

THE MINUTE GUN AT SEA.

'God of heaven!' cried the agitated sailor-boy, as he clung to the gunwale of the heaving vessel, and raised his eyes in the wilderness of despair to the blackened sky. 'God of heaven—I am a great sinner, and tremble to appear before Thee! We are going to the bottom, and there is none to help us. Oh! spare, save for thy mercy sake!'

Only three days had elapsed, since two ships laden with the rich merchandize of the West Indies, left the harbour of Kingston, Jamaica, on their passage home to London. On board were two youths, who thrown together in a foreign land, far from the scenes and companionship of their childhood, and separated from their respective crews, by education and early habits, had formed for each other a friendship characterized by all the enthusiasm of seventeen. The winter had been spent in thoughtless gaiety, in making excursions up the rapid Cobre, or climbing the wood of mountains, divided into a thousand deep gorges, formed by the rushing of the mighty torrents which fall during the rainy season. They had collected a quantity of beautiful shells—had bartered with the negroes for parrots, as presents for their absent relatives; and having filled the boxes with many tropical rarities, they left the island full of the buoyancy of youthful hope.

The first evening they put to sea, the two vessels were separated in a gale; and it was with mutual regret, and with feelings of considerable alarm for their mutual safety, that the friends beheld the space between them widen, until they were lost to each other in the distance.

One of these boys was blest with a pious mother, whose example and instruction had made a strong impression on the mind of her son; but the natural bias to evil—intercourse with the world—and the fascinating pleasures of sin, were as the withering simoom of the budding of piety within the soul. Conscience spoke loudly, and the Spirit of God moved on the step of his heart—among the fountains of life, still Henry remained indifferent, and lived in habitual neglect of the Saviour and his religion. No wonder it was now filled with consternation, as the minutest, with a tremendous crash, was plunged into the sea, dragging the ringing along with it, and clearing the deck of every thing in its course! It was an awful moment, even for the most intrepid; and ashy removed in prayer, acknowledgements were made by many, who, till that hour, regarded the attributes of the Almighty, as a mere nonentity.

During the next twenty-four hours, the storm raged with unabating violence. Light and darkness alternately predominated, as the fire of heaven shone with overwhelming brilliancy from the bosom of the black clouds that shrouded the sky, then vanished—leaving the scene immersed in a deeper gloom than before; and the billows swelling and bursting, seemed to rise and mingle with the rain which fell in sheets.

And the tumult of the hurricane, and the deep roar of thunder, the 'yo heave O,' of the poor wretch, came mournfully on the ear, and the brave boys were seen passing with wonderful velocity, the shrouds through their hands; and vainly endeavoring to steady the ship as she scudded before the wind.

Apprehension was visible on every countenance, and the feeling of immediate danger, fixed every one's thoughts upon himself, when a sound more startling than the thunder, came loud and dreadful over the mountain waves, and struck a sudden panic into every sympathetic breast. It was the 'Minute Gun!' and immediately a vessel with bare poles was seen through the spray, and rain, contending with the tempest. 'God have mercy!' exclaimed the captain. 'There are others in a worse case than we, this awful morning, but that signal of distress reaches us in vain! Higher power must be exerted to save these miserable wretches from a watery grave.' And again the Minute Gun came booming over the water with horrible distinctness, as the knell of death. As he uttered the heart-rending expression, he raised the glass to his eye, and with an exclamation of horror, pronounced the ship to be the *Helen of London!* the vessel that three days before left Kingston in company.

For the crew of the *Helen*, every one became in-

tensely interested, but in the soul of young Henry, because he bears not too hard on the common run the excitement was terrible—almost depriving him of his reason. There, there was his friend—his confident, his most beloved on earth—the individual with whom his happiest hours had been spent, and whose presence was connected with all his visions for the future. Oh! to see him thus! to hear his heart breaking appeals for succour, and be unable to extend the helping hand! the idea was agony. But there was one other thought on his mind, the heaviest of them all—containing the wormwood of the cup—his friend was an unbeliever, and he with clearer light and better teaching, had never tried to dispossess his soul of the demon. All minor considerations were lost in that one momentous truth, and regret, fruitless regret, was as a scorpion sting in his lacerated bosom.

As he stood on the fore-castle, straining his eyes, the *Helen*, was seen to reel several times as though in an eddy, then plunge like a thing of life and motion. Again she became visible, then reeled and plunged the second and third time—a moment of dread suspense and the certainty of her fate is known—she is gone to rise no more! The fierce surges of the ocean settle over those who a few hours before were in the full flush of manhood, with the future before them, all bright and tranquil.

This is no fiction, but a fearful reality, which the writer received from the lips of the survivor. And though he has now assumed the badge of discipleship, and has been enabled to approach God as a reconciled Father, it is always with the most poignant sorrow and regret, he recalls the time when he first heard 'The Minute Gun at Sea.'

Let us take warning. 'The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.' Let us not sleep as do others but let us watch!—*South. Churchman.*

TAYLOR'S MEMOIR OF HANNAH MORE.

ARCHBISHOP SECKER.

The summer and autumn of 1797 were devoted, so far as her health would permit, to the improvement of her village schools, and so completely did they absorb her attention, that she wrote scarcely any letters. In her reply, however, to some interesting inquiries sent her by the Duchess of Gloucester, we find that in the autumn she had been seriously indisposed. "I should not," she says, "have been so tardy in expressing my acknowledgments for the very kind letter which I had the honour to receive from your royal highness, but that it found me on a sick-bed, to which I have lately been pretty much confined. But as I am persuaded that sickness comes from the same wise and merciful hand, which also dispenses of health, I wish to be enabled to receive both with an equal temper of mind; and convinced that what is bestowed on me is precisely that which is best. I should not have presumed to set out with talking of my insignificant self, in preference to the very interesting subjects of your royal highness's letter, did I not feel it my duty to account for my seeming inattention."

The subject principally referred to in this letter, related to the nature of evangelical piety, which Miss More had, on several occasions, taken the liberty to discuss with her royal highness, who appears to have imbibed the current but unscriptural notion, that mere external religion is the main constituent of Christian piety. The Duchess had recently been reading Archbishop Secker's Sermons, which she had highly commended, because his remarks were not severe upon those who were only pious in the estimation of the world. In reply, Miss More thus expresses her views on the subject: "I have great reverence for Archbishop Secker's talents and virtues, and he appears to me to have possessed one faculty of high and singular importance, for a writer on religion and morals, I mean an acute intuitive knowledge of the human heart. I think one grand defect in many of our preachers, and one reason, though not the primary one, why they do so little good, is that they do not attentively and accurately study human nature. One distinguishing attribute of the Divine Teacher was, as the apostle remarks, that 'he knew this present life, as the office of apostles and pastors what was in man.' I cannot dismiss this subject without taking the liberty your royal highness is so gracious as to allow me, of expatiating a little on your remark, that 'his sermons will do more good,

of good sort of people.' I presume your royal highness does not mean, that they will do more good because of that. That it will cause them to be more do more good I take the liberty to question. I have had the honour and the impertinence more than once, to hold some very lively and agreeable debates with your royal highness on the same standard of right, and on the difference, (great and essential in the view of scripture,) between good sort of people, and good people. You have always conceded to me, that there is no real goodness, where there is no religion, and that there is no true religion but that which the Gospel exhibits. I do not mean that any human being, with all those frailties and infirmities which still impede the best, can act up to the perfect pattern there exhibited. Even the best of the apostles and martyrs fell short of it. But I must contend, that every real Christian will endeavour to act on the principle and in the spirit of Christianity. He must labour after genuine piety and goodness, not for the praise of men, but for the glory of God. He must keep before his eyes, and ever seek after a degree of perfection which, however, he knows he shall never be able to attain. A continual sense of his many failings will serve to maintain him in humility—the basis of all true religion. If I did not think it was pushing the subject too far for a letter, I would go on to remark, that many persons in the New Testament, of whose future state we cannot entertain a very sanguine opinion, appear in a worldly sense to have been rather good sort of people: the man at whose gate the beggar Lazarus lay, may be supposed to have been charitable as well as splendid. He who said, soul, take thine ease, and pulled down his barns to build greater, is not said to have acquired his wealth unjustly; and the Pharisee, who thanked God that he was not as other men, would probably have been reckoned in the number of amiable, good sort of people in St. James's-square; and some of the most respectable in the fashionable world, have been very glad to have gone to his dinners or parties. The young ruler was a very good sort of man, but he seemed to have loved the world better than his Saviour and we are left to indulge no very assured hope of his eternal happiness."

EPISCOPACY.

TESTIMONY OF DISSENTERS.

Doddridge, an eminently learned man, and a decided Congregationalist, admits that DIFFERENT GRADES OF CLERGY existed in the time of Ignatius. His words are—"The distinction between bishops and presbyters does not appear to be of earlier date than the time of Ignatius."—*Lect. cxvi. S. 17.*

Calvin, the Geneva reformer, speaks of the ordination of Timothy as being the work of the Apostle Paul himself, and not of the presbyters. His words are—"His expression in the other epistle, of 'the laying on of the hands of the presbytery,' I apprehend not to signify a company of elders, but to denote 'THE ORDINATION ITSELF,' as if he had said—"Take care that the grace which thou receivest by the laying on of hands when I ordained thee, be not in vain."—*Calv. Inst. B. IV. c. iv. S. 2.*

"They named all on whom was enjoined the office of teaching presbyters. They chose one of their number in every city, to whom in particular they gave the title of Bishop, lest from equality, as usually happens, dissensions should arise."—*Calv. Inst. B. IV. c. iv. S. 2.*

"If they will give us such a hierarchy, in which the bishops have such a pre-eminence as that they do not refuse to be subject unto Christ, I will confess that they are worthy of all anathemas, if any such there be, who will not reverence it, and submit themselves to it with the utmost obedience."—*Calvin on the necessity of reforming the Church.—Johan. Calvin. Tract. Theol. omnes, p. 69.*

"Neither the light nor heat of the sun, nor meat and drink, are so necessary to nourish and sustain life, as the office of apostles and pastors is necessary to preserve the Church."—*Calv. Inst. B. IV. c. iii. S. 2.*

Luther, the great reformer, gives ample evidence in his writings, that he would have maintained in his