

## POETRY.

## GOD IS LOVE.

The bud unfolding in the vernal beam,  
The fruit that basks in summer's golden gleam,  
Autumn's rich smile—e'en Winter's frown above,  
All tell my thrilling soul that "God is love."

The flower that blushes on the streamlet's brink,  
Where dewy herbs the tears of morning drink—  
Each leaf that quivers in the verdant grove,  
Whispers mine inmost heart that "God is love."

The stars that gild the glowing arch on high,  
Orbs—worlds—transcendent wonders of the sky!  
Yon suns of glory, that majestic move,  
All have a voice, and echo "God is love."

Thunders, with roar reverberating loud,  
Lightnings, whose arrowy shafts transpierce the cloud,  
Concels through ether that eccentric rove,  
With one accord attest that "God is love."

Flowers, fruits—the beauty and the joy of earth—  
Stars, moons, and planets, of celestial birth—  
Suns, worlds, winds, meteors—that erratic move,  
Tell the wide universe that "God is love."

Yet faint as fall the murmurs of the stream,  
Or echo of the whisper of a dream,  
Compared with Calvary's Cross, their accents prove  
To teach my thankful spirit, "God is love."

## RELIGIOUS LITERATURE.

## THE ILLUMINATION OF THE FACE OF MOSES.

BY THE REV. H. O. CROFTS.

CHRISTIANS are exhorted by an inspired apostle, "not to be slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises." That the church might be benefited by their example, the Holy Spirit has recorded many of their lives upon the pages of sacred history. Those lives are well worthy the attentive perusal of every believer. The minute circumstances, as well as the general tenor of their lives, should be carefully weighed, and duly considered, if their characters are to be fairly estimated, and their worthy rightly appreciated. And certain it is, that the advantages derived from such labour, will amply repay for all the trouble required to obtain a full knowledge of those, whose characters are given by the Spirit in the Bible. No one can rise from a careful perusal of the life of a scripture character, without being a wiser if not a better man. One of the most illustrious of the Old Testament saints is Moses. Not only did the office he sustained, and the revelations made to him, conspire to make him illustrious; but his personal excellencies, viz., his strong faith, his surpassing meekness, his great self-denial, his amazing fidelity, and above all, his ardent love to God and his people, have raised him to a very conspicuous place in the first rank of the ancient worthies; and while piety remains on earth, the character of Moses will command attention, and excite in every pious heart, esteem, admiration, and reverence. It cannot be expected, that in a single communication justice can be done to every particular connected with the history of this truly great and inexpressibly good man. Your attention will therefore be directed to one circumstance in his history, and that is the Illumination of his face.

*The Illumination of the face of Moses was real, not imaginary.* This all must allow, who acknowledge the authenticity and divinity of the sacred Scriptures, and who attentively consider the circumstances of the case. In the 34th chapter of Exodus, it is positively stated, that "When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tables of testimony in his hand, Moses wist (knew) not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him, (God.) And when Aaron, and all the children of Israel, saw Moses, beheld, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called unto them, and afterward, all the children of Israel came nigh; and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. And till Moses

had done speaking with him, he put a veil on his face. But when Moses went in before the Lord, to speak with him, he took the veil off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel, that which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of his face shone. And Moses put the veil on his face again, while he went in to speak with him." Now, if there had been anything illusory in the illumination of the face of Moses, some out of the vast number of Israel would have detected it; Surely Aaron, and all the children of Israel, could not be deceived. Yet they all saw him, and all beheld the skin of his face shining. And allowing that they might have been deceived at first, by their distance from him, surely, when they all came nigh to him, and talked with him, the illusion would have vanished, if there had been any. But when they came nigh him, they still perceived that the skin of his face shone, and he was obliged to put a veil over his face, while he talked with them. It is, therefore, evident, that the shining of his face was real, not imaginary.

*The Illumination of the face of Moses was miraculous, not natural.* Natural causes may change the face of a man, and give a very peculiar expression to the countenance. Emotions of joy will spread over the face, a glow of cheerfulness and pleasure, which it is delightful to behold. Revengful and angry feelings will fill the eye with strange fire, and give to the countenance an expression which it is unpleasant to behold. Grief will give a peculiar look of sadness and dejection which excites pity and sympathy in the beholder. But there was nothing natural in the illumination of the face of Moses, for the children of Israel were filled with uncommon wonder and astonishment, when they saw him. Now we do not wonder uncommonly at seeing a man's face illumined with joy, or burning with rage. And it would have required something more than a mere natural change in the countenance of Moses, accustomed as the Israelites were to see him, from day to day, to have raised their wonder and astonishment to such a pitch. They were also afraid to come nigh him; but why this fear, if there was nothing miraculous in the change of his countenance? Besides, if it had not been miraculous, such marked and distinct notice would not have been taken of it in the Bible; consequently the inference is, that the illumination of the face of Moses was miraculous, not natural.

*The cause of this Illumination of his face was intimate communion with God upon Mount Sinai, for forty days and forty nights.* It is impossible for a man to hold close, intimate, and habitual communion with God in the present day, without a change taking place in his soul, if not in his face. Believers by beholding with their mental eyes the glory of the Lord; by gazing upon his glory, in the gospel glass, experience a change upon their souls; they are changed into the moral likeness of God, and sometimes that change is visible in their countenances, though not in the same manner, and to the same extent as the illumination of the face of Moses. The apostle, in the 3d chapter of the 2 Cor. says, "But we all with open face beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." And if this effect in now produced upon the souls of believers, why need we wonder at the illumination of the face of Moses, when we consider the remarkable manner in which God communed with him for so long a period as forty days and forty nights? Though Moses did not actually see the face of God, yet he was surrounded with the divine glory. He had an immediate interview with Jehovah, and conversed with him as a man with his friend. Here then we have an adequate cause assigned for this wonderful event. Such peculiar communion with God, for so long a time, caused his face to shine as no mere man's ever had done before, or ever has done since, excepting Stephen's, when he stood before the Jewish Sanhedrim. We are told respecting him, "That all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly upon him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." (Acts vi. 15.) And it is worthy of remark, although believers in the present day cannot hold communion with God in the same remarkable

manner that Moses did; and although there is not the same correspondent effect, yet those believers who are very eminent for piety, are easily distinguished from the common mass of professors. There is a peculiar glow of heavenly-mindedness in their countenances—a peculiar lustre and brightness about their actions, which distinguish them from Christians of but ordinary piety, and which even the men of the world observe.

*The Illumination of the face of Moses gave him an elevation of character, and an extent of influence unknown before.* Nothing upon earth could have exalted the character of Moses, so much as this illumination of his face. Had he continued in Egypt, as the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, and had he been raised to the throne of that country, or had he been made the absolute monarch of Israel; had his dominions been as extensive as those of Nebuchadnezzar's were, and had his government been revered at home and respected abroad, his character would not have been so elevated as it was by this illumination of his face. This circumstance stamped his character with the highest, with the truest dignity. The most flattering worldly distinctions could not have rendered him so illustrious. And this single circumstance gave a splendour to his appearance, which all the brilliants in the world could not impart, and gave a grandeur to his mien, which neither nature nor art could ever supply; for there was in his appearance something more Godlike, a nearer approach to the likeness of the great "I AM," than the world had ever seen before in the face of man. The Israelites were not merely dazzled with the shining of his face, but were struck with awe, and were obliged to retire from his presence, as from the presence of a being belonging to a far superior order. And as the illumination of his face gave him such an elevation of character, it would also extend his influence. Both extrinsic and intrinsic excellencies are ever accompanied with a certain degree of influence; and the more conspicuous a man's excellencies are, the greater will be his authority and power over his fellow creatures. Therefore, the power of Moses must have been increased by the illumination of his face. The Israelites would be more disposed to bow to his authority, and yield to his commands, when they saw the divine glory beaming in his countenance, and streaming from his face. Hence we are told in the narrative, that they were afraid of the man that possessed such open and visible proofs of God's approbation. And exalted piety, like the illumination of the face of Moses, will always elevate the character, and extend the influence of those who possess it. Exalted piety gives man the truest dignity, and the greatest power. If you find a man of extraordinary holiness, you at once perceive in him an elevation of character, and an extent of influence, which you do not perceive in ordinary Christians. Make inquiries about such a one in his immediate neighbourhood, and you will find that he is respected and admired by all classes. Rich and poor, learned and illiterate, pious and profane, alike speak of him with esteem, affection, and reverence. Cultivate an acquaintance with this man—enter into conversation with him—be much in his company, and you will find that in his presence you are surrounded with an atmosphere so pure, that in it vice & impiety can scarcely breathe. Take the most abandoned profligate, who knows the man, into his company, and his spirit, hardy as it may be, will quail and shrink before him, and he will stand abashed in his presence. Yea, reverence and awe will fill the soul of the profligate, and the blush of shame will steal over his countenance, at once portraying the uneasy, the unwelcome, and the unpleasant feeling which pervades his mind. Are the ungodly brought to the bed of death—do they quail and shrink, seared by the near approach of the terrible monster, death? Do they want instruction, assistance and comfort? Then the man of exalted piety is requested to attend: his conversation is eagerly listened to—his prayers are earnestly and fervently implored, and his advice is attended to with the utmost diligence. In short, you have only to find out the man that possesses elevated piety, and there you will perceive an elevation of character, and an extent of power, which ordinary Christians do not, cannot possess.

To be continued.