THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL READINESS OF MIND, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO .- ACTS XVII. 11.

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LOVE DIVINE. O Love divine ! eternal source Of good to man, I mark thy course, To Bethlehem I follow thee, And there the wondrous babe I see, A cheering, glorious sight.

I trace thee thence to Calvary, And there the Man of Surrows see, His body bath'd in blood; The stream I followed from its source, Now pours with a resistless force, A rapid, swelling flood.

Its waters life and healing bring, They make the waste rejoice and sing, Their progress thus we trace; They pour their virtues through the earth,
They fill the world with stered mirth,
And giadden ev'ry place.
Rev. IV. Cerus Wils n's Collection.

THE SAVIOUR'S BIRTH. O strange cradle of that Great King, which heaven itself might envy! O Saviour, thou, that wert both the maker and owner of heaven, of earth, couldst have made thee a palace without hands, couldst have commanded thee an empty room in those houses which thy creatures had made. When thou didst but bid the angels void their first place. they fell down from heaven like lightning; and when, in thy humbled estate, thou didst but say, "I am he," who was able to stand before thee? How easy had it been for thee to have made place for thyself in the throngs of the stateliest courts! Why wouldst thou he thus homely, but that, by contemning worldly glories, then mightest teach us to contemn them? that thou mightest sanctify poverty to them, whom thou calledst unto want? that, since thou, which hadst the choice of all earthly conditions, wouldst be born poor and despised, those which must want out of necessity, might not think

Here was neither friend to entertain nor servant to attend, nor place wherein to be attended a only the poor heasts gave way to the God of all the world. It is the great mystery of godiness, that "God was manifested in the flesh," and "seen of angels"; but here, which was the top of all wonders, the very heasts might see their Maker. For those spirits to see God in the flesh, it was not so strange, as for the brute creatures to see him, which was the God of spirits. He, that would be led into the wilderness among wild beasts to be tempted, would come into the house of beasts to be horn, that from the height of his divine glory his humiliation might be the greater. How can we be abased low enough for thee, O Saviour, that hast thus neglected thyself

their poverty grievous?

That the visitation might be answerable to the homeliness of the place, attendants, provision, who shall come to congratulate his hirth, but poor shapherds? The kings of the earth rest at home, and have no summons to attend him, by whom they reign. Gol hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty. In an obscure time. the night—unto obscure men, shepherds—doth God manifest the light of his Son by glorious angels. It is not our meanness, O God, that can exclude us from the best of our mercies : yen, thus far dost thou respect persons, that then hast put down the mighty, and exalted them of low degree.

If these shepherds had been snoring in their bods, they had no more seen angels, nor heard news of their Saviour, than their neighbours : their vigilancy is honoured with this heavenly vision. Those, which are industrious in any cashing, are capable of farther blessings; whereas the idle are fit for nothing but temptation.

han a whole choir of angels are worthy to sing the hymn of "glory to God," for the incarnation of his Son : what joy is enough for us, whose nature he took, and whom he came to restore by his incarnation? If we had the tongues of angels, we could not raise this note high enough to the praise of our glorious Redeemer.

No sooner do the shepherds hear the news of a Saviour, than they run to Bethlehem to seek him. Those that left their beds to tend their flocks, leave their flocks to inquire after their Saviour. No earthly thing is too dear, to be forsaken for Christ. If we suffer any worldly occasion to stay us from Bethlehem, we care more for our sheep than our souls. It is not possible that a faithful heart should hear where Christ is, and not labour to the sight, to the fruition, of him. Where art thou, O Saviour, but at home in thine own house, in the assembly of thy saints? Where art thou to be found, but in thy word and sacrament? Yea, there thou seekest for us: if there we haste not to seek for thee, we are worthy to want thee; worthy that our want of thee here should make us want the presence of thy face

for ever.

The shepherds and the crib accorded well; yet even they saw nothing which they might not con-temn: neither was there any of those shepherds, that seemed not more like a king, than that King whom they came to see.

But O the divine majesty that shined in this baseness! There lies the babe in the stable, crying in heaven to proclaim, whom the sages came from the east to adore, whom a heavenly star notifies to the world, that now men might see that heaven and earth serves him that neglected himself.

Those lights, that hang low, are not far seen; but those which are high placed, are equally seen in the remotest distances. Thy light, O Saviour, was no less than heavenly. The East saw that which Bethlehem might have seen. Oft-times, those which are nearest in place are farthest off in affection. Large objects, when they are too close to the eye, do so overfill the sense, that they are not dis-

What a shame is this to Bethlehem! The sage came out of the east to worship him, whom that village refused.

The Bethlehemites were Jews: the wise men Gentiles. This first entertainment of Christ was a presage of the sequel. The Gentiles shall come from far to adore Christ, while the Jews reject

Those easterlings were great searchers of the

tion of Christ. Human learning well improved instruments of music," &c .- The sequel is doubtledge whereof God is not the author; he would never have bestowed any gift that should lead us away from himself. It is an ignorant conceit, that inquiry into nature should make men atheistic. No man is so and to see the star of Christ, as a diligent

Doubtless this light was visible unto more; only they followed it, which knew it had more than nature. He is truly wise, that is wise for his own soul. If these wise men had been acquainted with all the other stars of heaven, and had not seen the star of Christ, they had had but light enough to lead them into utter darkness. Philosophy, without this star, is but the wisp of error.

These sages were in a mean between the angels and the shepherds. God would, in all the ranks of intelligent creatures, have some to be witnesses of

The angels direct the shepherds; the star guides the sages : the duller capacity hath the more clear and powerful helps. The wisdom of our good God proportions the means unto the disposition of the

Their astronomy had taught them this star was not ordinary, whether in sight, or in brightness, or in metion. The eyes of nature might well see, that some strange news was portended to the world by it; but that this star designed the birth of the Messiah, there needed yet another light. If the star had not besides had the commentary of a revelation from God, it could have led the wise men on ly into a fruitless wonder. Grant them to be the offspring of Balaam, yet the true prediction of that ing: "Beware of false prophets? intimating what false prophet was not enough warrant. If he told the experience of eighteen centuries has but too them the Messiah should arise as a star out of Jathem the Messiah should arise as a star out of Jafrom the posterity of Jacob, at the birth of the Messiah. He that did put that prophecy into the wouth of Balaam, did also put this illumination into the heart of the sages. The Spirit of God is free to breathe where he listeth: 6 many shall come from the east and the west" to seek Christ, when " the children of the kingdem shall be shut out."-Bishop Hall's Contemplations.

WORLDLY CONFORMITY.

Letter from the late Rishop Jibl. of Liverick, (before he became Bishop) to a brother Clergyman.

My DEAR SIR. I cannot remove from this place without taking leave of you on paper, though prevented from doing so in person; particularly as I have matters to talk about, of no slight importance, and which have occasioned me no little thought.

It has given me deep concern that you were at irs: shall. I had indulged expectations too sanguine, as the event proves, that you possessed sufficient steadiness and resolution, to act upon what I know must be your inward conviction respecting the common amusements of the world. The utter incompatibility of such tumultuous gaieties with Christian seriousness, you should be at least as well aware of as I can possibly be. For such scenes you can have no relish; they must be to you as a strange and unnatural element. Why then should you sanction them by your presence? Why should you thus do violence to your principles and your feelings? And why thus contradict, by your practice, without even the shadow of rational inducement, the general tenor of your doctrine from the

Perhaps, my dear Sir, you have never distinctly adverted to the fact, that what constituted the essential guilt of idolatry, in the earlier periods of the world, is fully implied in attachment to the amusements of the present day. The grossest idolatry did not more effectually defraud the one true Coll of the worship that was due to Him, as a providenne one true God tial and moral governor, than attachment to such amusements precludes devotedness of heart to the same gracious being, as the source and centre of all true happiness. This will appear upon very brief consideration. That natural thirst after some undefined good, that irksomeness of life, that craving void of soul, under which half the world is labouring, are all so many indications that so nothing is wanting, which the world cannot give; are all kindly meant to impel us to the blessed fountain of goodness, of enjoyment, of full and complete bliss. On the other hand, can it be doubted, that diversions are the chief engines of a diabolical counter scheme, by which people are enabled, at least for a time, to get rid of themselves; and are thus kept from earnestly and devotedly betaking themselves to God, as their light, their life, and the very joy of their heart? Now if these things be so, it inevitably follows, that common amusements contain the very essence of spiritual idolatry; and, for my own part I have no doubt that the great enemy can hardly be more deeply gratified, or the interests of his dark kingdom more essentially promoted, than when souls, capable of God, are seduced to prop up a "frail and feverish being? by those wretched shifts and expedients, which are miscalled the innocent pleasures

Observe, that I presume not, in this matter, to judge the mass of society. Before a far different tribunal it must stand or fall. Great multitudes unthe manger, whom the angels came down from questionably err through ignorance; and as God mercifully winked at the gross idolatry of the Gentiles, it is highly probable that he now winks at the subtler idolatry of mere professing, or of imperfectly informed Christians. It is however a most instruc-tive fact, that, against the idolatry of His own people-of those who had been taught to know, and trained to adore him-His denunciations and inflictions were tremendously severe. A most instructive fact: for it follows, by inevitable consequence, that they who have been brought within the higher influences of Christianity, cannot, without deep criminality, and extreme hazard, break down the barriers between themselves and the world: or in any degree countenance a system, which goes to shut out God from the heart.

What estimate the sacred writers formed of such enjoyments as the world delight in, it is needless for me to state. Let me barely direct your attention to that passage of Isaiah: "The barp and the viol, and the tabor and the pipe, and wine, religion to the judgment and taste, no less than to the interference but they regard not the work of the hearts and consciences of those around us; the Lord, neither consider the operation of His depths of nature; professed philosophers. Them hands:" and that other of Amos, "They chaunt to hath God singled out to the honour and manifesta- the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves Brodrick saw, and approved this letter.

less familiar to your mind; and it is awfully decisive. How different the picture given by the last of the away from himself. It is an ignorant conceit, that inquiry into nature should make men atheistic. No man is so apt to see the star of Christ, as a diligent other; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought of his name; and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." It would be triffing with a serious subject, to ask, is this the manner of communication that prevails in scenes of tumultuous gaiety? But, it may be fairly inquired, would not such conversation be incompatible with the whole scope and character of these assemblies? Nay, would it not, amidst such concomitants, be justly accounted at once ridiculous and profane? Can a Christian then (I use the term in the highest and only adequate sense) - can a Christian consistently and conscientiously frequent meetings, which by their very nature exclude those topics which should be habitually present with us; and of which we are not only to think, but also to speak, when we sit in the house, and when we walk by

the way; when we lie down, and when we wark by up? any serious Christian. But how transcendant is the obligation, how solema the responsibility of a Chrislian teacher! When our Lord, in his divine sermon cles in the way of strict religion, and the most dan-gerous seductives to a careless and secular mode of living, would be furnished by the erroneous doctrine and example of religious instructors. The "wide gate and the broad way," may be fairly taken to signify, the way of the world. And since it is notorious, that turnultuous gaieties constitute the chief occupation of this frequented road, and are the great allurements which induce multitudes to choose it, what can be more emphatically the duty of a Christian Minister, than to bear testimony, at least hy his own undeviating example, against such anti-spiritual pursuits? Or how can he more fatally betray the holy cause which he has been set apart solemnly to defend, than by a weak and dastardly compliance with the ruinous practices of the world? I use strong language: I can employ no other to do common justice to what I feel. And I am conscious that my words fall infinitely short of the mischief which they attempt to describe. If a clergyinan were to commit some flagitious enormity; if he were to forge a bank note, or to rob on the highway, the act, though more atrocious, would be far less prejudicial to the cause of true religion; for he would not then be "Exemplar vitiis imitabile." His conduct would be reprobated; his character would be stigmatized; his life would be forfeifed to the laws of his country, but Christianity would remain uninjured and unblenched. On the other hand, it should be deeply laid to heart, that the more innocent, the more edifying, the more exemplary a minister is, in all other respects, the more deadly will be his example, if he should unhappily give countenance to the pleasure-seeking propensities of the world. The thorough-paced votary of amusement would give little for the testimony of half a score buck parsons: but a sober, serious, correct clergyman is felt to be an invaluable acquisition. He will be triumphantly quoted, as a model of unstarched, uncanting unfanatical religion. His very virtues will be pressed into the service of vice; his piety itself will, an ingenious but not unusual artifice, be employed to raise recruits for the next campaign of pleasure, and to swell the muster-roll of dissipation. I do by no means speak at random: these things I have seen and heard. I myself have been assailed with arguments drawn from the example of "clergymen who were at once good and pleasant; whose zeal and charity were exemplary; and yet they did not scruple to promote the innocent gateties of life; 'and well do I know, that such specious examples have decided many a wavering heart to choose this world for its portion. This, indeed, is perfectly natural. Suppose an amiable and religiously disposed young person, for the first time in her life, introduced into a ball-room; " half-pleased, and half-afraid;" hesitating between God and the world; now, resolving to withdraw from those vanities which at her baptism she promised to renounce; now tempted to mingle with the crowd, and to do like other people. Suppose that, at this critical moment of suspense, she should spy out, in the giddy throng, a clergy-man; a respectable clergyman; a man beloved for his virtues, and revered for his piety,—would not this be decisive, would it not fatally turn the balance? I must soherly pronounce, that, in such circumstances, the weight of such an example would

be next to irresistible; and it is easier to imagine, than to state, how tremendous may be the con-sequences in this life, and in that which is to come. In these views I am by no means singular. They are entertained by some of the most judicious among our common friends. They are the views, also, of our excellent Diocesan, and I had indulged in a very delightful hope, that they were becoming the views of many of our brother clergymen in this diocese. The truth is, I had almost ventured to anticipate the growth and the diffusion of a higher principle than commonly prevails even in the religious world; a union of strict spiritual religion with a rational and somewhat philosophic temperament of mind; a separation from the world more complete because more interior, more penetrative because less palpable, than has been hitherto attained by the most systematic plans of external seclusion. In these latter, there has ever been a disposition, by a departure from the ordinary modes of life, literally to cut off the right hand, and pluck out the right eye; whilst we, I fondly hoped, were, at least, in progress towards a spiritual excision of whatever was inconsistent with genuine Christianity. By carrying common sense, rationality,

whilst by a degree of firmness, in abstinence from all 1 and Homily Society," an excellent Clergyman, clearly secular compliances, at least equal to that of the most rigid sectaries, we might put to silence all religionists that are unfriendly to our establishment. These things, however, cannot be, if we yield one atom of our religious strictness. In matters decidedly indifferent, it is, indeed, right that we should conform to the usages of civilized life. Good sense and Christian charity require this at our hands. Thus we may please our brethren for their good, to edification; and of this judicious and amiable conformity we have an exquisite model in Him who was our great Evaporte. But wherever conscience and regreat Example. But wherever conscience and religion are concerned, as they essentially are in this point of amusements, our line of duty is clear and unequivocal: "Come out from among them—be ye separate," is the language of Scripture; and I appeal to yourself, whether in this instance it is not also the language of conscience, of teeling, and of all that is spiritual within us. I shall only add, that the case of all who stifle this voice is singularly

You, my dear Sir, have been settled in a neighorthood where there is much that is amiable and respectable. In all the gentry there is a regard for religion; in some possibly there is an incipient dispersion; position to come within its higher influences. I know not many spheres in which a few wise and Much might be done to raise the tone of society; much to infuse deeper principles; much to lead people from ontward to inward religion. But it must be clergymen who go to balls. Such indeed may assist in religious tracts, to establish schools, perhaps even to institute family prayer. But, I must repeat, that clergymen who go to balls cannot carry along with them, and cannot leave behind them, the deep religion of the heart. Those of our profession who know nothing of this high and holy department, will, of course, be little solicitous to maintain that strictness which it indispensably requires. And they, possibly, may take the liberties in question, without either making themselves worse, or marring any object they can pursue. But they who are, in folly. Of the Established Church I have never they, possibly, may take the liberties in question, any degree, called to officiate in what we may term

On the whole, my advice to you is, to accept with cheerfulness, the civilities of the surrounding gentry; but always within certain limits. Never, on any account, to go where amusement is the avowed ostensible purpose of the meeting: and if, at a place where you may be engaged to dine and sleep, cards or dancing should be introduced, to show that, in such things, you from principle take no part. In a family circle, or where a few friends may be engaged to dine (which I look upon to be a fair and proper mode of maintaining the charities of life) I conceive it to be our duty to be as cheerful and entertaining as we can; always endeavouring to make our powers of pleasing subservient to the best purpose. By judicious management, we may thus render deep truth attractive and delightful; and

engage people to become pious, through the medium of taste itself, and on the principle of voluptuaries.

But I feel that I have enlarged too much. I trust self, and on the principle of voluptuaries. He el that I have enlarged too much. I trust receive what I have taken the liberty of is a proof of my sincere interest in your Lordship's time, I have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship's much obliged, grateful, and humble servant, Adam Clarke.—Life: Vol. iii. you will receive what I have taken the liberty of saying, as a proof of my sincere interest Wellare. as such I feel you to be a brother. I am myself but young, and not very experienced; but as I am somewhat more advanced than you, I offer that advice. which, in similar circumstances, I should thankfully receive. If it prove of any service, I shall be deeply gratified; for then my purpose will be effectually

DR. CLARKE AND THE BISHOP OF

LONDON. My Lord, -1 humbly beg your Lordship's acceptance of the volumes of Discourses which accompany this note. They are now for the first time published, though the substance of them has been preached at various times through the now united empire, and the Norman and Zetland islands. Whatever may be their merit, they are not constructed after the common manner of sermons. of the things of God. Your Lordship well knows how little is done for the interests of Divine truth, where the texts of Holy Scripture are taken as mottos to sermons, in which only sentiments or maxims of general morality, or social duties are explained. To secure the end of public instruction, I have often been obliged to call the attention of the people not only to the literal meaning of several exotic words, but also to the import of many terms in their mother-tongue, which, though of frequent use in religious matters, are little understood.

With this short explanation, I take the liberty of sending these volumes, as a mark of my deep reverence and high respect for your Lordship's sacred office, and great personal worth :- a reverence and respect which I have long entertained for your Lordship, and which have been greatly increased by the late opportunity with which I have been by the late opportunity with which favoured, of having the honour of paying my respects to your Lordship at Fulham. The talis cum pects to your Lordship at Fulham. The talis cum sis, &c., with which your Lordship dismissed me, iave done me indeed great honour : for your Lordship's inflexible attachment to truth; and honour, showed me how much I should value the opinion then expressed, though retaining a just sense of my

I hope that the omnino in the remaining part of the quotation, which I told your Lordship had been sent in a letter to me by the worthy Architeacon of Cleveland, neither refers to my creed, nor to my essential membership in the Church; but only in reference to my being destitute of its orders. afraid of making too free in mentioning the followng anecdote; if so, your Lordship's goodness will

At an Anniversary meeting of the & Prayer-book | ceiving a University education.

quoting something that I had written, was pleased to preface it by the remark, "The worthy Doctor who of all the men I know who are not of our Church comes the nearest both in doctrine and friendship to it." When he had done, I arose, and after making an apology (which the company were pleased to receive with great tokens of kindness), pleased to receive the great specific for the liberty to observe, "I was born, so to speak, in the Church, baptized in the Chu brought up in it, confirmed in it by that most apostolic man, Dr. Bagot, then Bishop of Bristol, after-wards of Norwich, have held all my life uninterrupted communion with it, conscientiously believe its doctrines, and have spoken and written in defence of it; and if, after all, I am not allowed to be a member of it, because, through necessity being laid upon me, I preach Jesus and the resurrection to the perishing multitudes, without those most respectable orders that come from it,—I must strive to be content; and if you will not let me accompany you to heaven, I will by the grace of God, follow after you, and hang upon your skirts." This simple declaration left few unaffected in a large assembly, where there were many of the clergy. Mr. Wilberforce, who was sitting beside the chair, rose up with even more than his usual animation, and Much might be done to raise the tone of society; much to infuse deeper principles; much to lead peowith " winged words," said, "Far from not acple from outward to inward religion. But it must be names are written in heaven,2—far from preventevident, that such services can never be performed by maintaining external decorum; they may promote him follow, he shall not hang on our skirts, to be as if dragged onwards, we will take him gentry to disseminate the Scriptures, to circulate in our arms, we will bear him in our bosom, and at the gate of blessedness,-we will not indeed let with shouting, carry him into the presence of his God and our God!" The worthy Clergyman, whose speech had given rise to these observations, soon placed himself on the best ground, with "Indeed, Dr. Clarke, my observation went only to the simple fact of your not being a Clergyman of the Established Church." Whatever evil may be in this, I believe your

this Holy of Holies, should be cautious, even to jealousy, that they lose not their vantage ground; that they swerve not an inch from their peculiar and in its favour, I believe I shall never be even that they swerve not an inch itom their peculiar and in its layour, I believe I shall never be even and appropriate calling; "Ye are the light of the tempted to retract. Being bred up in its bosom, I world," said our blessed Lord, "but if the light early drank in its salutary doctrines and spirit. I early drank in its salutary doctrines and spirit. I felt it in my carliest youth, as I felt a most dear relative. While yet dependent on, and most affectionately attached to her (my natural mother) who furnished me with my first aliment, I felt from an association, which your Lordship will at once apprehend, what was implied in Mother Church. However hopographs it may be to a par-Church. However honourable it may be to a person who was in the wrong, to yield to conviction, and to embrace the right, that kind of honour I have not in reference to the Church. I was never converted to it; I never had any thing to unlearn, when, with a heart open to conviction, I read in parallel the New Testament and the Liturgy of the Church. I therefore find that, after all I have read, studied, and learnt, I have not got beyond my infant's prayer :- "I heartily thank my heavenly Father, that He hath called me into this state of salvation; and pray unto him that He may give me grace to continue in the same to the end of my

EXTEMPORE PRAYER,

THE SEASON FOR NO OTHER THAN THAT. My mother had six children, three of whom died panied the death of one of them, and was a severe trial to her maternal feelings. Her then youngest child, a sweet little boy, just two years old, was, through the carelessness of his pures through the carelessness of his pures. through the carelessness of his nurse, thrown from a bed-room window upon the pavement beneath. I was at that time six years of age, and happened to be walking on the very spot, when the distressing event occurred; I was, therefore, the first to take up, and deliver into our agonized mother's arms, the poor little sufferer. The head was fractured, and he only survived the fall about thirty hours. I prehas ever been my aim, both in preaching and serve still a very distinct and lively remembrance writing, to endeavour to explain the words of God, of the struggle between the natural feelings of the mother, and the spiritual resignation of the Christain. She passed the sad interval of suspense in almost continued prayer, and found God a present help in time of trouble. Frequently, during that day, did she retire with me; and, as I knelt beside her, she uttered the feelings and desires of her heart to God. I remember her saying, "If I cease praying for five minutes, I am ready to sink under this unlooked-for distress; but when I pray, God com-forts and upholds me: his will, not mine, be done. Once she said, " Help me to pray, my child : Christ suffers little children to come to him, and forbids them not,—say something. " What shall I say mamma?—shall I fetch a book?" "Not now," she replied; "speak from your heart; and ask God that we may be reconciled to his will, and bear this trial with patience."

The day after the infant's death, she took me to the day after the intant's neath, she took me to the bed on which my little brother lay; and kneel-ing down, she wept for a few minutes in silence; and then taking his cold hand in one of hers, and mine in the other, she said, "Lord, if it had not been thy good pleasure, it had not been thus. Thy will be done! I needed this heavy trial, to shew me more of myself, and to wean me from the world. Forgive my sins, O God! and let me not murmur.? Then looking at the cherub countenance of her babe, she added, "Thou art not lost, but gone before 19 She then put his hand into mine, and said, " If you live, my child, never forget this; and may I one

day meet you both in heaven to I have dwelt upon this part of my dear parent's history with the more minuteness, because she has

Alluding to the narrow circumstauces of his father's family, which precluded the possibility of his re-