South Africa. They slept soundly, and waked in peace and safety. When they arose, Mr. Gladwin desired the Caffre to pray. They knelt down in the desert,—the Caffre prayed,—"O Lord, we thank Thee we have had a very good night; slept very well, only rather cold. We have borrowed the night from Thee, O Lord, and now we want to borrow the day." This was the beginning of his prayer, and we may learn a good confession from it. We have nothing of our own, everything is lent us by God; our life, our health, our influence, our money, all are entrusted to us, lent us by our heavenly Father, to be used in his service, and for his glory. Let us pray for grace rightfully to use our mercies.