

CHRISTIAN MIRROR.

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF RELIGION AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

"MANY SHALL RUN TO AND FRO, AND KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED."—DANIEL xiii. 4.

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[FOR THE CHRISTIAN MIRROR.]
LINES.

'Tis sweet to leave the busy strife
Of man with man contending still;
And hurry from the scenes of life,
To meditate upon Thy will.

'Tis sweet to cast our cares behind,
And, in the still repose of night,
To read, with self-reflecting mind,
Of blessings to the sons of light.

And sweet to know that in that hour
Of calm, religious, peaceful thought,
We're guided by the Spirit's power,
And by the Spirit's wisdom taught.

And when from time we're called away,
And Death at length appears,
To close the evening of our day,
In this sad vale of tears.

How sweet will then the joyful sound
Fall on the listening ear?
Of "All who in his likeness found,
" Shall with their Lord appear."

"Come, Blessed, come—the kingdom's mine,
"Ye servants whom I love;
"Take the inheritance that's thine,
"Prepared for thee above."

January, 1842.

J. D. M'D.

GENERAL LITERATURE.

THE BEREFT

'Tis sweet, as year by year we lose
Friends out of sight—by faith to muse,
How grows in Paradise our store.—*Keble.*

THAT we are "strangers and pilgrims on the earth," was the confession of that crowd of witnesses who now, through faith and patience, inherit the promises. With the Divine assurance for their passport, this band of believers made their way, through every variety of trial, to that "city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

There are those who in these latter days have followed closely in the footsteps of that holy flock, and among such was Mary Singleton, an aged mourner, who with chastened affections sojourned below, while her home and her citizenship were in heaven. Her path through this world had been strewn with thorns, and each tear that moistened it, "mourned its own distinct distress," and she now calmly pursued her earthly duties, with the eye of faith steadily fixed on that eternal weight of glory—the final reversion of the sanctified sufferer. But amidst a wreck of earthly feelings and prospects, there still remained one object upon which many a hope, and fond anticipation rested. An only son was spared to Mrs. Singleton—spared through the helpless years of infancy, and the uncertain paths of youth—spared from sickness and sorrow, and, to the eye of man, from sin. He had been devoted to the Lord from his cradle, and the mother's prayer was answered.—Herbert grew in grace as he grew in knowledge, and when maturer years confirmed the earliest wish of his youth, he dedicated himself, his talents and young affections, to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I cannot describe the emotions of the mother's heart when she first beheld her son ministering

at God's altar, and receiving the cup of blessing from the hand she had first taught to raise in adoration. It was the fulfilment of all her hopes—the answer to all her prayers—and in that one hour of bliss, years of anxiety and bereavement were forgotten. She felt that she had a son for eternity as well as time, and with the aged Simeon, she was ready to "depart in peace."

Her faith was soon put to this last test. A prophetic cough had for some months warned her of the nearness of the grave, and soon after the settlement of Herbert over his small country parish, her feeble frame began to yield, and she was confined to the chamber of sickness. Here her patience and pious trust were hourly displayed, and here filial affection was called to its last sad exercise. The son scarcely left the bed-side of his mother—

—day and night

He watch'd, anticipating every want,
And sharing every pang. From a full heart,
Now audibly, now silently, he pour'd
Incessant supplication for her life,
Or happiness in death—and when the hope
Of her recovery failed, with gratitude
He saw, unshaken to the last, her trust
In His compassion, whom in health she served
With willing mind.

The sweet month of May was drawing to a close—that month of hope and promise, of leaves and sunshine—that clothes the earth with smiles, but fills many hearts with tears, by calling the victims of consumption to its green bosom. It was the evening of the holy Sabbath. The public worship of God's house was over, and Herbert sat beside his sleeping parent.

She was tranquil—her pulse beat gently, and her son thought her much easier than usual—but it was only a prelude to the enduring rest upon which she was about to enter. A ray of the setting sun shone through the natural drapery of the window, and rested on her face. She opened her eyes, and cast a languid look of affection upon her son.

"Herbert," she said, "I feel very faint—I may not be able to say much more to you—nay, do not," she added, laying her hand upon his arm as he hastily rose: "do not go to get anything for this poor, worthless body, but kneel down and let us pray once more together;—ask that my faith may sustain me through the dark valley—that my Saviour may be with me, and that I may rest solely on the arm of His righteousness."

Herbert knelt,—large tears rolled over his cheeks, and nature for one moment would have way. "Lord strengthen me for this hour!" he faintly ejaculated, and then the calm voice of supplication rose. In one heart-felt petition he besought the Lord to receive the spirit of his departing parent. "Let her be thine, Saviour, in death—she has been thine in life—receive her now in the arms of thy redeeming love, and clothed in thy spotless righteousness, may she peacefully enter thy heavenly kingdom."

"Amen!" murmured the dying believer. Herbert rose. The "silver cord" was gently loosed, and the sainted spirit had returned to God who gave it.

The evening was full of the presence of God, and Herbert sought the retirement of its shaded stillness. The moon was out in all her composing beauty. A silvery haze was over the horizon, through which the smaller stars twinkled modestly. As the uplifted eye of Herbert rested on the heavens, he exclaimed,—"Yes! it is all ways so—the stars of divine promise shine through

the mists of affliction, assuring us that there are worlds of light beyond this dark scene." Nature and the voice of omnipotence whispered peace, and the mourner's tearful eye was dried, and his tumultuous bosom became "calm as the brow of Jesus." This was Herbert's first bereavement.

The love of father, brothers and sisters, he had never shared, for they had been summoned by death from the family circle while he was yet unconscious of his loss. But his faith was severely tried when he was called to part with his mother—his suffering, patient, Christian mother—the nurse of his infancy, the companion of his boyhood, the sympathising friend and faithful adviser of his after years.

But something told him that it was selfish to mourn for such a parent, and by and by reflection upon her memory became sweet and soothing, and a resignation full of hope filled his heart. He engaged with renewed interest in his sacred duties, and his increased faithfulness and zeal showed that his mother did not die in vain.

Caroline D— had been the playmate and early friend of Herbert Singleton. As her mind expanded, he admired its beauty and richness, and he learned to esteem and love her, as he saw the bright image of her Saviour reflected on her heart. The life of Caroline had been written with a sunbeam—she had known neither care nor sorrow. A sound and vigorous mind—a happy home, kind parents, and a refined circle of friends, were among the blessings for which her daily offering of praise arose. In "all time of her prosperity" she sought the author of every good and perfect gift. In bright unassuming youth, she laid upon God's altar the noble sacrifice of an untried heart.

She did not wait until other sources of happiness were dried up, and then turn to heaven for the comfort earth denied, but she "came to the cross when her young cheek was blooming," and beneath its holy shadow she was prepared for joy or sorrow.

When Herbert told her of his long and fond affection, she answered him with the simplicity and holy frankness of Rebecca.

The gifts of betrothment passed—his, a beautiful copy of the Word of Life—hers, a seal, bearing the inscription that should be written on the heart of every watchman of Israel, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

At the sweet hour of sunset on Sunday evening, a brother clergyman united Herbert and Caroline in the holy bonds of matrimony. The ceremony was performed in the little church at whose altar he ministered, and before whose chancel she had first received the emblems of a Saviour's love.—The young bride was surrounded by a circle of affectionate friends. The father, with a calm voice, committed his child to another's care, and the tear that stole down the mother's cheek was caught by a smile of affectionate approbation.

Brothers, sisters and friends, formed a congratulating group, and many an inward petition arose for blessings on the youthful pair.

Thus they married in the Lord, and, quietly waiting upon Him, they consecrated their affections, tastes and endowments to high and holy purposes. In pursuing the simple round of duty connected with a country parish, they neglected not the graces and refinements of life. Luxuriant flowers surrounded their cottage, and the tasteful hand of Caroline was displayed in their beautiful arrangement, while literature shed its refining light upon every thing around. After the labours of study or composition, Herbert sought the society of his gentle wife, as a bird returns to its nestlings after a weary flight, and replumes its pinions