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The Itinerant Bride.

BY MISS E. B. BALDWIN.
O Ere! be quiet, for thy dark brow,
The vessel is floating that bears me now
The first precious bird of my nest:
And, down on this heart, that with tremulous
beat,
Seems so anxious to fly to her floating retreat—
Must a mother's fond fears be repressed.
Away from the scenes where in childhood she
played;
Away from the haunts where her young feet
have strayed;
From the countless endearments of home:
Where parents, and sisters, still linger in love,
Where the brother once sang that now singing
above
With the songsters in heaven's high dome.
But whispers, all noiseless, yet reaching the
heart,
Are soothingly saying, "is needful to part—
Let your car on God's promises rest:
And, her toil in His vineyard will brighten
her brow,
And her face be more precious than earthly re-
wards,
And her treasure, a home with the blest."
And I thought of THAT home and my darling
one there;
And welcom'd each cross that would make it
more fair,
That would ripen another for heaven:
And, my heart, for each sacrifice, to complain,
For, I knew that each sanctified cross would be
gain,
When we met where no ties could be riven.

Excellences of the Bible.

BY REV. J. C. RYLE.
The Bible handles subjects which are utterly beyond the reach of man when left to himself. It treats of things that are invisible—the soul, the world to come, and eternity; subjects which man has no line to fathom. All who have tried to write on these subjects, without Bible light, have done little but show their own ignorance. They grope like the blind. They speculate. They conjecture. They generally make the darkness more visible, and land us in a region of uncertainty and doubt. How little did the wisest of the heathen know! How dim were the views of Solon, Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, and Seneca! A well-taught Sunday-school child, in the present day, knows more eternal truth than all these sages put together.
The Bible alone describes the beginning and end of the globe on which we live. It starts from the birthday of the sun, moon, stars, and earth, and shows us creation in its cradle. It foretells minutely the dissolution of all things,—when the stars shall fall from their places, and the earth, and all its works, shall be burned up, and the world in its grave. It tells us the story of the world's youth, and it tells us the story of its old age. It gives us the picture of its first days, and it gives us the picture of its last days. How vast and important is this knowledge!
The Bible alone gives a true and faithful account of man. It does not flatter him as novels and romances do. It does not conceal his faults, and exaggerate his goodness. It paints him just as he is. It describes him as a fallen creature, and very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil,—a creature needing not only a pardon, but a new heart, to make him fit for heaven. It shows him to be a corrupt being, under every possible circumstance, when left to himself; corrupt after the loss of paradise, corrupt after the flood, corrupt when fenced in by laws and commandments, corrupt when the Son of God visited him as man, in the days of his incarnation, corrupt in the face of judgments, corrupt in the face of mercies. In one word, it shows man to be by nature always a sinner. How important is this knowledge!
The Bible alone gives true views of God. By nature man knows nothing of him. All his conceptions and ideas of him are grovelling and deluded. What can be more degraded than the gods of the Canaanites, and Egyptians,—of Babylon, of Greece, and of Rome? What can be more vile than the gods of the Hindus, and other heathens, in their own times? By the Bible we know that God hates sin. He destroyed the world by the flood, the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, the drowning of Pharaoh and the Egyptians in the Red Sea, the cutting off of the nations of Canaan, the overthrow of Jerusalem and the temple, the scattering of Jews: all these are unmistakable witnesses. By the Bible we know that God loves sinners. His gracious promise in the day of Adam's fall, his long-suffering in the times of Noah, his deliverance of Israel out of the land of Egypt, his gift of the law at Mount Sinai, his bringing the tribes into the promised land, his forbearance in the days of the judges and kings, his repeated warnings by the mouth of his prophets, his restoration of Israel after the Babylonian captivity, his sending his Son into the world, in due time, to be crucified, his commanding the gospel to be preached to the Gentiles,—all these are speaking facts. By the Bible we learn that God knows all things. We see him foretelling things hundreds and thousands of years before they take place; and he foretells, so it comes to pass. He foretold that the family of Ham should be a servant of servants; that Tyre should become a rock for drying nets; that Nineveh should become a desolation; that Babylon should be made a desert; that Egypt should be the basest of kingdoms, and that the Jews should be reckoned among the nations. All these things were utterly unlikely; yet they all have been fulfilled. Reader, once more I say: how important is this knowledge!
The Bible alone teaches us that God has made a full, perfect, and complete provision for the sinner of fallen man. It tells us of an atonement made for the sin of the world, by the sacrifice and death of God's only Son upon the cross. It tells us that by his death for sinners, he obtained eternal redemption for all that believe on him. The claims of God's broken law have now been satisfied. Christ has suffered for sin, the just for the unjust. God can now be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly. It tells us that the blood of sin, even the precious blood of Christ. Whosoever believeth on him shall

not perish, but have eternal life. It tells us that there is a complete remedy for the power of sin, even the almighty grace of the Spirit of Christ. It shows us the Holy Ghost quickening believers, and making them new creatures. It promises a new heart and a new nature to all who will hear Christ's voice, and follow him. Reader, once more I say, how important is this knowledge!
The Bible alone explains the state of things that we see in the world around us. There are many things on earth which a natural man cannot explain. The amazing inequality of conditions,—the poverty and distress, the oppression and persecution, the shakings and tumults, the failures of statesmen and legislators, the constant existence of uncurable evils and abuses,—all these things are often puzzling to him. He sees, but does not understand. But the Bible makes it all clear. The Bible can tell him that the whole world lieth in wickedness,—that the prince of the world, the devil, is everywhere, and that it is vain to look for perfection in the present order of things. The Bible will tell him that neither laws nor education can ever change men's hearts; and just as no man will ever make a machine work well unless he allows for friction, so also no man will do much good in the world unless he always remembers that the world he works in is full of sin. The Bible will tell him that there is "a good time" certainly coming, and coming perhaps sooner than people expect it; a time of perfect knowledge, perfect justice, perfect happiness, and perfect peace. The Bible will tell him this time shall not be brought in by any power but that of Christ coming to earth again. And for that Christ coming to earth, the Bible will tell him to prepare. O reader, how important is all this knowledge!
But time would fail me if I were to enter fully into all the great things which the Bible contains. I have only sketched or outlined that the treasures of the Bible can be displayed. It would be easy to point out many other things besides those I have mentioned, and yet the half of its riches would be left untold.
How comforting is the account it gives us of the great Redeemer, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who came to earth in the form of man, and who died for our sins, and who is now seated at the right hand of his Father, and who will come again to judge the living and the dead. How precious are the promises which the Bible contains for those who believe on Jesus Christ! Four times before our eyes, Four separate witnesses tell us of his miracles and his ministry, his sayings and his doings, his life and his death, his power and his love, his kindness and his patience, his ways, his words, his wisdom, his thoughts, his heart. Blessed be God, there is one thing in the Bible the most precious reader can hardly fail to understand, and that is the character of Jesus Christ!
How encouraging are the examples the Bible gives of good people! It tells us of many who were of like passions with ourselves,—men and women who had careers, families, temptations, afflictions, diseases, like ourselves,—and yet by faith and patience inherited the promises, and got safe home. It keeps back nothing in the history of these people. Their mistakes, their infirmities, their conflicts, their perplexities, their prayers, their praises, their useful lives, their happy deaths—all are fully recorded. And it tells us the God sent Saviour of these men and women still waits to be gracious, and is altogether unchanged.
How instructive are the examples the Bible gives us of bad people! It tells us of men and women who were of like passions with ourselves, who were of like temptations, afflictions, and opportunities, like ourselves, and yet hardened their hearts, loved the world, clung to their sins, would have their own way, despised reproof, and ruined their own souls forever. And it warns us that the God who punished Pharaoh, and Saul, and Ahab, and Jezebel, and Judas, and Ananias, and Sapphira, is a God who never alters; and that there is a hell.
How precious are the promises which the Bible contains for the use of those who love God! There is hardly any possible emergency or condition for which it has not some promise in season. And it tells us that God loves to be put in remembrance of these promises, and that if he has said he will do a thing, his promise shall certainly be performed.
How blessed are the hopes which the Bible holds out to the believer in Jesus Christ! Peace in the hour of death; rest and happiness on the other side of the grave; a glorious body in the morning of the resurrection; a full and triumphant acquittal in the day of judgment; an everlasting reward in the kingdom of Christ; a joyful meeting with the Lord's people in the day of gathering together;—these, these are the future prospects of every true Christian. They are all written in the book,—in the book which is all true.

How striking is the light which the Bible sheds on the character of men! It teaches us what men may be expected to be and do in every position and station in life. It gives us the deepest insight into the secret springs and motives of human action, and the ordinary course of events under the control of human agents. It is the true discernment of the thoughts and intentions of the heart, a full and complete revelation in the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes! I can well understand an old divine saying, "Give me a candle and a Bible, and shut me up in a dark dungeon, and I will tell you all that the whole world is doing."
Reader, all these are things which men could find nowhere except in the Bible. We have probably not the least idea how little we should know about these things if we had not the Bible. We hardly know the value of the air we breathe, and the sun which shines upon us, because we have never known what it is to be without them. We do not value the truths on which I have been just now dwelling, because we do not realize the darkness of men to whom these truths have not been revealed. Surely no tongue can fully tell the value of the treasure this one volume contains. Well might old John Newton say that some books were copper coins in his estimation, some were silver, and some few were gold; but the Bible alone was like a book made up of bank notes.
Think not for a moment that any part of the precious book is not profitable. Think not that such portions as catalogues and pedigrees,—as Leviticus, and the description of Ezekiel's temple,—are useless and without value. Believe me it is childish folly to question the usefulness of any word in the Bible, merely because our eyes at present do not see its use.

Absence from Church.

He has been absent from church for several Sabbaths.
HAVE YOU BEEN TO SEE HIM? Perhaps he is sick. And O how grateful are the attentions of a fellow member of the Church to a sick brother! Do not leave him in his loneliness uncheered by a word of sympathy or comfort. Go and sit by his bedside and talk cheerfully to him, and read the word of God to him; sing some of the songs of Zion and every melody. You may do him great good, administer spiritual comfort to his heart, and be will live you more; as he recovers, the religion which prompts you, and the Church with which you are mutually connected, will become dearer to him as he realizes the precious sympathy which his fellowship evokes.
HAVE YOU BEEN TO SEE HIM? Perhaps he is poor, and wants fitting garments to appear decently in the House of God. It may be a false pride keeps him away on this account, or it may be the true cause of his absence. It is a cause of more frequent recurrence than many of us are willing to admit. Visit him discreetly, kindly, with his confidence, and inquire like a brother, for the reasons. And if this should be the case, interest yourself with your brethren, for the supply of his necessities. Jesus will remember your kind interposition, and say to you, approvingly, "I was naked and ye clothed me."
HAVE YOU BEEN TO SEE HIM? Perhaps he is afflicted in his family. His wife or child may be suffering and need his attention at home. He may even be kept from his daily employment by nursing the sick, and thus doubly need your fraternal sympathy and aid. At any rate go and see what is the matter; you may be useful.

Prayerfulness.

Reader, this is the book which I address to you this day. Surely it is no light matter what you are doing with it. It is no light matter in what way you are using this treasure. I charge you, I summon you to give an honest answer to my questions. What art thou doing with the Bible? Dost thou read it? HOW READEST THOU?
"He continued all night in prayer to God."—Luke vi. 12
We speak of this Christian and that Christian as "a man of prayer." Jesus was emphatically so. "The Spirit was poured upon him without measure, yet he prayed." He was incarnate wisdom, "needed not that any should teach him." He was infinite in his power and boundless in his resources, yet he prayed! How deeply sacred the prayerful memories that hover around the solitude of Olivet and the shores of Galilee! He seemed often to turn night into day, to redeem time for prayer, rather than lose the blessed privilege.
We are rarely, indeed, admitted into the solemnities of his inner life. The veil of night is generally between us and the Great High Priest, when he entered "the holiest of all"; but we have enough to reveal all that is secret, to move our confiding hearts to His Heavenly Father. No morning dawns without his fetching fresh manna from the mercy seat. "He wakeneth morning by morning; He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned."—Isa. l. 4. Beautiful description of a praying Redeemer, waiting as if at every door, for man's good, to get fresh supplies for the duties and trials of the day. All his public acts were consecrated by prayer—his baptism, his transfiguration, his miracles, his agony, his death. He breathed away his spirit in prayer. "His last breath," says Philip Henry, "was praying; in holding communion with God, Jesus drank of this very brook! He consecrated the benediction and the silent chamber. He refreshed his fainting spirit at the same great fountain head from which it is life for us to draw and death to forsake."
Reader, do you complain of your languid spirit, your drooping faith, your fitful affections, and your lukewarm love? May you not trace too much of what you deplore to an unfrequented chamber? The treasures are locked up for you because you have suffered the key to rust; the hands hang down because they have ceased to be lifted in prayer. Without prayer, it is a pilgrim without a staff, a seaman without a compass, the soldier going unarmed and unharassed to battle.

God is Love.

Blessed, glorious truth! The sun of our darkness, the solace of our woe! The crown of our joy! The anchor of our hope! The shield of our life, the thick and impenetrable night obstruct our way? We remember that "God is love," and the midnight of our prospects brightens into day. "Are we afflicted, distressed, borne down by the burden of insupportable sorrow? We feel that "God is love," and our load of affliction is lightened. "Are we blessed with prosperity, and rejoicing in the fullness of delight? We are reminded that "God is love," and our cup of bliss overflows, we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Do we hope for rest and recompense on high when the toils of life are over? The truth that "God is love" almost ripens that hope into present fruition.—"I became a hope full of immortality."—N. Y. Evangelist.

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We speak of this Christian and that Christian as "a man of prayer." Jesus was emphatically so. "The Spirit was poured upon him without measure, yet he prayed." He was incarnate wisdom, "needed not that any should teach him." He was infinite in his power and boundless in his resources, yet he prayed! How deeply sacred the prayerful memories that hover around the solitude of Olivet and the shores of Galilee! He seemed often to turn night into day, to redeem time for prayer, rather than lose the blessed privilege.
We are rarely, indeed, admitted into the solemnities of his inner life. The veil of night is generally between us and the Great High Priest, when he entered "the holiest of all"; but we have enough to reveal all that is secret, to move our confiding hearts to His Heavenly Father. No morning dawns without his fetching fresh manna from the mercy seat. "He wakeneth morning by morning; He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned."—Isa. l. 4. Beautiful description of a praying Redeemer, waiting as if at every door, for man's good, to get fresh supplies for the duties and trials of the day. All his public acts were consecrated by prayer—his baptism, his transfiguration, his miracles, his agony, his death. He breathed away his spirit in prayer. "His last breath," says Philip Henry, "was praying; in holding communion with God, Jesus drank of this very brook! He consecrated the benediction and the silent chamber. He refreshed his fainting spirit at the same great fountain head from which it is life for us to draw and death to forsake."
Reader, do you complain of your languid spirit, your drooping faith, your fitful affections, and your lukewarm love? May you not trace too much of what you deplore to an unfrequented chamber? The treasures are locked up for you because you have suffered the key to rust; the hands hang down because they have ceased to be lifted in prayer. Without prayer, it is a pilgrim without a staff, a seaman without a compass, the soldier going unarmed and unharassed to battle.

God is Love.

Blessed, glorious truth! The sun of our darkness, the solace of our woe! The crown of our joy! The anchor of our hope! The shield of our life, the thick and impenetrable night obstruct our way? We remember that "God is love," and the midnight of our prospects brightens into day. "Are we afflicted, distressed, borne down by the burden of insupportable sorrow? We feel that "God is love," and our load of affliction is lightened. "Are we blessed with prosperity, and rejoicing in the fullness of delight? We are reminded that "God is love," and our cup of bliss overflows, we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Do we hope for rest and recompense on high when the toils of life are over? The truth that "God is love" almost ripens that hope into present fruition.—"I became a hope full of immortality."—N. Y. Evangelist.

Absence from Church.

He has been absent from church for several Sabbaths.
HAVE YOU BEEN TO SEE HIM? Perhaps he is sick. And O how grateful are the attentions of a fellow member of the Church to a sick brother! Do not leave him in his loneliness uncheered by a word of sympathy or comfort. Go and sit by his bedside and talk cheerfully to him, and read the word of God to him; sing some of the songs of Zion and every melody. You may do him great good, administer spiritual comfort to his heart, and be will live you more; as he recovers, the religion which prompts you, and the Church with which you are mutually connected, will become dearer to him as he realizes the precious sympathy which his fellowship evokes.
HAVE YOU BEEN TO SEE HIM? Perhaps he is poor, and wants fitting garments to appear decently in the House of God. It may be a false pride keeps him away on this account, or it may be the true cause of his absence. It is a cause of more frequent recurrence than many of us are willing to admit. Visit him discreetly, kindly, with his confidence, and inquire like a brother, for the reasons. And if this should be the case, interest yourself with your brethren, for the supply of his necessities. Jesus will remember your kind interposition, and say to you, approvingly, "I was naked and ye clothed me."
HAVE YOU BEEN TO SEE HIM? Perhaps he is afflicted in his family. His wife or child may be suffering and need his attention at home. He may even be kept from his daily employment by nursing the sick, and thus doubly need your fraternal sympathy and aid. At any rate go and see what is the matter; you may be useful.

Prayerfulness.

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Do you Want a Friend.

Consider solemnly whether Christ is your friend, and you are his. There are thousands, I grieve to say, who are not Christ's friends. Outward members of his church, attendants on his means of grace—all these they are no doubt. But they are not Christ's friends. Do they hate the sins which Jesus died to put away? No. Do they love the Saviour who came into the world to save them? No. Do they delight in the word of reconciliation? Yes; it is sadly true. Do they speak with the Friend of sinners in prayer? No. Do they seek close fellowship with him? No. Oh reader, how is it with you? Are you, or are you not, one of Christ's friends.
If you are not one of Christ's friends, you are a poor, miserable man. I write this deliberately. I do not say it without thought. I say that if Christ be not your friend, you are a poor, miserable man.—You are in the midst of a falling, sorrowful world, and you have no real source of comfort or refuge for a time of need. You are a dying creature, and you are not ready to die. You have sins, and you are not forgiven. You are going to be judged and are not prepared to meet God. You might be, but you refuse to use the only mediator and advocate. You love the world better than Christ. You refuse the great Friend of sinners, and you have no friend in heaven to plead your cause. Yes; it is sadly true. You are a poor, miserable man. It matters nothing what your income is; without Christ's friendship, you are very poor.
If you really want a friend, Christ is willing to become your friend. He is ready to receive you, all unworthy as you may feel, before you write your name on the list of his friends. He is ready to pardon all the past, to clothe you with righteousness, to give his Spirit to make you his own dear child. All he asks you to do, is to come to him. He bids you come with all your sins, only acknowledging your villainy, and confessing that you are a sinner. And as you are waiting for nothing—unworthy of anything in yourself, Christ bids you come and be his friend. Come, and be wise. Come, and be safe. Come, and be happy. Come, and be Christ's friend.—Ryle.

The Backslider.

Who was he? His name was Demas. "Demas," says the Apostle Paul, "hath forsaken me, having loved this present world."
There was a time when it was otherwise with Demas. When, as the Apostle Paul wrote, Paul wrote his epistle to the Corinthians, he said: "Luke, the beloved Physician, and Demas, greet you." And again, the same year writing to Philemon, he says: "Demas and Lucas, my fellow laborers, salute thee." But now, alas! two years later, writing to Timothy, he says: "I have had to cross several times to go to the place of worship; they are agreed to invite every person they met, who was at all likely to accompany them. They did so and persevered; at length they could reckon up twenty, whom they had induced to attend ten of them were converted to God, as became the custom of the Church. They lived so far to purpose. A young man whose heart was fired with the love of Christ, collected together twelve lads, and formed them into a class, to educate them on the Lord's day. He persevered. He offered special prayer for them. In time every one of them became hopefully converted to God. Two of them are Ministers of Christ, several of them teachers of the young, and the rest continue in a profession of religion. He lived to purpose. A Christian desired to live to purpose; he wrote a tract, printed and circulated it. He then produced a book, "Let us have grace whereby we may suspend, or performed in a heartless manner. He does not daily, as formerly, "