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BIOGRAPHY.

JOACHIM CURÆUS,

A German physician of eminent talents and singular piety, was one of the burning and shining lights of the Reformation, and never were the following lines of the poet more strikingly illustrated than in the death of that genuine believer:

"The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
Is privileged far beyond the common walk
Of virtuous life—quite on the verge of Heaven."

This excellent man died of a burning fever, in which he evidenced, as in life, the subjection of his soul to the Divine will, attended with fervent breathing after Christ in the exercise of divine love. The state of his soul at this solemn season, will best appear from some of those divine and weighty sentences which he then uttered: "Lord, I am oppressed; but it is enough for me that thy hand hath done it. My body now suffers because of sin, but my soul is raised and comforted with the assurance of eternal life. I will wrestle with Jacob till the brightness of thy sight shall appear. Come, Lord Jesus, and let all that love thee, say come; and as for him that loves thee not, let him be *Anathema Maranatha*. Thou knowest, who searchest the heart, that I love thee. With thee I shall be at the beginning of the new year; and shall be satisfied with thy sight, and drink of the wine of that everlasting joy, which is in thy Father's house, where are many mansions, one of which is there reserved for me." He then cried, "My heart glows at the prospect of life eternal, the beginning of which I now actually feel within me. I have learned to know thee, and my aim hath been that others should know thee aright. Son of God, acknowledge me also, and take me to thine embraces! To come to thee, my soul with desire leaps for joy; and because it is yet withheld, I think the time long; I desire to be dissolved! O dissolve me, that I may be with thee! I am overwheeled by my continuing here! I groan for that dwelling above, which thou hast revealed to me! As the traveller in a dark night looks for the sun, so do I earnestly look after the brightness of that light, which is in the vision of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! I shall see my Saviour in the flesh, who is exalted at the right hand of the Father, and there I shall bless him for all the blessings I have received from him. Thou wilt, also, set a guard over this body, even thy holy angels, to keep thy dust and bones, which were, and shall be ever, the dwelling place of the Holy Ghost; for it is impossible that this flesh, which hath been quickened by a participation and communion of the spirit, and thus ingrafted into the body of Christ, should ever be annihilated, or for ever continued in the state of death. But thou, who art the fountain of life, shalt require from the earth, this thine own image; and by sending forth thy spirit afresh, thou wilt again build it up as a glorious living body, that it may there become for ever a dwelling for thy spirit to inhabit; there we shall follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, O glorious and divine leader! and there we shall sing the new song, Let us rejoice! Hallelujah! O come let us go forth to meet our redeemer! Our conversation is in heaven; even in this life we must begin to know an eternal life, and follow it in that order which Christ hath appointed. We shall be clothed upon, and not be found naked; and he who is the beloved Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world, shall lead us to the fountain of living waters, and wipe away all tears from our eyes. What the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor hath entered into the hearts of men, is prepared for them that love God. This earthly life is but death; but that is life indeed which Christ hath begun in my soul. And now I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; therefore I will praise him. O blessed soul, where Jesus hath his seat, who doth lead and bear well in all our motions and actions."

Those who were witnesses of his last moments inform us, that these were but a small part of the ardent breathing of the soul of this blessed man, after the enjoyment of God in eternal life. Just before he expired, he was heard to say, "Now I die, and have gained admission; like old Simcon, I die testifying to the truth of the prophets and apostles, blessing the Lord that he hath made the light of the gospel, in his marvellous goodness, again to return after a season of such darkness." Having uttered these words, he shortly after sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

RELIGION.

The intimate connection between Religion and National Prosperity.

(By J. A. JAMES, OF BIRMINGHAM.)

It is a most important sentiment, of which the evidence is abundant, and which ought to be kept constantly before the public mind, that religion is the most direct and powerful cause that can be conceived of, to promote national comfort, prosperity, and security; in the absence of which, all other causes must be limited and transient in their effects. If religion were indeed a mere abstraction of devotion, confined in its exercises to the closet or the sanctuary, and restricted in its influence to the imagination and the taste, but which has no necessary control over the conscience, the heart, and the life, and which is not allowed to regulate the intercourse of society; if it were merely the temper of the convent, united with the forms of the church; beginning and ending upon the threshold of the house of God; then it would be difficult to point out what connection such a religion has with the welfare of a country. It would in this case resemble only the ivy, which, though it add a picturesque effect to the venerable fabric, imparts neither stability to its walls, nor convenience to its apartments. But if religion be indeed a principle of the heart, an element of the character, an inseparable habit of thinking, feeling, and acting aright in all our social relations; the basis of every virtue, and the main prop of every excellence; if it be indeed the fear of the Lord, by which men depart from evil; if it be faith working by love; if it be such a belief in the gospel of Christ, as leads to a conformity to his example; then we can easily perceive how such a religion as this conduces to the welfare of the country. There is not one single influence, whether of law, of science, of art, or of learning, that affects the well-being of society, which true religion does not guard and strengthen. Take the summary of its duties as it is expressed in the two great commandments of the law, supreme love to God, and equitable love to man; or take the direction of Paul, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, or if there be any praise, think of these things;" or take Peter's comprehensive circle of christian duty, "Honor all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the King." Here we see that religion, though founded on a belief of doctrines, and cherished by the exercises of devotion, diffuses its influences over the whole social character of man, and through the whole range of society. It is the belief, the love, the worship, the imitation, of a Deity, whose moral attributes, when copied by us, as they ever will be where piety exists, form a character, in which sound morality is animated and sanctified by the spirit of true devotion.

Such a religion contains the germ of every social excellence, the seminal principle of every relative virtue; "It maintains an incessant struggle with whatever is selfish, barbarous, and inhuman; by unveiling futurity, it clothes morality with a divine sanction, and harmonizes utility and virtue in every state of existence and every combination of events." To man, in his individual capacity, it prescribes,

not only the homage of God, but the duties of self-government and respect: it follows him into the domestic circle, the fellowship of the church, the community of the country, the citizenship of the world; binding upon him the duties which are appropriate to every station, and calling him to acknowledge the claims which reach him from every quarter. As with the smiling countenance and the flaming sword of the cherubim, it guards all the social interests of man, protecting the throne from the turbulence and anarchy of the people; and the rights of the people from the encroachments of the throne; the rich from the invasion and spoilation of the poor; the poor from the insults and oppression of the rich; it teaches justice to the master, and fidelity to the servant; ordains equity and truth, as the rules of commercial transactions; nerves the arm with industry, and melts the bosom to compassion; carries the authority of God into recesses too deep and distant to be reached by the institutes of human jurisprudence, and makes a man a law to himself amidst the urgency of temptation, and the privacy of solitude. In short, there is not a single duty by which man can promote the welfare of society, which is not enjoined by religion; nor is there one evil influence which it does not oppose by the weight of its authority and the terror of its frown: it places society in the shadow of the eternal throne, draws over it the shield of omnipotence, and employs for the defence of its earthly interests, the thunder that issues from the clouds and thick darkness in which Jehovah dwells. That man must be a fool, and not a philosopher, whatever be his pretensions to learning or to science, who does not recognize in religion, the tutelary genius of his country, the ministering angel of the world.

Let it not be said, that virtue would do all this without religion; for where did natural virtue ever exist in the absence of religion? A land of atheists, or even of deists, is a dark and frightful spectacle, which the world has never yet been fated and afflicted to witness, and in all probability never will: it is easy to conceive, however, that in the absence of all those moral principles, those standards of duty, those examples of goodness contained in the scripture, and which are so essential to the right formation of character, such a land must be barren of virtue, and prolific in crime. The only attempt that was ever made to introduce the reign of atheism to a country, was productive of such enormous vice, and such prodigious misery, that it excited the horror, and was abandoned amidst the execrations of the whole social community.

No, it is religion alone that can preserve, much more extend that virtue, in which the well-being of the country consists; and it is perfectly self-evident that the universal prevalence of piety, would be necessarily followed with the universal reign of virtue; for virtue, properly defined, is not only a part of piety, but is piety itself. It has been finely demonstrated by Butler, in his immortal work, that the virtue of a people necessarily increases their strength, and that the predominance in one, other things being equal, must ever be expected to produce superiority in the other.

And then there is another way besides its direct influence, in which piety leads to the prosperity and security of a land; I mean by the influence which it has in drawing down the blessing of God. If there be a moral governor of the universe, sin must provoke him, and holiness please him; if sin provoke God, he is able to punish it, for the destiny of nations are at his disposal, the balance of power is in his hand; bodies of men, as such, are revolvable and punishable only in this world, as death dissolves all bands, and reduces society to its elements, allowing the existence of neither families, churches, nor nations in eternity. God's determination to punish guilty nations, and to bless virtuous ones, is recorded on the pages of scripture, and confirmed by the details of history. Harken to the awful denunciations of Jehovah. "At what instant, I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a king-