

Christian Mirror.

NEW SERIES.

WEEKLY.]

"MANY SHALL RUN TO AND FRO, AND KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED."—DANIEL xii. 4.

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POETRY.

THE BOOK DIVINE.

Stanzas, composed by the Rev. Dr. Marsham, of Serampore, and sung with thrilling effect, on the occasion of the completion, by Dr. Carey, of the first translation of the New Testament into Bengali.

Hail precious book divine!
Illumed by thy rays,
We rise from death and sin,
To tune a Saviour's praise;
The Shades of error, dark as night,
Vanish before thy radiant light.

We bless the God of grace,
Who hath his word revealed
To this bewildered race,
So long in darkness held;
His Love designs, his people pray;
His providence prepares the way.

Now shall the Hindus learn
The glories of our King;
Nor to blind gurus turn,
Nor idol praises sing;
Diffusing heavenly light around,
This book their Shasters shall confound.

Deign, gracious Saviour, deign
To smile upon thy word;
Let millions now obtain
Salvation from the Lord;
Nor let its growing conquests stay,
Till earth exult to own its way.

THE SABBATH MORN.

THE morn, the Sabbath morn, is come. Alas!
And art thou welcome? Welcome! No, not so:
Not all, not half—nor even half of this,
Can welcome thee as all true Christians do.
The man of business may,—perchance, he may
Rejoice that thou art come; for what? That he
May worship God? Oh no: that he may cease
From toil,—his wearied limbs require some rest;
His mind too, 'cumbered with the bustling week,
Is tired,—looks forward to the Sabbath with
Delight, and thinks he welcomes it. Again,
Are there not times and seasons when this day
Of rest is irksome in th' extreme? Does he
Not wish it o'er before the noon arrives,
In order to add field to field or house
To house? And when at Church (to which
He never goes but once,) note how he sits
Or stands, when one would think 'twas favour e'en
To kneel in presence of Almighty God,
To have our prayers heard and answer'd too.
Well, so it is; good-natured Man, his own
Ill deeds can overlook; his neighbours, they
Are magnified—How easily to teach!
But here's the rub, 'to practise what we preach'
Now to return; this man has been at Church,—
On what has been his thoughts? God only knows.
Have they been lifted to the throne of Heaven,—
Has he implored that mercy for his sins
Which e'en the truly good requires?—has he
Been thankful for the good received? or was
It words, mere empty words,—both prayer and praise
Omitted? Yes, I fear it was. If so
Has not his thoughts been on the world employed;
How to increase his store, his wealth, his lands,
Or, perhaps, in what is worse, how to deceive
His fellow-men. Is this to worship God?
Is not this Idolatry, in modern shape,
Of which the Israelites were oft forewarned?
The only difference is, *THEY* God was wrought,—
OUR Gold was coined, and from Peru is brought.

CHOICE EXTRACTS.

THE GRAVE OF MY FATHER.

A YEAR had passed since the death of my best earthly friend, and three years since I had heard his kind words and salutary admonitions. Eighty-five winters had howled around his head—yet they had not whitened his locks; nor had multiplied sorrows obliterated that native energy of the soul, and produced that second childhood which is so common to age. He dropped away—he fell like the leaf, because he was ripened and the time of his gathering had come.

I stood by his grave—had traversed a long and tedious way for the sole purpose—and while all was hushed, a voice whispering from the sleeping dust seemed to say, "Child, have you come to bewail my dust with filial tears? Wipe them away—I am walking the streets of the New-Jerusalem. My robes are made white in the blood of the Lamb. Remember from your earliest childhood, I pointed you to the abodes of bliss—I told you of a place "where the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick;" and "where all tears shall be wiped from all faces." I told you the world you inhabit was a vale of tears, and you must not expect to go through it singing. I told you temptations would lie in your path—and I told you to "cleanse your way by giving place thereto" to the words of eternal life. Listen then to the voice of instruction: return to your home—struggle a little longer with the maddening storms—the furious whirlwinds which have seemed to mark you for their prey—and then with me shall you be safely gathered in a healthier clime, where not a wave of sorrow shall roll over you, where kindred and friend, father and child, shall be lost—shall be swallowed up in the Father of all."

My soul was soothed; my tears had gone back to the fountain; I said it was enough! My Father yet liveth, and I shall see him when I die. The sun was setting upon the grave-yard—the long shadow of the steeple where with him I had often gone up to worship—the farm he had cultivated—the house he had inhabited—all lay in sight. I looked upon his grave for the last time; and as I bade farewell to the most loved spot on earth, I felt the last string was severed, and my connection to sublunary things for ever dissolved. I felt like an isolated being, inhabiting this bleak world alone; with none to care, with none to pity. I felt that the guide of my youth, the counsellor of my days, could no more drop the tear of parental tenderness on my hapless head, and I longed to mingle my dust with his—I longed again to talk with him of that heavenly world, he had while on earth so delightfully anticipated—and drink with him the pure river of the waters of life, and pluck from the tree on either side of the river, that fruit which grows alone in the paradise of God.

FEED MY SHEEP.

THERE is in his passage a peculiar meaning, and one full of the most exquisite tenderness, which I do not think is generally perceived; nor do I know how to describe it but by a comparison which may seem too like disparagement.

Suppose a mother lying upon her bed of death, surrounded by the little flock whom she was about to leave, turning her languid eyes towards him who had been the partner of her earthly sorrow, and saying, "O! if you have ever loved me, if that sorrow which you now evince be indeed sincere, and if those tears which you now shed be genuine tokens of affection, I beseech you by every tie that binds us, and by every hope of our reunion after death, that you take care of these little ones, these dear pledges of our love: Be now both father and mother to them; train them up for God, that we may all meet again, a family in heaven."

As a drop to the ocean so is such an exhibition to the emphatic tenderness of meaning which I would attribute to the words before us. "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." Well then, if it be so indeed, if I have that place in your heart which I lived and died to purchase, I beseech you by all that I have done and suffered for you; I beseech you by all the gentleness and patience with which I have borne with your infirmities and provocations! I

conjure you by those bitter tears which you shed when, in the palace of the high priest, you thrice denied me, when the crowing of the cock and that look which penetrated your inmost soul reminded you of all your broken promise and vows; I conjure you by my fasting and temptation, by my agony and bloody sweat, by my cross and passion, by my precious death and burial, by my glorious resurrection, by that ascension which will soon translate me to the right hand of God, if you have that love which you have so often and so ardently professed to me, your friend, your brother, your Saviour, and your God, then "feed my sheep," "feed my lambs," take heed to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you an overseer, to feed the church of God, which I have purchased with my own blood."—*London Christian Observer.*

A BEAUTIFUL THOUGHT.

How few men seem to have formed a conception of the original dignity of their nature, or the exalted design of their creation, regarding themselves as only the creatures of time, endowed merely with the animal passions, and intellectual faculties; their projects, aims, and expectations, are circumscribed by the narrow outline of human life. They forget that instability and decay are written as with a sunbeam, upon all earthly objects—that this world, with all its pageantry and pomp and power, is crumbling to the dust—that the present life is scarcely deserving of a thought, excepting as it forms the introduction to another, and that he alone acts a prudent or rational part, who frames his plans with a direct reference to that future and endless state of being. Sin has so blinded the understanding and perverted the will, and debased the affections, that men never fail to invest some temporal good with fancied perfection, and idly imagine that the attainment of it would satisfy the desires and fill the capacities of the immortal spirit. Vain thought! How little they know of themselves! The soul is not of earth, and they will strive in vain to chain it to the dust. Though its native strength has been impaired, and its purity tarnished, and its glory changed, it will not always be a prisoner here. Send it forth as you will, to range the whole material universe, and like the dove dismissed from the ark, it will return without finding a single place to rest—for it has no resting place but the bosom of God!

A WISE MOTHER.

THE mother of a family was married to an infidel who made a jest of religion in the presence of his own children; yet she succeeded in bringing them all up in the fear of the Lord. One day asked her how she had preserved them from the influence of a father, whose sentiments were so openly opposed to her own. This was her answer: Because to the authority of a father I did not oppose the authority of a mother, but that of God. From their earliest years my children have always seen the Bible upon my table. This holy book has constituted the whole of their religious instruction. I was silent that I might allow it to speak. Did they propose a question? did they perform any good action? I opened the Bible, and the Bible answered, reproved or encouraged them. The constant reading of the Scriptures has alone wrought the prodigy which surprises you.

DOMESTIC HAPPINESS.

HUMAN life is chequered with innumerable ills; and perhaps nothing, independent of Religion, so much fits us for their endurance as the sympathies and tenderness of connubial love. The frowns of the world may sicken us of intercourse with the multitude around us; but the endearments of home is a solace to our wounded spirits; and in the most discouraging circumstances, we may find enjoyment in the bosom of family affection.

MAN was never intended to be idle. Inactivity frustrates the very design of his creation; whereas an active life is the best guardian of virtue, and the greatest preservative of health of body and mind.

THE speech of a modest man giveth lustre to truth, and the diffidence of his words absolveth his error.