

[FOR THE RECORD.]

ABRAHAM'S CHILDHOOD.

AN ORIENTAL TRADITION,
Translated by J. M. H.

Abraham was brought up in a cave, for the tyrant, Nimrod, sought to take his life. But also in the dark cave the light of God dawned within him, and one day he meditated and said, within himself, who is my Creator? Thus he had spent sixteen years in the cave, when he one morning stepped out, and as he, for the first time, saw the heavens and the earth, he was greatly astonished, and rejoiced, and asked every thing about Him.—Who is your Creator? The sun was just rising; he fell upon his face, and said, this is surely the Creator, for its appearance is grand and beautiful. But the sun that had risen in the morning, set again in the evening, and the moon arose, then said Abraham to himself, this cannot have been the God of heaven—perhaps this smaller light may be the God, whom these numberless stars may serve. But also the moon and stars disappeared, and Abraham stood alone meditating. Thus disappointed, he went to his father, and asked him: who is the God of heaven and earth? and Terah shewed him his idols. I will prove them, said Abraham to himself; and when his father had left him alone, he placed before them the most beautiful fruits. If you are living gods, then take this offering, said he, but the idols stood motionless. And is it possible, said the boy, that my father holds these for gods, and worships them? Well, perhaps I may instruct him, and with this, he took a stick and broke all the idols in pieces save one, in whose hand he placed the stick, and ran to his father: father, said he, thy tallest god has killed all his brethren.

Terah looked upon the youth with a fierce countenance and said: you mock me boy, how can that be—how could he have broken them in pieces, whom my hand has made? Oh, be not angry with me, my father, said Abraham, and let thine ear hear what thy own mouth has said. You deny your god the power of doing that which I myself have done with my feeble hands, how can he be the God who created me and thee, and the heavens and the earth? Terah stood motionless at the words of the youth.

But soon afterwards this occurrence was made known to Nimrod, the tyrant, who demanded that Abraham should be brought before him, and said: My god thou shalt worship, boy, or be cast into a fiery furnace. For all the wise men had foretold to the king at the birth of Abraham, that he would destroy all the idols in his kingdom, and also, bring him down from his throne, therefore he sought to kill him.

Who is thy God, O King? replied the unterrified youth.

The fire is my god, it is the most powerful element.

The fire, said the boy, is extinguished by water, the water is easily carried by the clouds, the wind disperses the clouds, and man can withstand the wind, so man is the most powerful living.—And I am the most powerful of all beings, said the King, therefore worship me! or the fiery furnace is your reward.

Then the boy raised up his modest eyes, and said: I saw the sun yesterday morning rise, and set again in the evening, command, O King, that it to day rise in the evening and set in the morning, and I will worship thee. And Abraham was cast into the furnace.

But the fire injured not the boy, an angel took him softly into his arms, and drove the flames from him. More beautiful the youth went forth from the fire, and soon afterwards the Lord appeared to him, and called him forth from the land of Chaldea, and made him his friend. So Abraham became the founder of the true worship of the God of heaven and earth.

Toronto, March 18th, 1851.

THE PRAYING SOLDIER—During the unhappy commotions in Ireland, a private soldier in the army of Lord Cornwallis, was daily observed to be absent from his quarters, and from the company of his fellow soldiers. He began to be suspected of withdrawing himself for the purpose of holding intercourse with the rebels, and on this suspicion, probably increased by the malice of his wicked comrades, he was tried by a court martial and condemned to die. The Marquis hearing of this, wished to examine the minutes of the trial, and not being satisfied, sent for the man to converse with him. Upon being interrogated, the prisoner solemnly disavowed every treasonable practice or intention, declared his sincere attachment to his sovereign, and his readiness to live and die in his service; he affirmed that the real cause of his frequent absence was, that he might obtain a place of retirement for the purpose of private prayer, for which, his lordship knew, he had no opportunity among his profane comrades, who had become his enemies merely on account of his profession of religion. He said he had made this defence on his trial, but the officers thought it so improbable that they paid no attention to it.—The Marquis in order to satisfy himself as to the truth of his defence, observed, that if so, he must have acquired considerable aptness in this exercise. The poor man replied, that as to ability he had nothing to boast of. The Marquis then insisted on his kneeling down, and praying aloud before him, which he did, and poured forth his soul before God with such copiousness, fluency and ardour, that the Marquis took him by the hand, and said, he was satisfied that no man could pray in that manner who did not live in the habit of intercourse with his God. He not only revoked the sentence, but received him into his peculiar favour, placing him among his personal attendants, and in the way to promotion.

A WALDESIAN BENEFACTOR.

The American and Foreign Christian Union, for December, has a sketch of Col Beckwith, written by Dr. Baird, who has distinguished himself as a benefactor of the Waldenses. Col B is now about seventy years of age. He entered the army during the French Revolution of 1789, bore himself afterwards with bravery and prudence in the army of Wellington, and in the battle of Waterloo he lost a leg. At what time he professed Christ, is not precisely known. In answer to the inquiry, what has he done for the Waldenses, Dr. Baird furnishes the following answer:—

1. He helped them to complete their beautiful College, and their Grammar school. 2. He gave them aid in erecting, or rather furnishing their Hospital, or Alms House, at La-Tour. 3. He has assisted them in building more than 160 school houses. 4. He has expended considerable sums in small charities. We have no means of knowing how much money he has laid out for the improvement of these people; but we were informed, as much as seven years ago, by one of the pastors, that they estimate his donations at thirty thousand dollars!

It is but recently that he has engaged to erect several houses at La Tour, for the Professors in the College, to enable them to live with more comfort on their small salaries. What a blessing he has been to these people! How much to be envied—for the great esteem in which he is held by them! He is labouring to raise up in those schools and in the college, a band of pious youth, for the service of God in France—in Italy; for they speak both French and Italian with more or less ease and purity. He once begged us to ask our American Christians to remember the Waldenses in their mountain home, and pray that God would make their country a nursery for his church. He has long foreseen that the day will come when many laborers will be needed to propagand the truth in Italy—and whence are they to come but from among the Waldenses?

The day is certainly not far distant now, when an immense field will be opened in Italy for all the men whom the Waldenses may be able to furnish. May it please him who is "King in Zion," to pour out His Spirit upon these remains of a martyr-race, and raise up a great number of preachers of righteousness! The fields, in Sardania at least, are even now white unto harvest."

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