

CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.

VOL. I.

TORONTO, APRIL, 1851.

No. 4.

Poetry.

THE SAINT'S REST.

My rest is in heaven, my rest is not here,
Then why should I murmur when trials are near?
Be hush'd, my dark spirit, the worst that can come,
But shortens thy journey, and hastens thee home.

It is not for me to be seeking my bliss,
And building my hopes in a region like this;
I look for a city which hands have not piled;
I pant for a country by sin undefiled.

The thorn and the thistle around me may grow;
I would not lie down upon roses below;
I ask not a portion, I seek not my rest,
Till I find them forever on Jesus's breast.

Afflictions may damp me, but cannot destroy;
One glimpse of his love turns them all into joy;
And the bitterest tears, if he smiles but on them,
Like dew in the sunshine, twin diamond or gem.

Let doubt, then, and danger my progress oppose,
They only make heaven more sweet at the close;
Come joy, or come sorrow, what'er may befall,
One hour with my God will make up for it all.

A scrip on my back, and a staff in my hand,
I march on in haste through an enemy's land;
The road may be rough, but it cannot be long;
And I'll smoothe it with hope, and I'll cheer it with song.

Doctrine and Duty.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.]

THE KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS, THE
MOST EXCELLENT OF THE SCI-
ENCES, by ALEX'R CARSON, LL.D.
New York: E. H. FLETCHER, 1850.

We should hesitate before we join in the customary congratulations that the science of our day is not like that of a former generation, arranged in open hostility against religion. It is matter of congratulation that many of its most distinguished cultivators are disciples of Christ. But it would be a grievous mistake to construe the tone of courtesy and respect which worldly wisdom holds towards Christianity into an approbation of its distinguishing doctrines,

as if the reproach of the Cross had ceased. As in the ordinary intercourse of life the seeming respect for Christians, which now takes the place of the scorn which the world formerly poured upon all who would live godly, is due not so much to the elevation of popular sentiment as to the depreciation of the standard of Christian profession. So there is reason to fear the conciliatory tone of science is due not so much to its late-sprung friendship for the gospel, as to the extent to which the advocates of the gospel consent to keep its obnoxious features in the back ground.

If the gospel may be treated as a mere system of ethics, and the Scriptures as a mere reflection of the light of nature, why should not science tolerate or even patronize Christianity? If the Roman government could have quietly placed the statute of Jesus as one among the motley crowd by which the Pantheon was peopled, the sword of persecution would never have been whetted against his followers. This is virtually the condition on which the man of science will speak approvingly of our faith. We must be permitted to leave out of view every thing which exposes the lost and undone condition of man, and which reveals God as a just God, and yet a Saviour. The cross must be veiled.

There is called for, a loud protest in the name of Christianity against the dilutions and perversions of truth by its carnal abettors. But there is still more urgently demanded a forcible and earnest endeavour to lead so called evangelical churches back to the beginning of Christian confidence. If there is but one name given under heaven whereby men may be saved, then is there nothing censorious in the allegation that to a fearful extent, the preaching in our pulpits, and the faith in our pews, are delusions in which multitudes are hastening to hear a slighted Saviour say, "Depart from me, I never knew you." Preachers may declaim about a change of heart, and consecration to God; professors may talk of their hopes, their feelings, their lamentations, and their resolutions, and in all this He may be entirely left out, whom to know is life eternal:

"The knowledge of Jesus" is the want of our times, and in Dr. Carson's little work we have not only a masterly presentation of the whole theme, but an exhibition of it admirably adapted to the present

exigency. It is more immediately addressed to the man of science, who in the scriptures finds a revelation that "has not a feature of the divine character which gives a just ground of hope to the guilty." But we would scatter it by thousands amongst professing Christians with the expectation that it would overthrow thousands of fond, but false, hopes, and startle hundreds of preachers with the discovery of the worse than vanity of their most learned and popular declamations.

The features of the work on which we would fix attention, are its illustrations of the important truths that the gospel is a manifestation of the Divine character, the only manifestation of it that is a ground of confidence for sinners, and that the gospel is self-evident truth, it cannot be known without being believed, and on this ground the rejection of it is condemnation.

In summing up his treatise the author remarks, "I am not aware that these views are found in any human writings." Without questioning his claim to the reputation of singular originality as a thinker and writer, we think better of his views than to believe, that they were left to be discovered at this late day; and without pretending to very profound learning, we can furnish from recollection many illustrious defenders of the faith who stand side by side with him in the maintenance of every important point. In the very important position, for instance, that the gospel is self-evident truth, we find him occupying a place side by side with Owen, who devotes an admirable treatise to this very theme, "that the word makes a sufficient proposition of itself wherever it is, and he to whom it comes, who refuses it because it comes not so or so testified, must give account of his atheism and infidelity. He that has the witness of God, need not stay for the witness of men, for the witness of God is greater." We may suggest moreover, that in the course of his arguments he deals out rebukes not dissimilar to Dr. Carson, against that philosophy which professes so profound an adoration for the God of nature, while it turns with disgust from the more glorious manifestation of God in the gospel.

Besides being written out and advocated, we believe that it has been the distinction of all times of the church's glory, and of every ministry which God has blessed, to the advancement of a work of grace, that