

From the Christian Witness.

THE LOST TRAVELLER.—A Recent Fact.

At the close of a mild day in September, 1835, a solitary traveller, on horseback, was winding his way through one of the vast prairies of the State of Illinois. His dress was coarse and plain, and his appearance, way-worn and fatigued. A shade of serious thought rested on his brow, but the mild light of his eye told a tale of inward peacefulness. The lone traveller was a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, who had left, for a time, the flock he had gathered in a distant part of the State, to scatter the seed of the Gospel over the wilderness, and to break the bread of life to those who were living without hope and without God in the world. Like his Master, the faithful man went from house to house, and never departed without leaving a prayer and blessing behind him. On Tuesday, the thirtieth of September, his heart was cheered and his spirit refreshed by his arrival at a cottage, whose inmates had heard the glad tidings of the Gospel of peace, and faithfully cherished its hopes and promises as their best portion here, and only passport to eternity. It was very sweet to him to sit down at their simple board which the supplicated blessing had hallowed, and sweeter still to kneel around a family altar where the flame of humble piety was kept burning, and where incense and a pure offering daily arose to the Author of every good and perfect gift. But our Missionary could not linger beneath this roof, delightful as it was to find a response when he spoke of the common hopes, joys and fears, that bind the people of God together. He must be on his way to those who, as yet, saw no beauty in the face of the Lord Jesus, and try to set him forth in the true loveliness of his life and doctrine. Soon after dinner he mounted his well-fed horse, and, with a parting benediction, took his leave. He rode slowly along. The first leaves of an early autumn were beginning to fall—the silvery foliage of the maple was giving place to its richer garb of gold, and the rustling leaves of the lofty oak awoke the first note of the forest's requiem. At a distance of about ten miles from his last resting place, was a cottage, to which the traveller had been directed, and where he hoped to pass the night. The sun was sinking behind the hills, and as yet he saw no opening nor sign of cultivation. The prairie lay before him in its vast, bewildering sameness. The dread waste stretched on and on, bounded only by the dark blue horizon. With the gathering folds of evening came the painful apprehension that the night must be spent in the forest. It became dark, and it was useless for him to proceed. He alighted from his horse, and taking from his pocket a portion of cold meat and bread that his last kind hostess had put up for him, sat down to his lonely meal. There he knelt on the damp earth and offered up his evening prayer, and soon slept peacefully beneath the shadow of His wing who never sleepeth. With the first faint light of morning, he was again on his uncertain way. With the confident expectation of soon reaching some habitation, he consumed the remnant of his provision, and with a heart cheered by the presence of God, rode along in silent prayer. But hour after hour passed, and but one prospect presented itself—that of a wild, uncultivated prairie. The woods grew more dense and the solitude deeper, and again our pilgrim saw the darkness of night coming on, and found himself without a place to lay his head. He left his jaded beast and sat down on the stump of a tree. The scene was still and solemn. The sun was setting, and as its last rays fell upon the tall trees, the forest presented no unfaithful picture of our world, enshrouded, as it is, with the shades of sin, through which the Sun of Righteousness can alone penetrate. It was light from this source that illumined the heart of our traveller—a light, which, like the pillar of fire that led the Israelites of old, he knew would guide him right, and whether it was God's will that it should lead him forth from this solitude to serve him on earth, or conduct his soul to its heavenly home, he felt that all would be "well." When he found that another night must be passed in the forest, he took the bridle from his weary horse and turned him adrift, hoping that instinct might guide him to a habitation. And now he again knelt and poured forth his soul before God, and the sweet assurance came over him—"Verily the Lord hath heard thee." "Why should I murmur," he exclaimed—"Jesus has been in the wilder-

ness before me, and the servant is not greater than his Master.' He took his hymn book from his pocket and sung the following lines, every one of which, he said, seemed written for him. His voice died away in the distance, but the strain ascended to the Throne of God.

*Upward I lift mine eyes,
From God is all my aid,
The God who built the skies
And earth and heaven made.*

*God is the tower
To which I fly,
His grace is nigh
In every hour.*

*No burning heats by day
Nor blasts of evening air,
Shall take my health away
If God be with me there.*

*Thou art my sun
And thou my shade
To guard my head
By night or noon.*

*Hast thou not given thy word
To save my soul from death?
And I can trust the Lord
To keep my vital breath.*

*I'll go and come
Nor fear to die—
Till from on high
Thou call'st me home.*

The whole of Thursday was spent in the same fruitless effort to extricate himself from the mazes of the wood. He was now on foot, and with slow and feeble steps, first took one direction and then another. At times he would follow the Indian trails, but soon left them, finding that they always led either to the top of some mountain or to the depth of a ravine.

On Thursday evening he sank on the ground, sick and exhausted. He felt all the symptoms of fever, and death seemed inevitable. Taking a pencil and paper from his pocket, he wrote, what he considered his dying requests, and commending his soul to his Saviour, laid his weary head on a log of timber,—to die.

But God had ordered it otherwise. He had yet work for his son on earth, and he caused a deep sleep to fall upon him from which he did not awake until the sun called him forth to renew his pilgrimage. It was now two days since he had tasted any food, and the 'water was spent in the bottle.'

But though weak nature was almost exhausted, his spiritual strength failed not—He had meat to eat that we know not of, and he had tasted of that living water of which those who drink shall never thirst.

Another day he was doomed to wander, and another night to sleep beneath the canopy of heaven. On Saturday morning, he, with difficulty, raised his crippled limbs from the ground. After walking a short distance, he again sank down, exhausted, when—the clear, ringing sound of an axe broke on his ear. He fell on his knees—"Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me," he exclaimed, "and I know that thou hearest me always, and art always nigh to those who call upon thee."

He arose and followed the sound, and soon perceived, through an opening in the trees, a distant house and barn. With great effort he reached it, and sinking on the door step was immediately lifted up and borne to a bed.

"Don't you recollect us?" exclaimed one and all. He knew not that he had seen any of them before. "But don't you know that you took dinner with us last Tuesday," asked the good woman of the house. A dimness rested on his mental vision,—all seemed strange to him. Soon after the aged head of the family came in—"Why, friend, don't you remember that you sang and prayed with us on Tuesday, and said it was the only family you had found with whom you could thus mingle your heart and voice?" The truth

now broke upon the mind of the Missionary. He was again beneath the roof of the Christian family whom he had left *four days before*, and whose prayers had daily ascended for him since his departure. They now ministered kindly to his suffering body, and after repose for the day and night, he was so far refreshed as to be able on the next morning, which was that of the sacred Sabbath, to perform for them the sweet services of his calling.

A. M. M.

New York, March 19th, 1836.

AN ENGLISH CATHEDRAL.

We gave in our last an extract from 'Sketches of Society in Great Britain and Ireland,' by an American Congregational Minister. We now present to our readers a description of a Cathedral of the Church of England, by the same writer.

'Yesterday was the Sabbath, and at eleven o'clock we directed our steps to the Cathedral, there 'to wait upon the Lord,' and 'to renew our strength.' * * * * * Dr. Sumner, the learned and pious prelate of the See, is not at present in Chester, and the audience was small, consisting principally, from appearance, of those connected officially with the Cathedral, with their families, and a few strangers.

The perfect quietude and order of the whole city during the morning, except the chiming of silver-toned bells, calling her citizens to the temples of their God; the neatness, respectability, and Christian aspect of the crowds we met making their way, in the brightness of the morning, to their various places of worship; and the cursory view we had taken of the Cathedral, had all aided in a preparation of the heart for the services of piety. And I was thankful for that frame of mind, in which alone we have the humble confidence, that we worship 'in spirit and in truth.'

I do not remember at any time before to have been so deeply moved by the Litany and its touching appeals to the most sacred passions of the bosom; and if I have ever known the affections of penitence and love to God, of faith in a Redeemer, and joy and peace in believing, they once more visited my soul with a melting and refreshing power, as I now bowed before the Almighty, and joined in the praises and supplications of his people.

The Rev. Mr. Law, a prebendary of the Cathedral, and a brother of a late Bishop of Chester, preached the sermon. His voice and intonations are not agreeable; but his manner was solemn and sincere; and the discourse, in doctrine, illustration, and practical inference and application, all that truth and ministerial faithfulness could desire.—*Church Advocate.*

KEPLER, THE ASTRONOMER.

Kepler concludes one of his astronomical works with the following prayer: 'It remains only that I should now lift up to heaven my eyes and hands from the table of my pursuits, and humbly and devoutly supplicate the Father of lights. O thou, who by the light of nature dost enkindle in us a desire after the light of grace, that by this thou mayest translate us into the light of glory, I give thee thanks, O Lord and Creator, that Thou hast gladdened me by thy creation, when I was enraptured by the work of thy hands. Behold! I have here completed a work of my calling, with as much of intellectual strength as thou hast granted me. I have declared the praise of thy works to the men who will read the evidences of it, so far as my finite spirit could comprehend them, in their infinity. My mind endeavoured to its utmost to reach the philosophy; but if any thing unworthy of Thee has been taught by me—a worm born and nourished in sin—do thou teach me that I may correct it. Have I been seduced into presumptions by the admirable beauty of thy works, or have I sought my own glory among men, in the construction of a work designed for thine honour? O then graciously and mercifully forgive me; and finally grant me this favour, that this work may never be injurious, but may conduce to thy glory, and the good of souls.'—*Gambler Observer.*

Comfort in Affliction.—Has your child been taken from you? It was but lent of the LORD. It has gone to the haven before the storm of life comes on,—not gone away from you, but gone before you: prepare to meet it in glory.