

MISCELLANEOUS.

DOMESTIC WORSHIP.

From the Life of Rev. Thomas Scott, D.D.

"At first (says Dr. Scott) I only used a form of prayer from a manual belonging to my wife. After a little time, I read a chapter of the Bible before the prayer; and, as my views of religion gradually improved, I aimed at something more evangelical, and exchanged my manual for Jenk's Devotions. But, had I duly considered the subject, the Common Prayer Book of our church, with a little arrangement, would have supplied me with far more suitable words, than any book of the kind I had then seen, or have ever yet seen. Merely, indeed, to read the common prayer, as appointed for public worship, must, in general, be both inadequate, inappropriate, and in many things superfluous, to a family: but a selection of collects, parts of collects, and extracts from the Litany, varied as circumstances should require, I am now fully convinced, might be rendered, in all respects, preferable to any other forms which have been published.

"I afterwards wrote, on particular occasions, such prayers as I thought proper to be added to the form: and, at length, I was gradually led to adopt the method of extemporary prayer, which I judged, and do still judge, far better for domestic worship, than any forms can be; both as admitting of adaptation to the varying circumstances of families, and the cases of friends and relatives, to be remembered in our prayers; and also as giving scope to more enlargement in intercession according to occurring events, for all sorts and conditions of men. By degrees, also, I proceeded to expound, as well as read the scriptures to my family.

"From this beginning, I do not know that, during more than thirty-eight years, the daily worship of God in my family, morning and evening, has ever been interrupted, except when I was ill, or from home; and, indeed, when that has been the case, some one of my household has generally supplied my place.

"On this I look back with peculiar gratitude, as one grand means of my uncommon measure of domestic comfort, and of bringing down on my children the blessings which God has graciously bestowed upon them. And, though the time which I have allotted to this service has been, for many years, far longer than is generally deemed sufficient or expedient, yet, by a punctual observance of an appointed hour, and the adjustment of domestic affairs to the plan, as known and invariable, no inconvenience worthy of notice has resulted from it. Nor have I, as many complain in excuse for great brevity, found my domestics, in general, shew symptoms of weariness and inattention. My evening worship is much shorter than that of the morning; and for many years past, it has taken place, in all ordinary cases, at a pretty early hour; which, where it can be practised, appears much preferable.

"In numerous instances, I have had visitants, especially relatives, to whom I clearly perceived that my family worship was disagreeable; and some, who would not, so much as by a change of posture, profess to join in our prayers: but I never once omitted the service, or altered the method of it, on that account; and in some cases, the parties have been softened into a more cordial concurrence with us."

CANAL ACROSS THE ISTHMUS OF DARIEN.

ADVICES have been received from Panama, that the obstacles heretofore interposed, by the clashing of the local and general governments, with regard to the proposed canal across the isthmus, have been effectually removed, and that the work seems at length in a fair way to be accomplished, through the medium of the Franco-Greco-American Company, established at Paris. The funds are already provided, and operations will soon be commenced.

A MAN can have no worse enemy in the world than a flattering and fawning minister, that dares not deal plainly with his conscience. We are in much more danger to wrong the souls of men by our oil, than by our salt,—by our praises than by our reproofs.—*Bishop Reynolds.*

VISIT TO THE VOLCANO OF KIRAUEA.

THIS volcano is situate in the southern part of the island of Owhyhee, the largest of the group called the Sandwich Islands. Owhyhee, like many of the islands of the Pacific, is of volcanic origin. Vast streams of lava have since flowed over the greater part of it; some of these have rolled on for thirty and more miles, and then precipitated themselves over the cliffs into the sea; and so late as the year 1800, a single current from one of the large craters filled up an extensive bay, twenty miles in length, and formed the present coast. The recent lava is quite bare, without even a blade of grass, while the more ancient has become decomposed, and is covered with the most luxuriant vegetation. The scenery of the island is sublime; some of the mountains are from fifteen to eighteen thousand feet above the level of the sea. The following account of a visit to the great volcano has been drawn up for Professor Siliman, from the statements of two American captains who visited it in 1838:—

"Early in the morning, on the 7th of May, Captains Chase and Parker, in company with several others, left the port at Lord Byron's Bay, for the purpose of visiting the celebrated volcano of Kirauaea. After travelling a few miles through a delightful country, interspersed with hill and valley, and adorned with clusters of trees, hung with the richest foliage, they came to a forest several miles in extent, so entangled with shrubs, and interwoven with creeping vines, that its passage was extremely difficult. On issuing from this, the scenery again wore a pleasing aspect, but was soon changed into a dreary waste. Their route was now in the direct course of a large stream of lava, thirty miles in length, and four or five in breadth. The lava was of recent formation, with a surface, in some places, so slippery as to endanger falling; and in others, so rugged as to render it toilsome and dangerous to pass. Scattered around, were a few shrubs that had taken root in the volcanic sand and scorice, and on each side of the stream grew a stunted forest. Mouna Roa and Mouna Kea were seen in the distance, and on either side stretched the broad expanse of the ocean, mingling with the far horizon.

"The party had travelled nearly the whole extent of the current of lava before sunset; they were, however, much fatigued, and gladly took possession of a rude hut erected by the islanders, where they slept soundly through the night. Early the next morning, ere the sun rose, they resumed their journey, and soon a beautiful landscape broke upon their view; but its delightful scenery detained them only a few moments, for the smoke of the volcano was seen rising gracefully in the distance. Quickening their march, they arrived soon after nine o'clock at a smoking lake of sulphur and scorice, from which they collected some delicate specimens of crystallized sulphur, and proceeded on. The next object which attracted their attention, was a great fissure five or six hundred feet from the crater. It was about thirty feet wide, five or six hundred feet long, and from all parts of it constantly issued immense bodies of steam, so hot that the guides cooked potatoes over it in a few minutes. The steam, on meeting the cold air, is condensed; and not far from the fissure on the north, is a beautiful pond formed from it, that furnishes very good water, and is the only place where it occurs for many miles. The pond is surrounded with luxuriant trees, and sporting on its surface were seen large flocks of wild fowls. It was now ten o'clock, and the whole party, since passing the lake of sulphur, had been walking over a rugged bed of lava, and standing by the side of vast chasms, of fathomless depth. They had now arrived at the great crater of Kirauaea, eight miles in circumference, and stood upon the very brink of a precipice, from which they looked down more than a thousand feet into a horrid gulf, where the elements of nature seemed warring against each other. Huge masses of fire were seen rolling and tossing like the billowy ocean. From its volcanic cones continually burst lava, glowing with the most intense heat. Hissing, rumbling, agonizing sounds, came from the very depths of the dread abyss, and dense clouds of smoke and steam rolled from the crater.

"Such awful, thrilling sights and sounds were almost enough to make the stoutest heart recoil with horror, and shrink from the purpose of descending to the great seat of action. But men

who had been constantly engaged in the most daring enterprise, whose lives had been spent on the stormy deep, were not easily deterred from the undertaking. Each one of the party, with a staff to test the safety of the footing, now commenced a perilous journey down a deep and rugged precipice, sometimes almost perpendicular, and frequently intersected with frightful chasms. In about forty-five minutes, they stood upon the floor of the great volcano.

"Twenty-six separate volcanic cones were seen, rising from twenty to sixty feet; only eight of them, however, were in operation. Up several of those that were throwing out ashes, cinders, red hot lava, and steam, they ascended; and so near did they approach to the crater of one, that with their canes they dipped into the liquid fire. Into another they threw large masses of scorice, but they were instantly tossed high into the air. A striking spectacle in the crater at this time, was its lakes of melted lava. There were six; but one, the south-west, occupied more space than all the others. Standing by the side of this, they looked down more than three hundred feet upon its surface, glowing with heat, and saw huge billows of fire dash themselves on its rocky shore; whilst columns of molten lava, sixty or seventy feet high, were hurled into the air, rendering it so hot that they were obliged immediately to retreat. After a few minutes, the violent struggle ceased, and the whole surface of the lake was changing to a black mass of scorice; but the pause was only to renew its exertions; for while they were gazing at the change, suddenly the entire crust which had been formed commenced cracking, and the burning lava soon rolled across the lake, heaving the coating on its surface, like cakes of ice upon the ocean surge. Not far from the centre of the lake there was an island which the lava was never seen to overflow; but it rocked like a ship upon a stormy sea.

"The whole of these phenomena were witnessed by the party several times; but their repetition was always accompanied with the same effects. They now crossed the black and rugged floor of the crater, which was frequently divided by huge fissures, and came to a ridge of lava, down which they descended about forty feet, and stood upon a very level plain, occupying one-fourth of the great floor of the crater. This position, however, was found very uncomfortable to the feet; for the fire was seen in the numerous cracks that intersected the plain only one inch from the surface. Captain Chase lighted his cigar in one of them; and with their walking-sticks, they could, in almost any place, pierce the crust, and penetrate the liquid fire. Sulphur abounds everywhere in and around the volcano; but here the whole side of the precipice, rising more than a thousand feet, was one entire mass of sulphur. They ascended several feet, and were detaching some beautiful crystallized specimens, when accidentally a large body of it was thrown down, and that rolled into a broad crack of fire, and obliged them immediately to retreat, for the fumes that rose nearly suffocated them.

"They had now been in the crater more than five hours, and would gladly have lingered, but the last rays of the setting sun were gilding the cliffs above; and they commenced their journey upward, which occupied them about one hour and a quarter. They repaired to their rude hut, and while the shades of evening were gathering, despatched their frugal meal. Curiosity, however, would not allow them to sleep without revisiting the great crater. Groping along, they reached the edge of the precipice, and again looked down into the dread abyss, now lighted up by the glowing lava. The whole surface of the plain, where they had observed cracks filled with fire, appeared as though huge cables of molten lava had been stretched across it. While examining these splendid exhibitions, the entire plain, more than one-fourth of the whole crater, was suddenly changed into a great lake of fire; its crusts and volcanic cones melted away, and mingled with the rolling mass. They now hurried back, astonished at the sight, and shuddering at the recollection that only a few hours had elapsed since they were standing upon the very spot.

"The next morning, they returned to the crater for the last time. Every thing was in the same condition; the new lake still glowed with heat, the volcanic cones hurled high in the air red-hot stones, mixed with ashes and cinders, and accom-