



The Caged Eagle.

There was a very large eagle that had been kept, in a cage for many years. The owner at length concluded to give him his liberty, and at the appointed time a large number of persons assembled to see him take his flight. The door of the cage was opened, and the noble bird stepped to the threshold, and after deliberately looking around on those who were standing there, he spread his wings, made two or three circles over their heads, and then darted directly towards the sun, and was soon lost sight of in the distance.

The time will soon come, my little readers, when each one of you will take your departure from the body in which your soul is caged; and perhaps some of your friends may then stand by to see you go, and bid you the last long farewell. O that God would grant that you, like the captive eagle, may, after a parting look at those you love, ascend heavenward in your flight, and stop not till you reach the throne of God. As you think of the holiness and happiness of heaven, may you have a heart to adopt this sweet language of the poet:

"I'm fettered and chained up in clay;
I struggle and pant to be free;
I long to be soaring away,
My God and my Saviour to see:
I want to put on my attire,
Washed white in the blood of the Lamb;
I want to be one of your choir,
And tune my sweet harp to his name;

I want, Oh, I want to be there,
Where sorrow and sin bid adieu,
Your joy and your friendship to share,
To wonder and worship with you."

Pictures from the Life of Jesus.

PICTURE IV.

THE PREACHER OF THE WILDERNESS.

You remember the gospel writer, says, "Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man;" and though this seems but scanty information for eighteen long years, much may be inferred from it. Depend upon it the home at Nazareth was a happy place, for holiness was there, and holiness is only another name for happiness; and we can think how Jesus grew to be a man, and now, submitting to that good law of Palestine which made all parents teach their sons some trade, he toiled all day in the workshop of Joseph, putting honour upon industry, by being called the carpenter; and we can think of him, hidden from the world, yet making despised Nazareth a happy spot, by deeds of mercy and by words of love, and in his own person destroying the proverb, "No good thing can come out of Nazareth."

The song of the angels, the shining star, the words of Anna and of Simeon, have been forgotten by all but a few: the wonder has gone by—the glory which shone round him when he came, has died away, but only for a season. He stands amid the throng, a poor Galilean peasant; the hopeful, the fearful, the devout, the envious, the curious, the anxious, the oppressed, are about him, and John, in his solemn, fearless strain is bidding them repent, and take from him the pledge of baptism, that as soon as the expected Saviour comes, they may be his followers. While his voice is yet ringing in their ears, and their expectations are at the highest, his eyes fall upon the man of Nazareth, and the tone of his voice is changed, and his speech is altered—