

with God upon you, which walking in after-years will be strong in proportion as you early find companionship there. Remember, he who neglects to sow in spring fails to reap though autumn be golden. He who neglects the years of youth must not fault Providence if manhood finds weeds only to be uprooted by bitter discipline and carking care.

We do not read of Enoch sowing his wild oats. There were enough of those in the godlessness around; there is enough of sin and misery here, without your adding to its volume of cursing. Enlarge Enoch as one who, by a life pleasing unto God, served his day and generation, and was not, for God took him.

Was not. So must it be for you, for all. The youthful step is but hastening on to that shadow which enwraps all in its gloom. As it falls on you, will it be "God took him," or "Better for that man that he had never been born?" Remember, all faith is not to be trusted. Ere Smeaton built the Eddystone lighthouse, against which the fierce storms of a century have beat, spending their force in vain, a Mr. Winstanley erected an imposing building on those rocks. So secure was he in the work of his hands, that he expressed a wish to be in the lighthouse during the wild-est storm that could blow. His wish was gratified. The wind blew, the billows rose; and when the darkness had passed, building, architect—all had been swept away; not a vestige remained, or mark to tell a tale. Trust not a refuge of lies, but by faith walk with God. Then, when earth's record may run "He is not," you shall live where glory writes, "He is, for God took him."

A BRIEF RESUME OF THE LIFE OF JESUS.

II.—THE BIRTH AND YOUTH OF JESUS.

"Wrapped in His swaddling bands,
And in His manger laid,
The hope and glory of all lands
Is come to this world's aid:

No peaceful home upon His cradle smiled—
Guests rudely came and went, where slept the royal child."

How unconscious the world often is of its greatest blessing! No portends mark the Saviour's advent, such as are found recorded in the legendary records of the demigods of old—the guardian snake at the bed of the

mother of Alexander the Great, for instance, or fiery signs at Caesar's birth. Augustus reigned; Herod ruled; Rome forgot not one of her pleasures; not even a ripple was observed on the great ocean of life when the Prince of Peace was born.

A humble pair journeyed from Galilee. Bethlehem's crowded inn was not disturbed when they sought shelter, though David's royal blood flowed through their veins. An inn, or "khan," is a low square structure, generally of one story, built rudely of brick or stone, enclosing a square where the cattle are housed, with arched recesses around for the travellers. Sometimes a cave is utilized; and tradition, with some plausibility, points out a cave as the birthplace of the Messiah. There is no furniture, nor provisions—simply shelter; all else the travellers supply. Privacy is thus out of the question where all have equal right. In such a shelter the child Jesus was born. No room in the inn, as, alas! through life; and now the world's "inns" are full of other friends, and the friend that sticketh closer than a brother still left without, an unwelcome guest. Who of us thus crowd from life and heart the Christ of God?

An apocryphal gospel relates how, at the natal hour, the pole of the heaven was motionless, the birds were still, workmen lay on the earth with their hands in a vessel, those who handled did not handle it, and those who took did not lift, and those who presented it to their mouth did not present it; but the faces of all were looking up; "and I saw the sheep scattered, and the sheep stood, and the shepherd lifted up his hand to strike, and his hand remained up; and I looked on the stream of the river, and the mouths of the kids were down, and were not drinking; and everything which was being propelled forward was intercepted in its course." No such fancies are in our gospels. Their trustworthiness, if not their divine inspiration, is attested thereby. The heavens did choir an anthem, but it was heard only by a few shepherds on Bethlehem's plains. Astrologers, too, had observed "His star in the east." What was that star? Our heavens for some time past have exhibited conjunctions and appearances of planets only possible at long intervals. One morning, rising early, under a clear sky, there were all our visible planets to be seen