

Selected for the Pearl.

The following verses are from the pen of Thomas Miller an illiterate journeyman basketmaker—within the last few months his talents have brought him into notice, his circumstances have been considered—he has been called up to London and under proper patronage is now engaged in preparing several volumes for publication.—Some of these works are of singular excellence and beauty—they are already known in the literary world under the titles of "A day in the woods," "Beauties of the Country" "Songs of the Sea Nymphs," etc. His leisure moments are devoted to fugitive pieces for the periodicals and annuals from one of which we select the following.

MY DAUGHTER.

And thou art dead! thou that wert dear to me,
The treasured idol of my fondest love;
Thou who didst seem a seraph on my knee,
That sleeping dreamt of cloudy beds above;
Unconscious of the earth that cradled thee,
But only resting like a wearied dove,
That for a moment, lighting on the green,
Just coos and looks around, then never more is seen.

And thou art dead! and one soft lock of hair
Is all I now can to my bosom press;
And many a night I've sat in mute despair,
And gazed through tears upon that braided tress;
And tried to blend death with a thing so fair,
But tried in vain; the grave's lone dreariness
With it would mingle not, nor, can I now
Gaze on that lock and death—it conjures up thy brow.

But O, the night thou diest I can recall!
Thy mother on my shoulder leaned to weep;
Her grief-lent shadow fell upon the wall,
And when death came, so noiseless did he creep,
That we heard not his muffled footsteps glide.
E'en, I who held thee deemed thou didst but sleep;
Thy slow pulse ceased; but no one could tell when;
If ever silence listened breathless, it was then.

There thou didst lie, a sinless child at rest,
Hushed as the march of starry-studded night;
Mute as the dew closed in the rose's breast;
Silent as darkness stealing o'er the light;
Cold as a statue in pale marble dress;
Still as a rainbow fading from the sight;
Calm as a halcyon, that upon the deep
Folds slowly its white wings and fearless falls asleep.

And I have thought of lands beyond the grave,
Of ever-verdant fields where angels roam;
Of stream-bathed banks, where flowers eternal wave;
Of music rolling from the ethereal dome;
Of the blue floor which stars resplendent pave.
Then have I turned to view thine earthly home,—
How desolate!—O may I be forgiven,
If selfish love alone hath made me sigh for heaven!

And I have heard thy voice in the low wind,
And caught thine accents in the gurgling stream;
And in the whistling grass where I reclined,
And in old woods where I was wont to dream;
I've seen thy face in clouds and thy locks twined
In the loose silver of their skirts did seem;
Bee, bird or blossom, flower, a leaf, a soul;
There have been moods of mind, when thou in those wert found.

When the hushed footfall of the voiceless night
Pressed the dim clouds and stole down from the sky,
In the dull splendour of the stars' faint light,
Hath thy fair form in silence glided by,
Or motionless hung o'er the mind's far sight;
When dark-winged sleep sat brooding on the eye,
In visions, my lost child, I've tried to press thee,
And in long restless dreams, my lips have moved to bless thee.

The spring brings to my mind thy growing charms—
The Summer, what thou wouldst have been in bloom—
The Autumn, all thy love to aged arms—
The dreary Winter only brings thy tomb.
And the loud wind my throbbing heart alarms,
And shadowy forms fled in the gathering gloom;—
But these are fancies floating through the brain
And catching shapes from thee which they too well retain.

For the Pearl.

ON COMPOSITION.

No person who is capable of writing, finds much difficulty in composing in such a manner, as to make the meaning he intends to convey always intelligible to himself. But to select and arrange our words so as to enable others to obtain a correct sense of the ideas we intend to express, requires the assistance of art, and the experience of practice.

Though the rules of composition are numerous, the fundamental requisites are, Perspicuity and accuracy, in words and phrases, and in the construction of sentences.

To render composition accurate in words and phrases, it must possess the properties of Purity, Propriety, and Precision. *Purity* consists in using such words only as belong to the language we are writing. A plain, native style, and a due arrangement of words is understood by every reader, while foreign words or phrases render the meaning of the composition unintelligible, to those unacquainted with the Language from which they are borrowed. *Propriety* requires that an idea be expressed by such words as correctly convey the meaning. The composition must be free from unintelligible and low expressions—from the injudicious use of technical phrases—and from the repetition of the same word in different senses. *Precision* in words and phrases forbids a multiplicity of synonymous words. All superfluities must

be avoided, and our expressions so pruned as to convey a just view of our meaning. In a loose style, the words may convey less, or they may convey more than we wish; but precision permits the use of such words only as convey the idea and no more.

Perspicuity and accuracy in the construction of Sentences, is highly necessary in good composition. The essential qualities of a good sentence, are Clearness, Unity, and Strength. *Clearness* requires such an arrangement of the word as will prevent obscurity. To avoid an obscure order of words, we must arrange our sentences so as to have the words or members that are most closely related, placed as near to each other as possible. A circumstance introduced into one part of the sentence may render the meaning obscure, while its removal to another place would render the sense of the whole more apparent. *Unity* forbids a change of scene in the sentence. In the same sentence, we must not hurry from one idea to another, or from one circumstance to another. When transition is necessary, a new sentence ought always to be made. The injudicious use of the parenthesis ought always to be avoided. Generally, when a sentence is properly arranged the parenthesis can either precede or follow the other members, or be dispensed with altogether. The *strength* of a sentence consists in placing the principal words or members of a sentence in such a position as will enable them to make the most forcible impression. In doing this, the judgment of the writer must be exercised; for the arrangement which may be required for one subject, would sound harsh and unnatural in another.

Another requisite in writing, is to avoid introductory eulogiums on the subject. To commence by announcing our subject to be of the "highest importance," the "greatest interest," etc. is common, but improper. Instead of such laudatory assertions, we should endeavour by our subsequent propositions, to prove that the subject is one of importance.

I have now given a brief sketch of the rules to be observed in composition. But though attention to these is requisite in a correct and easy style of composition, there is still another qualification, without which neither rules nor practice can render us successful composers. This is an enlarged and a correct view of our subject. To attempt to compose on any subject without previous examination of its nature is like a person who is familiar with the principles of masonry or of carpentry, attempting to construct an edifice without the necessary materials.

A CORRESPONDENT.

For the Pearl

HINTS ON READING THE SCRIPTURES.

My dear young Friend.

Agreeable to your request, I proceed to give you a few rules for the more profitable reading of the Holy Scriptures.

1st. Read them as books generally are read, for, even the sacredness of the Bible has led to its disparagement; a person introduced to a room takes up any other book, not from a well grounded preference, but from an habitual flinching from the bible as a common book, a book for ordinary use. But in reference to other books ancient or modern we are attracted by an agreeable or important Title Page,—we examine the book—we review it—we form an estimate of it and its author; if we approve of its language or scope we read it through with an interest proportioned to its novelty or weighty import, if it inspire admiration we read it through quickly, we go over some parts of the pleasurable task a second, or third time, we speak of its merits to our acquaintance, we produce it in our social circle, we exemplify and descant on its beauties, we become apologists and partizans of the author, and defendants of his sentiments, we propose to ourselves to influence our future conduct by his rules, we bestow a portion of our expenditure very gratefully on the work, and we enumerate it among our companions and counsellors. Were the Bible dealt with thus, instead of with the frigid unconcern, and mortifying indifference that too often accompanies it, were it read, not in a scrappy, disconnected, lexicon-like mode, not so much from an impression that duty required as that gratification enjoined it, we should undoubtedly find a high and an increasing, nay, a perpetual satisfaction in the use of this best of books, whether our satisfaction should arise from beauty of rhetorical style, imagery or argument, important discoveries or communications brought to bear on our individual peace and emolument, or the friendly advice and intercourse of an esteemed living author, for in this light should the author of the Bible always be regarded, and we should certainly secure this point, before ever we undertook to defend or to invalidate the positions of this volume to make ourselves conversant with its contents, literary and general history, its import and design, and that analogy or harmony of doctrine and proposition which it exhibits, and by which the real value of all its separate statements must be tried

2nd. Read them attentively.

This is the way both to obtain an understanding of them, and to ground the same in the memory. Consider the general design with which a book or chapter was written, and endeavor to trace the mode in which this design is answered. Consider the import

of particular periods, enquire of the author, it may be God himself, or a holy man, or an holy angel, or a bad man, or the devil, enquire respecting the occasion, this frequently leads to a clear conception of the sense, as for instance "Behold thy mother"—Christ when he uttered these words to the Apostle John was dying, and commended his afflicted parent to the care of the beloved disciples. Without this history of the text it must wander in search of a meaning. Consider the address, this is sometimes to an empire, or particular nation, or to the nation of Israel, or to the Jews only, or to the Jewish or the christian church, or to its ministry, or to a particular congregation, or to an individual minister or member, or a lapsed or heretical christian, or to an avowed enemy, or to some spiritual powers: now if we mistake the address and apply these things indiscriminately to ourselves, we shall mistake the object and be tossed to and fro; reflect on the sense and this may be metaphorical or literal and should be considered in either light as the passage demands—"this is my body" affording an example of the former; "ye are my friends" of the latter.

Particular words require to have their sense investigated and admitting that we have a faithful version of the original, a good English Dictionary may be proposed as a convenient and sufficient commentary, especially as used in connexion with the privilege of a gospel ministry; which is calculated to give us such a system of theology as will preserve us from erroneous interpretations of the essential doctrines of the divine word. The moral intention also of each particular text, or number of a text should be contemplated, and if manifold, contemplated in all its parts, in order that such design should not be lost upon us, either wholly or in part, but be applied according to our distinct relations, circumstances, and obligations and so be rendered prescriptive of our duty in each condition of life.

3rd. Read them faithfully.

Regarding God as their author and as in them revealed one who is I AM, or "thou art the Rewarder of them who seek thee;" regarding all their sentences respective as they are of character, infallible, irrevocable or eternal after the likeness of their author. Regarding ourselves as interested in all of either its promises or its threatenings as surely as we are interested in any one of them. And herein reading our character and our destinies, as described by the finger of Jehovah, and determining in the divine strength to obey all its dictates whether they respect our renunciation of any practice on connexion offensive to God, our subjection to the appointments of his providence, or the performance of his commands.

4th. Read them consecutively.

The making a scrapbook of the Bible, and going to it as to a dictionary for a word, or definition, an instance, or a maxim, is not an eligible way of arriving at their sense. The import, reference and scope of the sacred writers respectively requires to be studied in order that their writings may accomplish in us what they were designed for. It is therefore a duty to read not only each Book as entirely as possible, but to apply the same rules to the entire volume. But it should be remembered that although the compilers and editors of the Scriptures as Ezra, Simon and St. John, seem to have had reference to an historical order in their disposal of chapters, books, etc. a considerable discrepancy prevails in regard to their destiny, which renders it difficult to read them chronologically and next to impossible to realize their meaning in their present relations. To afford an instance or two, the book of Job should probably take place between the 36th and 37th chapters of Genesis but Nehemiah, which precedes it, belongs to the period of Malachi with which the scripture history closes. And the chapters of Jeremiah who was cotemporary with Ezekiel, who prophesied in Babylon while the former delivered his prophecies in Jerusalem instead of being read from chapter 1 to 51 inclusive should be perused in the following order 1 to 13. 20. 22. 23. 35. 36. 45 to 48. 49. v. j. to xxxiv 21. 24. 27. 34. 37. 39. 49. xxxjo to xxxjx. 50. 51. 40 to 44: and not to proceed the 3rd. 2nd. and 1st. Epis of St. John should be read not only as here dated; but before the 4 Gospels as introductory to the New Testament. The numerical dates in our Quarto or Family Bible if consulted will furnish important assistance for the removal of this difficulty. In passing through the Bible it will be found more interesting to read only at each review such portions as are found most attractive and interesting. Yet in the procedure to satisfy the mind respecting the subject matter and contents of all the intersecant portions. The whole will thus be reviewed: and what at once may appear void of interest, and almost of no use, on the sacred page, will rise in interest and importance at every interview. An agreeable mode of perusing the sacred volume is to divide it into 7 portions, 1 for each day and reading as much as is convenient on each respective day and returning to the commencement of the cycle every week

Sunday Genesis.
Monday Deuteronomy.
Tuesday 2 Samuel.
Wednesday Nehemiah.
Thursday Isaiah.
Friday Daniel.
Saturday G. of John.