

Sweet is the light of Sabbath eve,

And soft the sunbeam ling'ring there ;
Those sacred hours thus low earth leave,
Wafted on wings of praise and prayer.

Season of rest ! the tranquil soul

Feels thy sweet calm and melts in love ;
And while these sacred moments roll,
Faith sees a smiling heav'n above.

EDMISTON.

"It is good to be here," should be the language of our souls, not merely when on the mount of ordinances, but throughout all the hours of that blessed day which Jehovah has sanctified for himself. It is good to be apart from the cares and turmoil of time ; and gaining this sacred eminence, to look abroad upon eternity. And, were our hearts but right with God, such meditation, though solemn, would be far from sad ; the calm majesty that encircles the Infinite would settle and compose the spirit, and should find a response within to that counsel of the Levites to the remnant of Israel, "This day is holy unto the Lord," &c.

So far from having any tendency to throw a shadow over the mind, it is the native property of divine truth, when fully received, to minister peace and joy. If Christians, then, are under the dominion of habitual and prevalent dejection, it is not because they have too much religion, but because they have too little. Indeed, if our Christianity has never been to us the spring of a sensible satisfaction, there is too much reason to suspect it of spuriousness ; at all events, to conclude that it has but a very broken and imperfect sway.

That joy, in some measure or degree, is an essential result of the possession of a true faith, is involved in innumerable declarations of Scripture. Joy is expressly mentioned among the fruits of the Spirit. It is Paul's desire for the Romans, that the God of hope may fill them with all joy and peace in believing. The Psalmist declares that praise is comely for the upright ; exhorts all lands to make a joyful noise unto God ; prays that the nations may be glad, and sing for joy, and that the daughters of Judah might exult in God's judgments ; counsels all worshippers to serve God with gladness, and come before his presence with singing ; and gives an explicit warrant to all that seek him to glory in his holy name. It is an apostolic precept to live rejoicing in hope,—to rejoice in the Lord always ; and, to mark its importance, the injunction is repeated, "Again I say, rejoice." In a word, the announcement of a Saviour is "good tidings of great joy ;" his appearance was to give light to the people that walked in darkness ; the very name of his forerunner was one of gladness ; and his disciples are directed to the natural issue of their faith, which nothing but its weakness prevents them from reaching, when Peter addresses these words to the children of the dispersion,— "in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory."

Why, then, should our hands hang down, or our knees be feeble ? "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not."— "We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again." "It is Christ that died ; yea, rather that is risen again." "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

Besides the general reasons for religious and sober joy, which is supplied by the grace that has been brought nigh unto us through the appearing of Jesus Christ, there are special reasons peculiarly applicable to all seasons of solemn festival and, in particular, to that weekly rest which God's Word appoints and blesses.

One of these may be drawn from that communion of saints, in spirit and purpose, which is one of the most refreshing of revealed truths.

To think that there is one great family called by the name of Jesus, scattered indeed through every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue,—yet keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace ; bowing around a thousand hearts, yet before one throne of grace ; praying in a thousand tongues, but the language of their hearts breathing one melody ; differing in bodily form and feature, but bearing one image and superscription on their souls ;—to think that on this day, especially, their hymns and prayers are all ascending, to be perfumed with Immanuel's costly incense, and to return in showers of blessing ; surely this were enough to enkindle the coldest affections—to elicit a glad answer to the Levites' exhortation, "Mourn not, nor weep." To think that the living stones, found on every shore, from the icy mountains of the north to the islands of the southern wave, are being brought together to constitute one glorious temple, invisibly yet indissolubly cemented by the blood of the Lamb,—and that this day has a peculiar part to perform in consolidating the sacred edifice,—this were a sufficient reason for an angel's joy.

And need we add that the Sabbath is joyful too, as the appointed emblem of the rest that remaineth for the people of God ? It is hallowed, not merely by the concert in worship of the saints on earth, but as the type and figure of their adoring repose in heaven. But how does our sin and corruption make the comparison to fail ! How "cold our warmest thought" to the service of those, his ministers, who are as a flame of fire ! How wretched our unbelieving doubts and fears, our half-confiding prayers, our stammering praises, when placed in contrast with the full tide of joy and gratitude which is poured from the lips of those who have exchanged faith for vision, and serve Him day and night in his temple ! Yet let the institution of the sacred day, as emblematic of its eternal antitype, elevate our aims, raise our affections, and fill us with a holy gladness. "The Lord has risen indeed," and gone to "prepare a place" for us—a place of everlasting Sabbath and jubilee. Lord, bring me to that rest ! Guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory ! Amen.

SELECTIONS FOR THE YOUNG.

MY MOTHER KNOWS BEST.

A party of little girls stood talking beneath my window. Some nice plan was on foot ; they were going into the woods, and they meant to make oakleaf trimming, and pick berries, and carry luncheons. O, it was a fine time they meant to have. "Now," said they, to one of the number, "Ellen, you run home and ask your mother if you may go. Tell her we are all going, and you must." Ellen, with her green cape bonnet, skipped across the way and went into the house opposite. She was gone some time.

The little girls kept looking up to the windows very impatiently. At length the door opened, and Ellen came down the steps. She did not seem to be in a hurry to join her companions, and they cried out, "You got leave ? You are going, are you ?" Ellen shook her head, and said that her mother could not let her go. "O," cried the children, "it is too bad !—Not go ! it is really unkind in your mother." "Why, I would make her let you." "O ! O !" "I would go whether or no." "My mother knows best," was Ellen's answer, and it was a beautiful one. Her lip quivered a very little, for I suppose she wanted to go, and was much disappointed not to get leave ; but she did not look angry or pouting, and her voice was very gentle, but very firm, when she said, "My mother knows best." There are a great many occasions when mothers do not see fit to give their children leave to go and do where and what they wish to ; and how often are they rebellious and pouting in consequence of it ! But this is not the true way,

for it is not pleasing to God. The true way is cheerful acquiescence in your mother's decision. Trust her, and smooth down your ruffled feelings by the sweet and beautiful thought, "My mother knows best." It will save you many tears and much sorrow. It is the gratitude you owe her, who has done and suffered so much for you.—*Christian Treasury.*

CONTROVERSY.—Although heresies and dissensions are immediately prejudicial to the church, by disquieting the minds of men, and producing an alienation of affection, which is the usual effect of a difference of sentiment, yet they ultimately contribute to its purification and establishment. When controversies about doctrines arise, individuals may be seduced into error and apostasy by the plausible reasonings of false teachers, but in consequence of the closer attention which is given to the subject of discussion, it comes to be better understood than before ; is expressed with greater accuracy of language, and is supported by arguments more judiciously selected, and more skilfully arranged. Those who are conversant with ecclesiastical history, will recollect more than one instance in proof of this observation.—*Dr. Dick.*

HEAVEN.—Heaven is a day, without a cloud to darken it, and without a night to end it.

In heaven all God's servants will be abundantly satisfied with his dealings and dispositions with them, and shall see how all conducted like so many winds to bring them to their haven, and how even the roughest blasts helped to bring them homeward.—*Mason.*

A MOTHER'S PRAYER.—"When I could first remember," said John Randolph to a friend, "I slept in the same bed with my widowed mother: each night, before putting me to bed, I repeated on my knees before her the Lord's Prayer and the Apostle's Creed ; each morning, kneeling in the bed, I put my little hands in prayer in the same form. Years have since passed away ; I have been a skeptic, a professed scoffer, glorying in my infidelity, and vain of the ingenuity with which I could defend it. Prayer never crossed my mind but in scorn. I am now conscious that the lessons above mentioned, taught me by my dear and reverend mother, are of more value to me than all that I learned from my preceptors and compeers."

USE OF AFFLICTION.—Make use of affliction as a great advantage for your purest and unmixed delight in God. The servants of Christ, have usually never so much joy in the Holy Ghost as in their greatest sufferings, especially if they be for his sake. The soul never retireth so readily and delightfully to God, as when it hath no one else that will receive it, or that it can take any comfort from. God comforteth us most when he hath made us see that none else can or will relieve us. When all friends have forsaken us save only one, that one is sweeter to us than ever. When all our house is fired down except one room, that room is pleasanter to us than it was before. He that has lost one eye, will love the other better than before.—*Baxter.*

SELECTED THOUGHTS.

That the objects which interest the heart in religion are infinitely more desirable and important, than all others will not be disputed ; and why should it be deemed irrational to be affected by them in a degree somewhat suitable to their value.—*R. Hall.*

I ought to study Christ as an intercessor. He prayed most for Peter, who was most to be tempted. I am on his breast-plate. If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million of enemies. Yet distance makes no difference ; he is praying for me.—*McCheyne.*