

The Watchman.

"I HAVE SET WATCHMEN UPON THY WALLS O! JERUSALEM THAT SHALL NEVER HOLD THEIR PEACE, DAY NOR NIGHT."

VOL. I.

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Poetry.

From the N. E. Puritan.

THOUGHT.

And what is Thought? The wealth of mind,
Gold, finer than Peruvian kind,
Vaster and grander too;
No numbers can compute its worth—
With figures cover o'er the earth,
And still they are too few.

What's Thought? It is the mental fire that lies
Burning behind the sparkling eyes,
And lighting up the brow;
Quenched it—and mind, devoid of light,
Is wrapt in gloom of starless night—
For man's an idiot now.

Yes, what is Thought? The lamp that shows
The treasure of the mind that glows
In its resplendent hall,
Where gems and diamonds sparkling bright,
And pearls, and jasper-stones of light,
Range round the garnished wall.

What's Thought? Again I ask the wise;
The mind's dispatch; that quicker flies
Than lightning's swift-wing'd fire,
When tidings it doth bear to man,
In moment doth the nation span,
On telegraphic wire.

Yes! Thought's the living spark we find
Thrown off from "flaming forge" of mind,
To flash from eye to eye;
Ye've seen it from the nervous will,
The crowd of auditors to thrill,
With shock electric fly.

Miscellany.

EJECTION OF THE CLERGY, ON SUNDAY AUGUST, 24, 1862.

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This intolerant Act placed the Presbyterian ministers in great difficulty; it was strictly penned, and pressed hard upon principle and practice; three months were only given to consider what was to be done with themselves and their families. Several consultations took place both in town and country, to know each other's sentiments, and it is not to be supposed that two thousand should all have been of exactly one mind. There was a great diversity of sentiment, and the grounds of their unconformity were different, some could not in conscience comply with the very form of the hierarchy, many scrupled at the re-ordination enjoined as implying a renouncing the validity of their former ministrations, and that which Dissenters of all denominations refused was the giving assent to all the Prayer book contained apprehending this to be more than was due to any human composition; also alleging the following objections, which were common to all,—that the book contained several things which, after searching the Scriptures, appeared not agreeable to them viz, its teaching the doctrine of baptismal regeneration and certain salvation as consequent on it, prescribing the use of god-fathers and godmothers in baptism, to the exclusion of parents; that they considered taking from the parents the right of devoting their children to God, by baptism, and opened a door for profaning the ordinance by those who, after the day of baptism, never even inquired after the child, and held themselves bound really to nothing, looking on the ceremony as a mere compliment paid to the parents. Then, subscription would also oblige ministers to use the sign of the cross in baptism, and not a few regarded this as superadded to the institution of our Lord, and tending to encourage superstition and the idolatry of the Papists, who foolishly adored the cross. The canon also forbade ministers, on pain of suspension, to give the Lord's supper to any that did not kneel, this they regarded as a new term of church-communication, and, though not sinful, as far from a necessary matter. They also objected to symbolize with idolatrous Papists, who use this form with the intention of adoring the elements. They further objected to pronounce all saved that are buried, except "self murderers, excommunicated and unbaptised," as by this positive avouching concerning every one, they must pronounce many saved at the grave, though cut off in the midst of sin, and without any sign of repentance. To reading apocryphal lessons they could not consent, not entertaining for them that respect as to place them in the room of Scripture. To the creed of St. Athanasius they could not "assent;" for though they approved of it generally, one expression "which faith, except every one do keep, whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly,"

was very repugnant. Several other things also appeared highly exceptionable in the canons according to which obedience was to be performed.

At length the decisive day arrived, and an example was presented scarcely to be paralleled in the Christian world. 2000 "Bartholomew divines" were ejected, or resigned their livings, rather than desert the cause of civil and religious liberty, and silence conscience. It was an action without precedent, and their succeeding hardships were indeed great. They were not only silenced, but driven from their spheres of usefulness and oppressed by those of their brethren who professed the same faith—Not only were they excluded preferments, but, without visible means of support, turned on the world—not as much as a vicarage, not even a school was left them; nay, more than this, though some offered to preach without remuneration, it was not allowed, but laws were enacted against them, which exposed them to fines and imprisonments for discharging any part of ministerial duty or coming near the place where they had formerly so done. This, too, occurred at a time when their services were greatly needed, as many large congregations were destitute of ministers, and the land was overshadowed with ignorance and profaneness, and those writers who have charged the ejected ministers as being enemies to order and friends to anarchy and confusion, "knew not the men or their communication." Thus cast upon the world, by an invisible hand they were supplied with all things necessary to life and godliness. One eminent man of their number has left it on record, that within a few miles of his own estate there was above a hundred supported entirely by Providence, then he says, "Though they were frequently in difficulty, they were never forsaken, though they were brought very low, and greatly harassed by persecution, had for earthly friends generally only those who were very poor and unable to support them, I never yet heard of one Nonconformist being in prison for debt, for Providence was instead of livings to those who left their livings for conscience' sake. They were drawn first out of their freeholds, and afterwards from all corporations, on purpose that they should be separated from all disposed to show them any kindness, cautions were entered against them to prevent their obtaining any kind of livelihood, and yet they lived comfortably and maintained their families creditably; and many of them brought up their sons to the ministry, in which they were very useful, and at last died in peace."

For ten years things continued, in this state, the ejected ministers being in obscurity, for though their endeavor was to be found in the path of duty, they were not suffered to live in peace. The silenced ministers were not only forbidden to preach in public, but so carefully watched in private, that, if they met together for prayer, it was deemed a seditious convulsion. The excellent Mr Baxter and Dr Bates were invited to the House of Mr Beale in Hutton garden, to pray for his wife, who was dangerously ill, but having some other necessary engagements, they were unable to comply with the request, and, had they been there, they would have been apprehended, for two justices of the peace came with a sergeant-at-arms to seize them, searched the house, and even the chamber of the sick woman. Many ministers soon after were imprisoned in several counties for the heavy crime of preaching and praying, and on the 30th of June, 1663, the Act against private meetings (called the Conventicle Act) passed the House of Commons, and soon became a law. The terms of it were these: "That every person above sixteen years of age present at any meeting, under the pretence of any exercise of religion in other manner than is the practice of the Church of England, where there are five persons more than the household, shall, for the first offence, by a justice of the peace, be recorded and sent to jail three months, till he pay £5, and for the second offence, six months, till he pay £10; and the third time, being convicted by a jury, shall be banished to some of the American plantations, excepting New England or Virginia." The severity of this act consisted in its giving to the justices of the peace power to record a man an offender without a jury; and if they did it without a cause, there was no remedy, seeing every justice was made a judge. Previously the ministers were the only sufferers, now the people shared largely with them.

Thus matters proceeded until 1665, when the plague broke out which carried off about a hundred thousand persons in the city of London.—The ejected ministers preached very privately and, comparatively, to few hearers; but now (seeing the city churches and the flocks left in the time of extremity, when about ten thousand

were dying weekly, without having any pastor near who cared for their souls, or to afford consolation under their terrors, (several who pitied the distressed and dying people were convinced that no obedience to human laws could justify their neglecting the souls of men.) They resolved, therefore to stay with them, enter the forsaken pulpits and render them the assistance that they were able under such an alarming providence. Amongst those who engaged in this work were Franklyn Grimes, Turner, Chester, Janeway, and Vincent. The face of death so, awakened preachers and hearers, that the former showed fervent zeal and the latter peculiar attention, and, through the blessing of God attending these labors, many were converted.—But while God, by this heavy judgment, was consuming the people, and the Nonconformists were laboring to save souls, the Parliament which sat at Oxford, was endeavoring to render their case incomparably more severe, by enjoining an oath, which if they refused, they must not come within five miles of any city or corporation, any place that sent burgesses to Parliament, any place where they had been ministers or had preached, after the Act of Oblivion.

TO BE CONTINUED.

HE WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD.

This is the pattern for every Christian. He is a counterfeit who does not strive to imitate it. The strength, the alacrity, the joy of the soul is connected with this imitation—Religious people are heavy and moping and cast down, because they are idle and selfish. The active, benevolent spirit of watching for opportunities to do essential service to our fellow-creatures, they often feel no more than the profane. What then avail doctrines believed to no good purpose? Usefulness is the very excellency of life. No man, in the real church of Christ, liveth unto himself. Every true Christian is a tree of righteousness, whose fruits are good and profitable unto men. He is glad to help and to comfort others. He is diligent and industrious.—He speaks of edification, dwells in peace, and gentleness and love. He reproves what is wrong by an excellent example, and recommends by his own practice what is pleasing to God.—Yenn

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

"Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."—Exodus. xx. 12.

"Honor thy parents, those that gave thee birth, And watched in tenderness thine earliest days, An' train'd thee up in youth, and loved in all, Honor, obey, and love them; it shall fill Their souls with holy joy, and shall give down God's richest blessings on thee; and in days To come, thy children, if they shall be given, Shall honor thee, and fill thy life with peace."

The judicious Hooker used to say, "If I had no other reason and motive for being religious, I would earnestly strive to be so for the sake of my mother, that I might requite her care for me, and cause her widow's heart to sing for joy."

Washington, when a boy, was about going to sea as a midshipman, and his trunk had been taken to the boat, when, as he went to take leave of his mother, he saw the tears bursting from her eyes and an expression of deep sadness on her countenance. Seeing the distress of his parent, he at once turned to the servant and said, "Go, and tell them to bring back my trunk. I will not go away and break my mother's heart." His mother was struck with the spirit and manner of the decision, and at once said to him, "My son, God has promised to bless the children that honor their parents, and I believe he will bless you."

Philip Henry, speaking of an unfruitful and wicked son in his neighborhood, charged his children to observe the providence of God concerning him. "Perhaps," said he, "I may not live to see it, but do you mark it if God does not send some remarkable judgment upon him in this life for thus revolting the fifth commandment." But he lived to see it fulfilled soon after, in a very singular providence.

Olympia, the mother of Alexander the Great, was so severe towards him, that his deputy, Antipater, wrote him long letters of complaint against her, to which Alexander returned this answer "Knowest thou not that one of my mother's will blot out a thousand of thy letters of complaint?"

A youth lamenting the death of an affectionate parent, a friend endeavored to console him by saying he had always conducted himself towards the departed one with tenderness and respect. "So I thought," said the other, "while my parent was living; but now I remember with shame and deep sorrow, many instances of disobedience and neglect, for which, alas, it is now too late ever to make any atonement."

"Let all children remember" says Dr. Dwight, "If ever they are weary of laboring for their parents, that Christ labored for his; if impatient

of their commands, that Christ cheerfully obeyed, if reluctant to provide for their parents, that Christ forgot himself and provided for his mother amid the agonies of the crucifixion. The affectionate language of this divine example to every child is, 'Go thou and do likewise.'"

SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATION.

"And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people and much people of Israel died."—Num. xxi. 6.

Fiery Serpents.—It is disputed whether the epithet "seraphim," "fiery," is given to these serpents on account of their brilliant appearance, or because of the burning agony occasioned by their bites or stings. The latter seems the most probable opinion, and appears to be sanctioned by the Septuagint, which renders "deadly;" and the Arabic version of the Pentateuch has "serpents of burning bites." In another place, Deut. viii. 15, the region through which the Israelites wandered is thus described, probably with a particular reference to this part:—"The great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water." This description answers, to this day, with remarkable decision to these desert regions, and particularly to that part, about the head of the gulf of Akaba, where the Israelites now were. Scorpions abound in all the desert, and are particularly common here, and they inflict a wound scarcely less burning than the serpents of the same region. As to the serpents, both Burckhardt and Laborde bear witness to the extraordinary numbers which are found about the head of the gulf; but it is to be regretted that neither of these travellers speaks particularly of the species. Burckhardt, who at the time of making this observation, did himself not see much of the head of the gulf, and was only on the western coast, nearly opposite the spot where the Israelites appear to have been thus visited, says:—"Ayd told me that serpents are very common in these parts; that the fishermen were much afraid of them, and extinguished their fires in the evening before they went to sleep, because light was known to attract them. As serpents then are so numerous on this side, they are probably not deficient towards the head of the gulf on its opposite shore, where it appears that the Israelites passed when they journeyed from Mount Hor, by the way of the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom, and when the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people." To these testimonies we may add that of Herodotus, who speaks of the immense number of serpents which are found in Arabia. It is true that he describes them as "winged" and migratory, and his account is mixed with much hearsay fable; but thus much we may certainly gather, that the parts of Arabia near Egypt had a dreadful renown for the number and venom of their serpents.—After speaking of the serpents worshipped at Thebes in Egypt, (apparently the ecrastes) he proceeds abruptly to speak of the "winged" serpents of Arabia. He says there was a district of Arabia, nearly opposite to Buto, which he visited for the sake of obtaining information concerning these serpents. He does not tell us that he saw any "winged" serpents there; but he does say that he beheld the skeletons of an immense multitude of serpents in heaps of various sizes. The district where he found these was, as described by him, in a mountain, defile opening upon an extensive plain which bordered upon the plain of Egypt. (Enterpe, lxxv)—Returning to the same subject in a subsequent page, he observes, that Arabia would not be habitable if the serpents multiplied so fast as their nature admits, but that their numbers were checked by a strange propensity among these reptiles to destroy each other. It is observable that commentators and old painters usually represent the serpents which afflicted the Israelites as winged, in conformity with the account of Herodotus. There is nothing to countenance this idea in the Pentateuch; but the prophet Isaiah ch. xiv. 19, and xxx. 6, without any allusion to the present transactions, mentions the *seraph*, serpent, and employs the additional epithet *meophoph*, translated "flying," and the whole "fiery flying serpents," and it is apprehended that the same must be understood here also. It would thus appear that no creation of serpents for this occasion was required, but that they were collected perhaps in extraordinary numbers, and ended probably with a stronger propensity than usual to assault all persons who fell in their way, until it pleased God, through an agency which would have been wholly unoperative but through Him, to heal those who had been wounded and were dying of their wounds.—*Pictorial Bible.*

A great author says, "Is there a God to swear by, and is there no to believe in none to trust to."